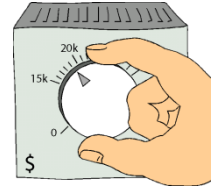


# Tips on Saving Energy (and Money!) This Winter

Lowering your use of energy means spending less on your hydro bill. And who doesn't want to save a few extra dollars these days!! Here are some tips on how to take charge of energy conservation in your home to lower your heating and hydro costs.

## Snuggle up

Whether you use electric baseboards or an oil or propane furnace, hydro is used every time your heating system kicks in. Turn the heat down as much as possible when you are sleeping or away from home. When you are home, try keeping yourself comfortable by sipping hot beverages, wearing thick socks or slippers or snuggling up with a microwavable heating pad or loved one instead.



## Don't pay to keep dust bunnies warm!

If you have rooms that you don't use, cover the windows and vents and close the doors to that room. Just be sure that you are keeping warm air flowing to areas that have water pipes to prevent frozen pipes.

## Clean filters make for easier breathing

Learn where your furnace filter is and replace it regularly to keep both you and your furnace breathing easy. Furnace filters cost anywhere from a few dollars to \$25 and higher. If you can only afford the \$4 filter, it is better than continuing to use a dirty one.



## Sunlight is important, healthy...and free!!

Keep your curtains open during sunny days. Just remember to close them again at night to reduce drafts. If you have drafty windows, consider getting a plastic insulation kit from the hardware store. It's super easy to install - you just need a hairdryer!

## Insulation is fun!

Ok. Not really fun. But it will help to keep your energy costs down. Heat loss through your ceiling can be significant. Make sure your attic is properly and adequately insulated. Call 211 for information on programs that might be able to help you with that, such as Greensavers.

Walk around the inside of your house and see if you feel any drafts. Find them and plug them!! Old rolled up towels work great to stop drafts from coming under doors. Talk to your local hardware store about other products available to help seal drafts.

## What happens in the bathroom...

Skip using the ventilation fan in winter. It is sucking out warm air!! Try naturally scented products to mask bathroom odors instead.

## Shed some light on it.

Make the switch to energy efficient lights bulbs. And only have lights on that you need. Consider lighting a few candles (with care) instead of turning on lights. Every little bit of extra heat will help and who doesn't enjoy a cozy candlelit evening once in a while! Just be sure to keep lit candles away from flammables and extinguish them when you leave the room.



## Project yourself from vampires!

Or, rather, vampire energy suckers. Don't leave small appliances (like tvs, cell phone chargers and microwaves) plugged in unless you are using them. Even when not 'on', these little buggers can be draining the energy right out of your sockets! You can also use a power bar to protect yourself against vampire energy loss.



## 7 is your lucky number!

At least, it is for winter time-of-use. Hydro rates during peak times are more than double off-peak time rates. So do all your chores (vacuuming, clothes washing and drying, showering, baking and dish-washing after 7pm and before 7am during the week or anytime during the weekends.

## Open up!

After baking up that batch of muffins, leave the oven door open to let the warm air out. Similarly, leave the bathroom door open when you shower. Higher humidity in the air will help with warmth.

## Lighten the load.

Learn your washing machine and don't overfill it with clothes. Set the appropriate water level for the size of the load and set the knob to cold for both the wash and rinse cycles.

Consider using an indoor drying rack or even a piece of unused exercise equipment to hang-dry your clothes instead of the dryer. If you must use the dryer, clean that lint filter EVERY time! Dry heavy and light fabrics separately and don't add wet items to a load that's already partly dry. If available, use the moisture sensor setting.



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