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Save Money This Winter

68 quick and easy tips from Delaware.gov

Heating

1. Keep your heating equipment well tuned with periodic maintenance by a professional service rep.
2. Use kitchen, bath and other ventilating fans sparingly. You can blow away a houseful of heat in just two to three hours using ventilating fans. Turn them off when their job is complete.
3. Set your thermostat at 68 degrees F. during the day and 60 degrees F. at night. You can save 3 percent in your heating costs for every degree you reduce the temperature below 70 degrees F. for the entire heating season. Special advice for Heat Pump Owners; Heat pumps need to stay at a constant setting, unless you have a programmable electronic heat pump thermostat with adaptive recovery. Check with your heating or air conditioning contractor to determine the type of thermostat you have.
4. Turn down your thermostat at night or when you're away for more than four hours during the day. Do not turn off your heating system entirely as this may cause pipes to freeze.
5. If you have a simple open-masonry fireplace, consider installing a glass screen, a convective grate, a radiant grate or a fireplace insert. They'll help cut down on the loss of warm air through the fireplace chimney.
6. Maintain proper air circulation. Keep heating supply registers and cold-air return registers clear of draperies and furniture.
7. Clean or replace the filter in your forced-air heating system each month. Foam filters can be rinsed with water, but be sure they are dry before replacing. Fiberglass filters need to be replaced periodically.
8. Keep draperies and shades open during the day to let the sunshine in; close them at night.
9. Check the duct work for air leaks about once a year if you have a forced-air heating system. To do this, feel around the duct joints for escaping air when the fan is on. Relatively small leaks can be easily repaired by covering holes or cracks with duct tape. More stubborn problems may require caulking as well as taping.
10. Dust or vacuum radiator surfaces frequently. Dust and grime impede the flow of heat.
11. Don't place lamps or television sets near your

thermostat. Heat from these appliances is sensed by the thermostat and could cause your furnace to shut off sooner than is needed for adequate warmth.

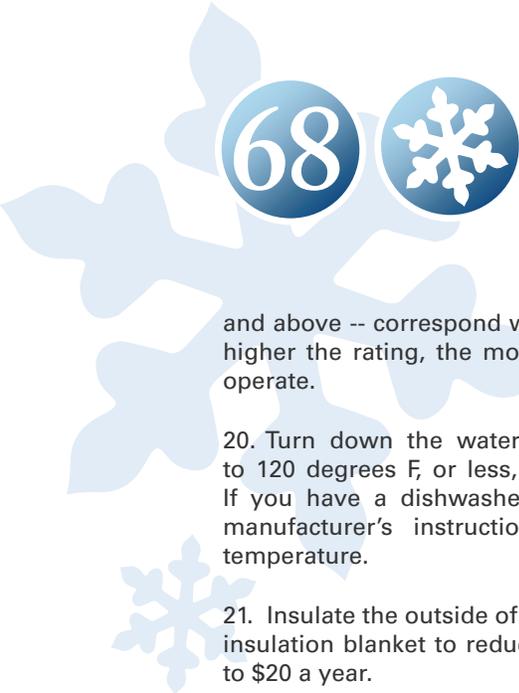
12. Dress warmly. The human body gives off heat - about 390 BTUs per hour for a man, and about 330 BTUs per hour for a woman. Dressing wisely can help you retain natural heat. Wear closely woven fabrics, which add at least a half degree in warmth. Slacks are at least a degree warmer than skirts; a light, long-sleeved sweater equals almost 2 degrees in added warmth; a heavy long-sleeved sweater adds about 5 degrees in warmth because the air between them serves as insulation to keep in more body heat.

Sealing Air Leaks

13. Insulate your attic floor or top-floor ceiling to a minimum of R-49 for these spaces. R-values or numbers indicate the resistance of an insulation material to heat flow. The higher the R-number, the more effective the insulating capability. R-values appear on the packages of insulation materials.
14. Don't insulate over eave vents or on top of recessed lighting fixtures or other heat producing equipment on the attic floor. Also, keep insulation at least 3 inches away from the sides of these types of fixtures.
15. Insulate heating and cooling ducts in unheated or uncooled areas.
16. Don't let air seep into your home through the attic access door. Check the door to make sure it is well insulated and weather stripped -- otherwise, you'll be wasting fuel to heat or cool the attic.
17. Test your windows and doors for air tightness. Add weather stripping and caulk where necessary. It's low cost and can save you 10 percent or more in annual energy costs.
18. Install storm windows. Combination screen and storm windows (triple-track glass combination) are the most convenient because they can be opened easily when there's no need to run heating or cooling equipment.

Hot Water Heater and Cooking

19. Buy a high efficiency heater. When you need a new water heater, purchase a unit with a high Energy Factor (EF) rating. EF ratings -- such as those of .91



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and above -- correspond with greater efficiency. The higher the rating, the more efficiently the unit will operate.

20. Turn down the water heater temperature dial to 120 degrees F, or less, or to the 'warm' setting. If you have a dishwasher, be sure to check your manufacturer's instructions for minimum water temperature.

21. Insulate the outside of your water heater with an insulation blanket to reduce heat loss and save \$10 to \$20 a year.

22. Use cold water rather than hot to operate your food disposal. Cold water also help get rid of grease by solidifying it, so it can then be ground up and washed away.

23. Install an aerator in your kitchen sink faucet.

24. Never boil water in an uncovered pan. Water will come to a boil faster and use less energy in a kettle or covered pan.

25. Keep range-top burners and reflectors clean. They will reflect heat better, and will save energy.

26. Match the size of the pan to the heating element. More heat will get to the pan, and less will be lost to the surrounding air.

