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## 20 Ways to Save Money on Your Fuel Bill

Conserving energy will save you money on your fuel bills while helping save the planet for future generations. And best of all, you can do it while still staying warm and comfortable.

Visit your home center for energy-saving products.

### Energy Conservation Begins at Home

Let's face it: Staying warm enough this time of year (without wearing a parka inside the house) is expensive. With winter approaching, it's a good time to get your home ready for the cold temperatures ahead.

Check out these 20 strategies for lowering your heating bills, saving resources, and helping to preserve the planet.

1. **Wear appropriate winter clothing.** Put on a sweater (and turn down the thermostat).
2. **Harness the sun.** Open south-facing window shades and drapes during the day and close them at night.
3. **Flip a switch.** Turn off the lights when you leave a room.
4. **Give your computer a rest.** Your computer's sleep mode (if activated) will let you power it down when sitting idle -- which can save \$25 to \$75 per year in energy costs. Or simply turn the computer and monitor off when they're not in use -- as well as the printer, copier, and fax machine.
5. **Ditto with other equipment.** Unplug all your electronic toys (TVs, DVD players, VCRs, cell-phone chargers) to keep them from using electricity when they're not in use.
6. **Make your ceiling fan do the work.** Most fans have a switch that lets you reverse the motor. The resulting updraft forces warm air near the ceiling down to where it can make you and your family feel more comfortable.

Caulking around windows and doors is a low-cost solution.

### 4 More Ways to Keep Warm Air Where It Belongs

7. **Stop air movement.** Close the fireplace damper when it's not being used. Check your dryer vent cap to make sure it closes tightly when it's not being used. Use ventilating fans sparingly.
8. **Plug up the big gaps.** Seal cracks, especially around windows and doors, with caulk and weather stripping. Install storm windows.
9. **Plug up the small gaps, too.** Put foam insulators behind the faceplates for light switches and [electrical outlets](#).
10. **Add a barrier.** Install or increase the amount of insulation, paying special attention to the attic and basement where the biggest gaps and cracks are lurking.

A programmable thermostat can save you up to \$150 per year.

### 6 Smart Ideas for Your Heating System

11. **Maintain your equipment.** Dirt and neglect are the most common causes of equipment failure. So clean or change the furnace filter once a month (or as often as recommended by the filter manufacturer).
12. **Make informed choices.** Call your local utility and ask what programs are available to encourage energy efficiency (such as rebates on new furnaces).
13. **Get a professional opinion.** Schedule a checkup of your heating system with a licensed contractor.
14. **Install a programmable thermostat.** Used properly, this little gadget can save you as much as \$150 a year in energy costs. How? By scaling the temperature down when you're away and scaling it back up when you return.
15. **Use less energy heating water.** Set your water heater temperature to no more than 120 degrees.
16. **Invest in new technology.** Replace your refrigerator or water heater if either is more than 10 years old. Replace your heating and cooling system if it's old and inefficient. Buy energy-efficient windows and exterior doors. Over a period of years, the energy savings will help make up for the purchase prices.

Lighting can consume 20 percent of home energy use.



## 4 More Bright Ideas for Conserving Energy

17. **Help lightbulbs last longer.** Install dimmers in the kitchen and dining room -- it adds ambience while saving energy! Use sensors outside to turn lights on only when needed.

18. **Get rid of lightbulbs altogether.** Solar-powered outdoor fixtures provide electricity-free lighting.

19. **Switch brands.** Replace standard incandescent lightbulbs with energy-efficient ones. They cost a little more, but use less energy and last a lot longer.

20. **Remove the guesswork.** Buy Energy Star. More than 50 types of products (from lightbulbs to new houses) bear this label. It means you're buying the most energy-efficient products on the market.

[Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy](#) [Energy Star](#) [Home Energy Saver](#) [Energy-Efficient Landscaping Tips](#)

## For More Information

Get more information and inspiration about saving energy and lowering your fuel bills by visiting these Web sites.

Try out this fun interactive tool (on the Energy Star Web site) called Energy Star @ Home. You'll see a house in cross-section view, and you'll be able to click on the various rooms and features within those rooms for more information.

