

Top 10 Winter Energy Savings Tips

Reward yourself and save energy while maintaining your home comfort-level. If these are things you do already, challenge yourself to take the next step. The following are 10 easy tips that are divided among “no-cost, low-cost, and ‘go-big’ (investment)” decisions. So, go on, give them a try! If you are looking for a bigger challenge and more ways to save, visit xcelenergy.com/savemoneyandenergy

Top 10 Winter Energy Saving Tips

No Cost:

1. **Start by setting your thermostat to 68°.** Your heating system will operate less and use less energy. Turn your thermostat down 5° at night or when leaving your home for an hour or more to save up to \$70 on energy costs each year.² For a small investment, consider purchasing a programmable thermostat to adjust your home's temperature settings automatically when you're sleeping or away.
2. **Set your water heater to 120°. It's simple.** Your water heater won't have to work so hard if it's set at a lower temperature. The temperature control settings on water heaters either indicate “low, medium, and high” or actual temperature settings. Simply consider turning down your water heater to a slightly cooler setting to reduce the amount of energy used to heat the water while still keeping the water warm enough for home use. In fact, each time you lower the temperature by 10°F you'll save 3–5% on your water heating costs. That's a savings of \$6-\$10 a year.¹ For a small investment (~ \$20) consider adding a water heater blanket to your water heater tank to insulate the tank and reduce the amount of energy used to maintain warm water in the water heater tank. Be sure to follow your manufacturer's recommendations.
3. **In the winter, to make the most of Mother Nature's sunlight by opening window coverings on south-facing windows to warm your home.** Also, consider closing window coverings in rooms that receive no direct sunlight to insulate from cold window drafts. At night, close window coverings to retain heat. Up to 15% of your heat can escape through unprotected windows, but the solar heat gain from the sun during the day can conserve valuable energy.
4. **If you have a clothes washing machine, use cold water.** According to ENERGY STAR, washing clothes in cold water will save you about \$40 a year with an electric water heater and about \$30 a year with a gas water heater³.

Low Cost:

5. **Replace your furnace or heat pump filter regularly.** Dirty filters reduce airflow, making your equipment work harder and use more energy. Replace your furnace filter monthly (unless it is a high efficiency filter designed to last several months) during the heating season to reduce heating costs by up to 5% or about \$35 a year.
6. **Install low-flow showerheads and faucets. It really helps!** 1.8 gallon per minute showerheads can reduce your hot water consumption by as much as

10%. You'll see savings up to \$6 per year for a sink faucet aerator and \$20 per year for a showerhead.

7. **Switch to compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs.** They cost a little more, but you can save about \$40 over the life of just one bulb.
8. **Weatherize your home** and save up to 10% of your heating and cooling costs. A handy homeowner can seal up holes to the outside by weather-stripping doors and sealing windows and gaps along the home's foundation.

Go Big:

9. **Insulate your home!** The easiest and most cost-effective way to insulate your home is to add insulation in the attic. Other effective places to add insulation include unfinished basement walls and crawlspaces. Insulating walls can be more complex, so check with a contractor for advice. When insulation is correctly installed *AND* the home is totally weatherized, the average home can see a savings of up to 20% of your heating and cooling costs.
10. **Purchase ENERGY STAR® appliances. A smart choice.** Appliances and electronics really contribute to your energy bill. When it is time to replace, remember items like refrigerators, washers, dryers, furnaces, TVs and computers have two price tags--purchase price and lifetime energy cost. According to **ENERGY STAR**⁴, the average homeowner spends about \$2,000 on energy bills every year. Change to appliances that have earned the ENERGY STAR rating, and you can save \$75 a year in energy costs, while saving the environment.

Bonus Tip:

Be sure to visit xcelenergy.com/energysavings for how-to advice and videos, rebates and offers, and more tips.

The suggested impacts are based on the typical residential customer natural gas usage and conditions. Individual results will vary based on a variety of factors including but not limited to energy habits, size of home and family, weather conditions, and location. Our top 10 winter energy savings tips are approximations based on the assumptions listed below.

Heating Calculation Assumptions:

Typical Residential Customer Gas Usage – per year	1000 Therms/year	\$1,000 per year
Heating Use	700 Therms/year	\$700 per year
Water Heating Use	200 Therms/year	\$200 per year
Cooking/ drying, miscellaneous	100 Therms/year	\$100 per year
Gas rate	\$1.00 /Therm	
Electric rate	\$0.10/kWh	

Sources:

¹American Council Energy Efficient Economy (<http://www.aceee.org/>) . Using a typical Colorado home as the model, a homeowner spends about \$200 (200 Th x \$1.00/Th) on water heating so an average home would save \$6 – \$10 per year.

²Resetting temperature by an average of 5° F over an 8-hour period for the year, e.g. when at work or sleeping, will save 5 - 10% (DOE nomograph and Honeywell modeling).

³Energy Star is a partnership between the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy. http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.es_at_home_tips_renters10

⁴Energy Star is a partnership between the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy. See <http://www.energystar.gov/>, "appliances" for more information.

These tips are brought to you in partnership with the Colorado Governor's Energy Office and Xcel Energy.