

15 Ways To Save Energy This Winter

You know about caulking windows and doors and lowering your thermostat already. You certainly know that getting a furnace tune-up before the season starts will keep your equipment working more efficiently. **Here are a few ideas that you might not have thought of:**

- ▶ **Use microwaves and toaster ovens** to cook or warm leftovers. You'll use less energy than cooking with a conventional oven.
- ▶ **Set your refrigerator temperature** between 30 and 42°F. Use the power-save switch if you have one.
- ▶ **Turn off your oven or burners** when food is almost ready and let existing heat finish the cooking for you.
- ▶ **Use tight-fitting covers** on pots and pans when cooking on the stove to shorten your cooking time and save energy.
- ▶ **Always wash with cold water**, laundry detergent works just as well, and you'll save 40 cents per load.
- ▶ **Check your hot water pipes for leaks**, which can drain your energy savings.
- ▶ **Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads** – available at home improvement stores - to reduce your hot water use.
- ▶ **Turn off your water heater** until if you plan on leaving home for a few days. Most models will reheat the water to the set temperature in about an hour.
- ▶ **Insulate the first six feet of the hot and cold water pipes** connected to the water heater. It'll keep your comfort high and your energy bills low.
- ▶ **Clean the dryer lint filter** before every load to keep your dryer running efficiently.
- ▶ **Plug electronics into a power strip**, then turn the strip off when not in use to save in energy costs.
- ▶ **Avoid energy vampires**. Even when they're turned off, home electronics in "standby" mode use energy to power features like clock displays.
- ▶ **Look for ENERGY STAR-qualified TVs** - they're up to 30 percent more efficient than noncertified models.
- ▶ **Get an insulation wrap** to help your old water heater heat in more effectively.
- ▶ **Reduce your water heater temperature** setting from 140 degrees to 120 degrees – it will save you money while keeping water hot enough for showers and cleaning dishes.

– *Bob and David Daniels*