

Dear Friend,

Did you know that a typical American family spends about \$1,900 each year on home utility bills? Keeping warm in the winter and comfortable in the summer shouldn't mean breaking the family budget, but rising fuel costs are making it more expensive for New Yorkers to heat and cool their homes.

This brochure provides timely, money-saving tips that will help you lower your fuel costs. Some of the tips are simple to do. Others require more effort and investment, but promise substantial savings for years to come.

For more information on lowering energy costs, visit the U.S. Department of Energy's website to access their Energy Savers Booklet at www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips

Please take a few moments to read these valuable tips and start saving money and energy today!

Sincerely,



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TIPS FOR LOWERING YOUR ENERGY BILLS



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Interested in learning how to save energy?

You've come to the right place.

Here are some helpful facts and tips from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority to help conserve energy and save you money. Read on and then try a few!

WINTERIZING YOUR HOME

- ▶ **Unblock the Vents.** Make sure not to block floor and wall vents with draperies, furniture, or rugs. Also, clean vents regularly with a vacuum or broom.
- ▶ **Buy a Good Thermostat.** Use a programmable thermostat with your heating system to lower the temperature automatically when no one is home or at night. You can save nearly \$200 a year without sacrificing any comfort.
- ▶ **Plug up the Cracks.** Keep the warm air in and the cold air out by adding insulation, caulking and weatherstripping around doors, attic access, windows, outlets and any area that can let the cold air in and the warm air out.
- ▶ **Let the Sun Shine In.** Take advantage of natural solar heating. It's free! Keep blinds and drapes of sun-exposed windows open in the daytime and closed at night.
- ▶ **Close the Damper.** If you have a fireplace, install glass doors and close the damper when not in use to keep heated air from escaping up the chimney.
- ▶ **Take Out the Room AC.** If you have a window air conditioning unit, remove it for the winter months to prevent heat from escaping.
- ▶ **Use Your Fan.** Ceiling fans can keep you comfortable in the winter too! Reversing the direction of the blades pushes warm air down into the room.
- ▶ **Don't Forget the Water.** Although some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, you can save big dollars by lowering the temperature to 120 degrees—a safe, comfortable level for most people.
- ▶ **Unplug the Appliances.** Electronics, appliances, and adapters continue to use energy even when they're turned off. In fact, just two cable/DVR set-top boxes use the same amount of electricity as a standard refrigerator.
- ▶ **Replace the Bulbs.** Replace your five most used bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and save more than \$60 on your annual energy costs. ENERGY STAR-qualified CFLs last up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs and use 75 percent less electricity.



TIPS TO PUT INTO USE TODAY

INSULATION

Be sure that your attic and basement are properly insulated, which increases energy efficiency enormously.

WEATHERPROOFING/CAULKING/SEALING

A well-sealed home is just as important as a well-insulated home.

INSTALL PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTATS

Program your thermostat to cool the house when people are sleeping or the house is empty.

USE A HUMIDIFIER

Properly humidified air feels warmer.

DISHWASHER/WASHING MACHINE

Don't run either until you have a full load.

CHOOSE THE CORRECT LIGHTING

Compact fluorescents are four times more efficient than regular bulbs and last about eight times as long.

Lighting

DID YOU KNOW?

- Lighting accounts for about 12% of the electricity we use at home.
- Replacing incandescent light bulbs with ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) can use 75% less energy and last about 10 times longer.
- ENERGY STAR-qualified LED lights last a minimum of 25,000 hours or 22 years, based on average household use, and most come with a minimum three-year warranty.
- ENERGY STAR fixtures operate at much lower temperatures than many traditional lamps, so the risk of starting a fire in your home is much lower.

TIPS

- To save even more, install a motion sensor and/or a photosensor to prevent outdoor lights from operating during daylight hours.
- Turn off unused appliances and lights when you leave a room.

Heating & Cooling

DID YOU KNOW?

- Half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling it.
- Replacing heating and cooling equipment that is more than 10 years old with ENERGY STAR-qualified equipment can cut your annual energy bill by nearly \$200.
- Each degree above 75°F that you set your air conditioner's thermostat saves you 3% of the energy used to cool your home.
- HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) air filters should be checked monthly during winter and summer, and filters should be replaced at least every 3 months.
- Sealing and insulating your furnace ducts improve the efficiency of your heating and cooling system by as much as 20%.
- In cold weather, take advantage of the sun's warmth by keeping drapes open during daylight hours and in hot weather, keep your shades down and the drapes drawn during the hottest time of the day. Open them at night.

The Bath

TIPS

- ▶ Use your exhaust fans sparingly; in just one hour they can remove a houseful of warmed or cooled air.
- ▶ Repair all leaky faucets. One drop per second can waste as much as 10 gallons of water in a week.

- ▶ Take showers rather than baths. A typical shower requires only half as much hot water as an average tub bath.

The Attic

TIPS

- ▶ Insulate your attic.
- ▶ To eliminate condensation, install a vapor barrier in your attic to reduce the flow of moisture from inside your home through the insulation.
- ▶ Make sure attic vents are not blocked so air can flow freely, thereby minimizing the use of an attic vent fan.

Computer

DID YOU KNOW?

- When you shut down your computer, don't forget to turn off the monitor - it can use twice as much energy as the computer!
- Use an advanced power strip for convenience; that way all of your computer accessories are turned off by one switch (even in sleep mode, your computer may cost you \$105 a year).
- Consider a laptop computer over a traditional desktop - laptops use less energy.
- Reduce the brightness of your computer screen and enable any power management features on your computer.
- Use the power management feature on your computer monitor; it will turn off the monitor when idle for over 15 minutes when you leave your computer on.
- Turn the computer monitor off when you are away from it. If you have a laptop, put it on standby mode.



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