



Keep Power Bills Down

(NAPS)—Now is the time for New York residents to make sure their homes are as energy efficient as possible when storms and cold temperatures hit and in the rare event of a power outage.

Here are some simple steps you can take to help keep monthly power bills down:

Short-term actions

Schedule an annual maintenance appointment for your furnace, boiler, or heat pump. They should be checked, cleaned, and repaired annually. This will:

- Improve efficiency
- Find small problems before they become big problems
- Extend the life of your furnace

Bleed radiators. Letting out air that gets trapped in your heating system will heat your home more effectively and reduce energy bills. If you hear pipes banging or gurgling, it's a sign your system needs to be bled.

Service chimneys. Also, close your fireplace damper if you're not going to be using it and consider investing in a glass screen that lets heat radiate but prevents warm air from getting vented out the chimney.

Weatherstrip doors and windows. A removable door draft stopper can make a big difference.

Make sure air vents aren't blocked. If furniture or curtains block your vents, the furnace works harder than it should to warm the house, driving fuel costs up. If you really like the position of furniture covering a vent, consider a low-cost vent extender.

Conserve & Manage Energy Use

Keep the thermostat between 68 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit while you're awake, and lower when you're asleep or away.

Add insulation to walls and pipes. This is a very inexpensive way to reduce your energy bill. Focus on your attic because heat rises, and this will keep heat in your living spaces. Also pay attention to electrical outlets, anywhere utilities enter the house, pipes (to prevent freezing and bursting), and appliances such as water heaters.

Adjust ceiling fans. Run fans clockwise in winter to push rising warm air down, potentially enabling you to lower the thermostat. In the summer, run fans counterclockwise to create windchill.

Unplug unused electronics. Also, consider switching to LED light bulbs, which are more energy efficient. Putting lights on a timer is both easy and cost-efficient.

Put rugs on hardwood floors. This provides a layer of insulation and can warm up a room—both literally and figuratively.

Open the curtains during the day and close them at night. Letting the sun in—even the weaker sunlight of winter—can help naturally warm a room, while drawing shades and drapes at night helps keep heat in and prevents drafts.

Thinking long-term

Get a professional energy audit. The auditor will ask about your bills and check your home to make sure it's properly sealed.

If you're income eligible, this audit could be free—along with additional discounted or no-cost services such as



Proper planning can help you save money and keep your home and family safe in rough weather.

insulation and air sealing upgrades, new appliances and heating or cooling systems and more. Find out more at <https://www.nationalgridus.com/NY-Home/Bill-Help/Energy-Savings-Programs>.

Consider zoned heating. Target heating and cooling to where it's needed.

Switch to a smart thermostat. A programmable thermostat lets you fine tune when your furnace runs, letting you pre-set it at a lower temperature while you sleep or are away and have it turn up just before you come home.

Just in case

Big storms happen, as do power outages.

National Grid is working to reduce power outages, which involves everything from the simple (trimming trees around lines) to the complex (installing smart meters and technology that automatically locates and isolates outages and restores service as quickly as possible). To make sure you and your family are prepared if the power does go out, do the following:

- Keep a gallon of water per person per day in an easily accessible, air-tight container
- Have three days of non-perishable food on hand (including for your pets)
- Put together a first aid kit
- Make sure batteries work in flashlights, lanterns, radios etc.
- Keep matches, candles, flashlights, etc., where you can find them easily
- Fully charge phones
- Have extra medication at the ready
- Fill your bathtub with water (for toilet flushing)
- Turn refrigerator and freezer to coldest settings, keep doors closed as much as possible
- Gas up the car

If you have a generator, make sure it's at least 20 feet away from the outside wall of your home. Never operate it in an enclosed space, employ GFCI protection, and use the proper cord.

Learn More

To learn more about the services and advice National Grid offers customers related to safety, reliability, affordability, and storm and power outage preparation, visit www.nationalgridus.com/NY-Home/Storms/Storm-Safety#:~:text=Turn%20off%20and%20unplug%20unnecessary,to%20also%20avoid%20power%20lines.