

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Putting The Freeze On Heating Costs

(NAPSA)—A few simple steps could help you cut energy use and save on heating costs.

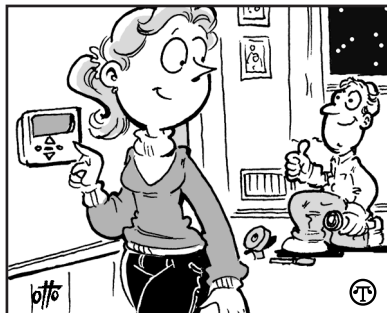
In fact, heating and cooling, along with ventilation, refrigeration and water heating, are responsible for about 75 percent of residential energy use. That's why something as easy as setting thermostats to 68°F during the day and 60°F at night could add up to big savings.

Similarly, checking that return vents, radiators and baseboards are not blocked by furniture or other objects will maximize airflow and the efficiency of your system.

Try these additional tips. They come from heating experts at the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)—an international nonprofit technical engineering society.

Heating Systems

- Clean or change furnace filters in forced hot air systems once a month or more often as needed.
- Have your heating system maintained and serviced according to the manufacturer's instructions. Dirty filters, coils and fans reduce airflow throughout the system, which decreases performance and could cause damage.
- Check heating ducts for air leaks from joints and holes. Check the hardware store for proper UL-certified mastic or tape for repairs.
- Insulate your hot water tank with an insulating jacket



Using a programmable thermostat and checking ducts for leaks could help cut heating costs.

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- You can comfortably turn down the thermostat in rooms that are unoccupied and can be closed off from the rest of the house, or that have their own heating zones. However, do not do this if it adversely affects the rest of your system, as it could lead to frozen pipes.

Windows And Doors

- Install caulking or weather stripping or use spray-in foams around exterior windows and doors or in spaces between heated and unheated areas (garages, basements, crawl spaces, etc.). Just be sure to read the instructions on the product you use.
 - Keep draperies and shades open during the day on your southern-facing walls to allow sunlight to enter. Keep them closed at night to reduce heat loss.
- For more tips and information, visit www.ashrae.org/consumer.