

ENERGY NEWS AND NOTES

Taking The Chill Off Of Energy Costs

(NAPSA)—A little preventive maintenance can mean big savings and increased comfort for homeowners anytime of year.

For example, experts say in colder weather it's possible to save as much as 10 percent on an energy bill by reducing the air leaks in a home.

Find and fix the leaks.

There are a number of places that can be the source of an air leak. Homeowners are encouraged to pay particular attention to doors, windows and places where plumbing, ducting or electrical wiring penetrate exterior walls, floors, ceilings and soffits over cabinets.

To test your home for leaks, hold a lit incense stick next to a suspected source of an air leak. This is best done on a windy day.

If the smoke travels horizontally, you have found a leak that may need caulking, sealing or weather-stripping.

Don't let energy go out the window.

While windows can add to a home's style and comfort, they can also be the source of a lot of wasted energy. The experts at the Department of Energy suggest:

- Close your curtains and shades at night; open them during the day.

- Tape clear plastic sheeting inside of a window frame if drafts, water condensation and frost are present.

- Install tight-fitting insulating window shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.

- For long-term savings, install storm windows over single-pane windows or replace them with ENERGY STAR® double-pane windows with low-e coating.

Insulate your home against high energy bills.



Experts say repairing air leaks in a home may help to reduce an energy bill by as much as 10 percent.

Insulating a home can help reduce energy costs year-round.

- Start by insulating the hot water heater and hot water pipes. It's best to follow the insulation manufacturer's instructions or get professional help.

- Check the insulation in the attic, ceilings, exterior and basement walls, floors and crawl space to see if it meets recommended levels for your region. ENERGY STAR retailers and installation professionals can advise consumers.

Control costs by controlling temperature.

- Installing a programmable thermostat can be an excellent way to cut your heating bills. Such a thermostat can be set to lower the temperature when you're sleeping or at work. The savings may well offset the cost of the unit.

These and many other energy-saving tips can be found at www.energysavers.gov, or by calling 1-877-337-3463. For more information about energy efficiency and renewable energy, visit www.eere.energy.gov.