

Cold Weather Energy Saving Tips

Follow the energy-saving tips below to help seal your home and save money:

- Set your thermostat at the lowest comfortable setting, typically 68 degrees. Every degree above 68 degrees can add 3 percent to 5 percent to your heating operating costs. If you have a fossil-fuel furnace (gas, LP, oil), turn it down at night or when you are away. If you have a heat pump, set it at 68 degrees and leave it there. If a red or blue light comes on signifying “auxiliary” heat has come on, try lowering the thermostat until the light goes off.
- Refrain from using electric space heaters, as they can significantly increase your electric bill.
- Weatherize your home by sealing duct work – the number one way to conserve energy. Make sure that all ductwork is sealed at joints and intersections with foil-backed tape, mastic or silicone caulk.
- Seal off fireplaces, and never use a fireplace as a heat source for your home. Even as a supplemental heat source, the cold air introduced to a warm home through an open flue isn’t as efficient as sealing off a fireplace and using the primary source of heat.
- Lower water heater to 120-125 degrees.
- Change furnace filters every month.
- Seal doors and windows with caulking or weather-stripping.
- Close draperies at night or if sitting close to a window.
- Insulate the first three- to six-feet of hot water pipes near the water heater.
- Add an insulation blanket to your water heater.
- Check your attic’s insulation. Add more, if needed.

Extreme cold temperatures could cause your water pipes to freeze. The following tips can help you prevent them from bursting and damaging your home:

- Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- Allow more heated air near water pipes. Open kitchen cabinet doors under the kitchen sink.
- If your pipes do freeze, do not thaw them with a torch. Thaw the pipes slowly with warm air from an electric hair dryer.

For more information on energy efficiency, visit www.ncpublicpower.com. For more winter weather preparedness tips, visit www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/.