

STRATEGIES FOR STAYING WARM THIS WINTER

Outside of wrapping your house in a blanket, you can find ways to stay comfortable, save money and save energy this winter. These strategies will help keep your home warm and your energy bill lower.

USE HEAT FROM THE SUN: Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home; close them at night.

COVER DRAFTY WINDOWS: Attach and tightly seal heavy-duty, clear plastic on the inside of your window frames, or consider buying tight-fitting, insulated drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty.

ADJUST THE TEMPERATURE: You can easily save energy in the winter by setting your thermostat to 68. When you are away set the temperature a little lower. Install a programmable thermostat to help you do this.

REVERSE CEILING FANS: In the winter, operate the fan in the reverse direction (clockwise). This redistributes the trapped warm air at the ceiling to provide even heat throughout the room.

FIND AND SEAL LEAKS: Search your attic, home and basement for any areas that allow in cold air. Seal, caulk or weatherstrip those areas.

MAINTAIN YOUR HEATING SYSTEMS: If you haven't done so already this season, have your heating system checked for efficiency, and don't forget to replace your filters once a month.

REDUCE HEAT LOSS FROM THE FIREPLACE: Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning to prevent your heated air from going up the chimney. When you use your fireplace, open dampers in the bottom of the firebox (if provided) or open the nearest window about an inch and close doors leading into the room.

LOWER YOUR WATER HEATING COSTS: Turn down the temperature of your water heater to 120°F.

LOWER YOUR HOLIDAY LIGHTING COSTS: Use light-emitting diode – or "LED" – holiday light strings to reduce the cost of decorating your home for the holidays.

TREAT YOURSELF TO A WARM, FUZZY BLANKET: If you still feel chilled, bundle up in a blanket that helps you forget the cold.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

