

# ENERGY SAVING IDEAS

## Keep Warm This Winter And Save

(NAPSA)—With the chill of winter upon us, you are no doubt eager to keep your home warm and cozy. But how much will it cost you? The average family spends \$1,300 a year on energy bills and nearly half of that is spent on heating and cooling. To avoid the bite of high winter energy bills, choose ENERGY STAR®.

This season, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is encouraging homeowners to look to ENERGY STAR, a government-industry partnership that gives everyone the power to improve the environment through energy efficiency. To help you save energy and money on utility bills without sacrificing your home's comfort or performance, EPA offers the following simple home improvement recommendations:

**Minimize Warm Air Leaks.** Many areas of your home—including those around windows, doors, recessed lighting and electrical outlets—have hidden holes, cracks and gaps that let heated air escape outside or cold air rush inside. The sum of these small openings can equal as much airflow as leaving a window open all year long—and your energy bills are the proof.

ENERGY STAR Home Sealing helps increase the energy efficiency of your home by improving your home's "envelope"—the outer walls, ceiling, windows and floors. This includes adding insulation, especially to the attic; sealing air leaks to stop drafts and get full performance from your insulation; and choosing ENERGY STAR qualified windows when replacing old windows. Effective air sealing, combined with the right amount



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of insulation, can save up to 10 percent on energy bills.

**Tighten Your Ducts.** If you have a forced air furnace or heat pump, a duct system is responsible for circulating warm air throughout your home. Uninsulated, leaky ducts in attics or crawlspaces can waste energy and contribute to poor indoor air quality. Insulating and sealing ducts can save you up to \$140 annually on energy bills and increase your system's ability to consistently heat every room in your home.

**Get A Tune-Up.** Whether you own a furnace, heat pump or boiler, the overall efficiency of your heating equipment makes an impact on your monthly energy bill. Annual maintenance of your equipment and changing your air filter monthly can help to keep your system operating safe and efficiently.

When it is time to replace your heating equipment, EPA recommends choosing an ENERGY STAR qualified model. Heating

equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR saves homeowners energy and money without sacrificing performance or comfort.

Get an experienced, licensed contractor to install your equipment and make sure it is properly sized to best accommodate your home. Checking for correct sizing and proper airflow will ensure that your equipment delivers the benefits you expect. Look for contractors whose technicians are certified by NATE (North American Technician Excellence), the leading industry-supported testing and certification program.

Finally, depending on how much your heating system operates, you can save about \$100 every year on your energy bills by investing in an ENERGY STAR qualified programmable thermostat. It allows you to better regulate your home's temperature using four programmable settings.

Improving energy efficiency reduces energy use, which means less pollution and lower energy costs. The ENERGY STAR can be found on more than 35 product categories, including appliances, lighting, home office equipment, consumer electronics, and heating and cooling equipment. Homes and buildings can also qualify as ENERGY STAR. Last year alone, Americans, with the help of ENERGY STAR, saved enough energy to power 10 million homes and avoid greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to that of 12 million cars—all this while saving \$6 billion.

To learn more about ENERGY STAR and how to make your home more comfortable through energy efficiency, visit [www.energystar.gov/homeimprovement](http://www.energystar.gov/homeimprovement).