27. Get in the habit of turning off the elements or surface units on your electric stove several minutes before completing the allotted cooking time. The heating element will stay hot long enough to finish the cooking without wasting electricity.

28. Turn off the oven five-to-ten minutes before cooking time is up and let trapped heat finish the cooking.

29. When using the oven, cook as many foods as you can at one time.

30. Avoid opening the oven door repeatedly to check food that is cooking. This allows heat to escape and results in the use of more energy to complete the cooking of food. Instead, watch the clock or use a timer.

31. Use small electric cooking appliances or ovens for small meals rather than the kitchen range of oven. They use less energy.

32. Use pressure cookers and microwave ovens if you have them. They save energy by reducing

cooking times.

33. Don't preheat the oven unless absolutely necessary, and then for no more than 10 minutes.

34. Avoid using the broiler. It's a big energy user.

35. Thaw frozen foods before cooking. It will save time and energy.

Dishwashing

36. When buying a dishwasher, look for an energy-efficient model with air power and/or overnight dry settings. These features automatically turn off the dishwasher after the rinse cycle. This can save you up to 10 percent of your dishwashing energy costs.

37. Scrape dishes and rinse with cold water from the faucet before loading them into the dishwasher. Avoid using the dishwasher's pre-rinse cycle.

38. Be sure your dishwasher is full but not overloaded when you turn it on.

39. Don't use the 'rinse-hold' on your machine for just a few soiled dishes. It uses three-to-seven gallons of hot water each time you use it.

Refrigerator/Freezer

40. Don't keep your refrigerator or freezer too cold. Recommended temperatures are 38 degrees F. to 40 degrees F. for fresh food compartments of the refrigerator; 5 degrees F. for the freezer compartment. Separate freezers for long-term storage should be kept at zero degrees F. Open the refrigerator or freezer door only when necessary, and don't hold it open any longer than necessary.

41. Regularly defrost manual-defrost refrigerators and freezers. Frost buildup increases the amount of energy needed to keep the refrigerator at its proper temperature. Never allow frost to build up more than one-quarter of an inch.

42. If possible, don't place your refrigerator or freezer in direct sunlight or near the stove.

43. Make sure the refrigerator door seals are airtight. Test them by closing the door on a piece of paper or dollar bill so it is half in and half out of the refrigerator. If you can pull the paper of dollar out easily, the hinge may need adjusting or the seal may need replacing.



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Laundry

44. Wash clothes in warm/cold water, rinse in cold.
45. Fill washers and clothes dryers but do not overload them.
46. Keep your clothes dryer's lint screen clean and its outside exhaust free of obstructions. Clean the lint screen after each load of laundry, and check the exhaust regularly. A lint screen in need of cleaning and a clogged exhaust can lengthen drying time and increase the amount of energy used.
47. Save energy by using the old-fashioned clothesline. Doing so can make clothes seem fresher and dryer than those emerging from a dryer.

Ironing

48. Remove from the dryer and hang clothes that will need ironing while they are still damp.
49. Save energy needed for ironing by hanging clothes in the bathroom while you're bathing or showering. By doing so, you can steam some wrinkles out and cut down on ironing time.
50. Avoid piecemeal ironing. If possible, iron a large load of clothes at a time.

Bathroom Energy Savers

51. Take showers rather than tub baths, but limit both your showering time and the water flow if you want to save energy.
52. Install a water-flow controller in the pipe at the showerhead. This saves a considerable amount of hot water and the energy used to produce it.
53. Install a aerator in the bathroom sink.
54. Don't let water run while shaving. This wastes hot water and the energy used to heat it.
55. Repair leaky faucets immediately.

Indoor Lighting

56. Use compact fluorescent bulbs. They produce about three to four times as much light per watt as incandescent bulbs. While compact fluorescents are initially more expensive, they last up to 10 times

longer. Compact fluorescent bulbs work best in the kitchen, bathroom or a work area. Deluxe white fluorescent bulbs produce the most pleasing light.

57. Halogen bulbs are another energy-efficient choice for indoor and outdoor lighting. They use about 25 percent less energy than traditional incandescents, and produce an intense white light, making them ideal for spot, flood and security lighting. Halogen torchieres, however, can pose a fire hazard due to the high temperatures produced by these bulbs.

58. Turn off lights in any room not being used, even if your absence will only be momentary.

59. When using incandescent bulbs, use the lowest wattage possible or convenient. In many cases, a lower wattage bulb can be substituted for the one currently being used.

60. Light-zone your home and save electricity. Concentrate lighting in reading and work areas, and where it's needed for safety, such as in stairwells. Reduce lighting in other areas, but avoid very sharp contrasts.

61. Consider installing solid-state dimmers. They make it easy to reduce lighting intensity in a room, saving energy. Most will not work with fluorescent bulbs however.

62. Use one large bulb instead of several small ones in areas where bright light is needed.

63. Socket extenders and special adapters let you use compact fluorescent bulbs in your table lamps.

64. When choosing a new lamp, buy three-way lamps. They make it easy to keep lighting levels low when intense light is not necessary, and that saves electricity. Use the high switch only for reading or other activities that require brighter light.

65. 'Long life' bulbs emit less light than a standard incandescent bulb of the same wattage. Use them only where the long-life feature may be advantageous, such as hard to reach places.

66. Turn on outdoor lights only when needed.

67. Use timers, motion detectors, heat sensors or photocell controls for light fixtures when possible.

68. Call your energy provider to find out about energy saving products and services for your home.