



How to Save Energy Heating Your Home

About 75 cents of every home energy dollar goes for heating your house. There are several low- and no-cost strategies you can employ to keep heating costs under control. Here's how to get started saving energy.

All heating systems

- Never use an un-vented (without an exhaust) combustion heater in your home.
- If you suspect fuel or exhaust leakage with any combustion heating system, contact your utility at once.
- A steady thermostat setting is the most energy-efficient. Appoint one person to adjust the furnace or heater thermostat.
- Select a comfortable and energy-saving temperature — 68 degrees is considered an optimum winter thermostat setting. If you feel cold at this setting your home is probably in need of air-tightening and insulation — call your utility, HRDC or the Extension Service for assistance.
- Set the thermostat back four to six degrees when 68 degrees is not necessary (6-8 hours during the night-time and during the day when the family is at work and school). For about \$75 an automatic clock thermostat can replace the conventional thermostat to regulate the time and heating demand of the household.
- Vacuum around furnace air intakes, vent registers, baseboard heater and radiators. Even a little dust can alter air flow to and from the heating system.

Forced-air furnaces

- Furnace filters should be replaced or cleaned once a month during the heating season.
- Do not block off furnace supply and return vents. For maximum efficiency furnaces need a balanced air supply. Also, draperies and furniture blocking vents can create a fire hazard.
- If furnace has outside combustion air intake check to assure that it is not blocked off.
- Check exhaust vent to make sure it has no obstructions — birds, collapsed pipe, etc..
- Have furnace checked at least every three years by a qualified serviceman.



- If heating and return ductwork run through an unheated area (crawl space or attic) insulate the ductwork with R-11 fiberglass.
- Check your heating ducts for cracks and other openings. Seal with duct mastic or contact your utility or HRDC for assistance.
- For furnace blower motors that require lubrication, oil annually. Also, clean the blower blades so that air can move more easily.

Electric baseboards and hot water radiators

- Keep clean!
- For proper air circulation and heating keep furniture and draperies away from the baseboards and radiators.
- For hot water heating systems insulate pipes running through unheated spaces.
- Place a sheet of aluminum foil or other non-flammable reflective material behind the radiator; it will reflect heat back into the room.
- To improve the efficiency of a hot-water heating system, bleed the air from your radiators once or twice a year. Turn the air valve or the key on each radiator until water comes out. Hold a bucket under the valve and remember that the water is hot. Shut the valve tightly when the water stops spurting.

For additional heating system maintenance and energy tips contact your power company or a reputable heating contractor in your area.

For More Information

For more information about energy-saving tips, contact your local utility, the Human Resources Development Council, the tribal weatherization office or the MSU Extension office in your county. For the HRDC or tribal weatherization office nearest you, call 1-800-332-2272.