

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Practice Energy- And Wallet-Friendly Home Maintenance

(NAPSA)—Besides making your home more attractive, well-planned home improvements can cut energy costs. Whether you're considering an addition, purchasing new comfort systems or weatherproofing your home, here's how to save on utility bills:

### Room Additions

- Install Energy Star-labeled windows, doors and skylights. The location and type of windows and doors affect your system's efficiency.

- Passive solar designs take advantage of solar heat in cold weather and shading in warm.

- For additions, use advanced framing techniques for increased insulation and less thermal bridging.

### Choosing Comfort Systems and Windows

- Look for the bright yellow EnergyGuide labels on heating and cooling systems. These identify energy-efficient furnaces, air conditioners, refrigerators and other appliances.

- The U.S. Department of Energy says all newly installed residential central air-conditioning systems need a 13 SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) or higher rating.

- Consider the U-Value of windows—U-Value measures how well a window conducts heat.

### Weatherproofing

- Insulate your attic using at least R-30-rated material (fiber-glass, cellulose, etc.).

- Seal openings in walls, around windows, doors, electrical



**LOOKING AHEAD**—Newly installed residential central air-conditioning systems need a SEER rating of 13 or higher.

outlets and plumbing.

- Weather-strip doors.
- Install thresholds and door shoes on main doors and a door sweep on those less used.

### Preventive Maintenance

- Have your home's heating and cooling system serviced seasonally by a NATE-certified technician to ensure that it is working at peak efficiency.

These tips are brought to you by North American Technician Excellence, or NATE, the nation's largest nonprofit certification organization for heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration technicians. The U.S. Department of Energy endorses NATE for raising quality standards and energy efficiency. For a contractor with NATE-certified technicians, go to the Consumer Contractor Connection at [www.natex.org](http://www.natex.org). Remember, when purchasing a new unit, select one with the Energy Star-qualified seal.