

# ENERGY MATTERS

## Making Wintertime Energy Management Easy

(NAPS)—When the weather cools, it's a good time for Massachusetts residents to prepare their homes for potential power outages. By taking a few simple steps, you can increase your home's energy efficiency and help manage monthly bills. Here are some actions to consider:

### Quick Fixes for Lower Bills

**Seal doors and windows:** Weath-erstripping or a door draft stopper can keep warm air in and cold air out.

**Unblock air vents:** Make sure furniture and curtains are not obstructing vents. A vent extender can help redirect airflow if you want to keep furniture in place.

**Schedule heating maintenance:** Book an annual checkup for your furnace, boiler, or heat pump to boost efficiency, catch minor issues before they escalate, and extend its lifespan.

**Bleed radiators:** Trapped air can hinder heating efficiency and increase energy costs. If you hear gurgling or banging, it is time to bleed your system.

**Check chimneys and fireplaces:** Service your chimney and close your fireplace damper when not in use. A glass screen can help keep warmth indoors.

### Tips to Conserve and Control Energy Use

**Adjust thermostats:** Keep the temperature between 68 and 70 degrees when you are home and lower it at night or when you are away. Lowering your thermostat by just one degree could reduce heating costs by 1 to 3 percent annually.

**Insulate key areas:** Insulating walls, pipes and especially attics can keep warmth in and cut down heating costs. Focus on outlets, utility entry points and water heaters.

**Change ceiling fan direction:** Run fans clockwise in the winter to circulate warm air downward. In the summer, reverse the direction to create a cooling breeze.

**Unplug unused electronics:** Unplug devices when they are not in use, switch to LED light bulbs and consider using timers for lights.

**Use rugs and curtains:** Rugs add insulation to hardwood floors. Opening curtains in the daytime to let in sunlight and closing them at night helps retain warmth.

**Limit decorative light use:** Limiting use of seasonal lights—such as indoor



**Energy saving tips can help people in Massachusetts keep energy bills under control while staying warm this winter.**

and outdoor holiday lights—and choosing energy-efficient LEDs helps prevent hazards and manage energy bills.

### Long-Term Energy Savers

**Consider a professional energy audit:** An energy audit can identify opportunities to improve efficiency. National Grid offers free audits to income-eligible households, along with services like air sealing, insulation, or energy-efficient appliance replacements, such as ENERGY STAR® appliances, through the Mass Save program.

**Install zoned heating or a smart thermostat:** Zoned heating allows targeted temperature control, and a smart thermostat lets you automate temperature adjustments, potentially saving 10 percent annually on heating and cooling.

**Seek out customer assistance:** National Grid's customer savings initiative offers eligible customers a monthly budgeting program that averages your annual energy costs and divides them into twelve equal payments, helping to smooth out high winter heating and summer cooling bills. National Grid encourages participation in the initiative's energy efficiency programs, flexible bill management solutions and payment assistance for income-eligible customers.

### Learn More

Visit [ngrid.com/ee](http://ngrid.com/ee) for details on energy efficiency programs for homes, multi-family properties, and businesses, or check [ngrid.com/heretohelp](http://ngrid.com/heretohelp) for additional payment options and tips on managing energy costs