

Energy Efficiency Tips to Make Your Home (*and Your Wallet*) More Comfortable

Keep the Cold Out

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the most common places where air escapes in homes are:

- Floors, walls, ceilings 31 percent
- Ducts 15 percent
- Fireplace 14 percent
- Plumbing 13 percent
- Doors 11 percent
- Windows 10 percent
- Fans and vents 4 percent
- Electric outlets 2 percent

Reducing air leaks could cut as much as 10 percent from an average household's monthly energy bill. You can take easy, inexpensive steps to reduce household energy consumption and minimize energy loss.

- Seal leaks around doors, windows and other openings – such as pipes or ducts – with caulk or weather-stripping.

Use Energy Wisely

- Set your thermostat between 65 and 70 degrees during the winter and lower it to 58 degrees when away from the house for more than a few hours. Add an extra blanket for warmth when sleeping. Bear in mind that warmer temperatures are recommended for homes with ill or elderly persons or infants.
- Turn down thermostats automatically without sacrificing comfort by installing an automatic setback or programmable thermostat.
 - § **MONEY SAVER:** *Cut your annual heating bill by as much as 10 percent per year by turning your thermostat back 10 to 15 percent for eight hours per day.*
- Change or clean furnace filters once a month during the heating season. Furnaces consume less energy if they “breathe” more easily.
- Warm air rises, so use registers to direct warm air-flow across the floor.
- Close vents and doors in unused rooms and close dampers on unused fireplaces.
- Set your water heater temperature to 120 degrees. A family of four, each showering for five minutes a day, uses 700 gallons of water each week. By lowering the thermostat on the water heater to 120 degrees, families can cut water heating bills without sacrificing comfort.
 - § **MONEY SAVER:** *Since water-heating is a typical family's third-largest energy expense – accounting for about 14 percent of the utility bill – turning down the unit's thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save money.*
- Install water-flow restrictors in showerheads and faucets.
- If radiators are located near cold walls, place a sheet of aluminum foil between the radiator and the wall to reflect heat back into the room.
- Run your washing machine and clothes dryer with a full load.
- Open draperies and blinds on sunny winter days to take advantage of free solar heat. Close draperies at night to insulate against cold air outside.

Plan for Long-Term Energy Efficiency Improvements

- Conduct a Home Energy Audit by accessing the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) "Do-It-Yourself Energy Audit Tool" at: <http://hes.lbl.gov>. This tool can help you determine conservation needs specific to your household.
- Check your heating system and replace old, outdated appliances with new, energy-efficient models. When shopping for appliances, look for the ENERGY STAR™ label. For more information, visit: www.energystar.gov.
- Install wood- or metal-frame storm windows to provide a second thickness of glass and a layer of still air to retard heat transmission. A less expensive alternative is to use plastic sheeting, which can be temporarily fastened over windows to prevent drafts and retain heat.

Bill-Payment Programs and Special Assistance

Allegheny Power offers a budget plan, special payment plans and access to energy assistance programs to customers who need help managing their utility bills. If you think you may need assistance paying your electric bill, please contact our Customer Service Center at 1-800-Allegheny (1-800-255-3443).

Sources for Additional Information on Using Energy Wisely

When it comes to useful tips on saving energy and money, the information on this fact sheet is only the *tip* of the iceberg. Listed below are informative Web sites regarding forecasted energy prices, detailed home energy conservation strategies and energy-efficient home improvement materials.

- www.energy.gov: This U.S. DOE Web site is a comprehensive guide to information about all forms of energy. It also features energy conservation tips.
- www.eia.doe.gov: The U.S. DOE Energy Information Administration (EIA) Web site is a great resource for pricing and supply forecasts for all forms of home energy. The EIA issues a monthly "Short-Term Energy Outlook" that contains information about supply, demand and prices for electricity, natural gas and petroleum.
- <http://hes.lbl.gov>: Conduct a Home Energy Audit by using the "Do-It-Yourself Energy Audit Tool," calculate your energy use and identify the best ways to save both energy and money. Key in your zip code to receive instant estimates of your energy use or take a quiz to customize your home's profile.
- www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization: The Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Web site explains the U.S. DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program, which enables low-income families to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient.
- www.ase.org: The Alliance to Save Energy Web site contains some tips to help consumers manage energy costs during the winter season.
- www.energyhog.com: A Web site for the entire family. Adults can learn how to save money, improve the comfort of their home and help the environment. Kids can learn how to defeat Energy Hogs and become an official "Hog Buster."

For product information on insulation and weatherization supplies, visit the following Web sites:

- www.aham.org: Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers
- www.nahb.org: National Association of Home Builders
- www.cellulose.org: Cellulose Insulation Manufacturers Association
- www.insulate.org: Insulation Contractors Association of America
- www.naima.org: North American Insulation Manufacturers Association

For electrical emergencies and outages, call us at 1-800-Allegheny (1-800-255-3443) 24 hours a day. For other business and account calls, please call between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. weekdays and from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends.