



College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences

*Disaster Education Response Team*



## **Saving Energy in Cold Weather**

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Summer is over and you can now turn the air conditioner off. Soon, however, it will be cold. It isn't impossible to stay comfortable without spending a fortune on energy. The less you use, the less you pay!

- **First things First**

- Use your windows! Air out your house while the weather is nice. Opening windows or screen doors across from each other creates a nice cross breeze. By opening the windows during the day and closing them at night, the house will remain comfortable.
- Use your blinds. Open them to let the sun in during the day and close them to keep the cold air out.
- Install an adjustable thermostat. It is easy to do and makes it easy to adjust the temperature in your house when you are at work, home or asleep.



- **Keep it In/Keep it Out**

- Minimize trips in and out of doors, so your house stays sealed up whenever possible.
- Storm doors over outside doors helps to keep cold air from getting in.
- Caulk any cracks around windows. If you hold a lighted match near a window and the flame flickers, cold air is getting in.
- Use weather stripping around doors. If you can feel a draft under or around doors, you'll need to replace or install weather stripping to keep cold air out.



### **Not sure how to caulk or put on weather stripping?**

Home improvement stores often have classes and have knowledgeable workers to offer help or answer questions.



- Use a water heater blanket. They are very inexpensive and can save energy even with newer water heaters. It keeps the water in your tank well insulated so it won't have to reheat.
- Take vent covers off and caulk the space between and around the vent. This will keep all the heat going where you intend it to go.



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- **Warm Up**

- Put on a sweater. Your mom was right, you need to dress for the weather. No one should be wearing shorts or t-shirts in the winter. Layering your clothes (a t-shirt under a sweater, long sleeved shirt, or sweatshirt) will help you adjust your body temperature easily as you get hotter or colder.
- Do something! Moving around generates heat while it keeps you healthier. You won't feel as cold and won't need to use as much energy to heat your house if you are cleaning, dancing, playing.....
- Cook a healthy dinner. By using your stove top and oven, you put heat into your house while feeding your family. After using the oven, leave it open at least a crack to let the heat out into the house while the oven cools. Make sure that young children or pets are safely away from a hot oven, however.
- NOTHING is better than snuggling up on a cold day. Get a fuzzy blanket and curl up on the couch to relax in the evenings. The heat from your body will stay trapped in the blanket and keep you warm without using extra energy to overheat the whole house. Sharing your blanket is even warmer and more fun!
- Use blankets at night to keep warm. You should be able to turn your heat way down at night since your body heat will keep you toasty under your covers and blankets.



It is recommended that you set your thermostat to 68° or lower in the winter and 78° or higher in the summer. Each degree lower in the winter or higher in the summer can save you up to 1% on your monthly bill.

- **Your Own Personal Heater**

- Use a space heater if you are going to be spending a lot of time in an enclosed space. You can lower your heat in the rest of the house and feel comfortable with more heat focused on you.
- Make your own heat bag. Sew a square bag out of old jeans and fill it with rice or feed corn. Microwave it for a few minutes and it will hold heat for quite a while. You can put the heat bag right on your skin as you sleep or sit and it will keep you warm.
- Eat or drink something warm. Soup, hot chocolate, and tea all will warm you to the core and keep you from spending extra to heat your house.



**Be sure to not leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off and unplug it when you are not in the room and/or house.**



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