



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Winter Energy Conservation

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Description:

Millions of dollars are wasted each year as heated or cooled air slips through cracks and crevices in homes. Heating and electric bills can be better managed by making homes more energy efficient.

**Environmental Impacts:**

- Generating electricity or burning natural gas and home heating fuel creates air emissions.
- As weather seals age and become brittle, they can allow air to escape. Broken seals waste electricity, natural gas and home heating fuel, which is a poor use of natural resources and increases utility bills.
- Almost half of an average home's energy consumption is used for heating. Keeping a home's air inside the house with seals and insulation is vital to conserving energy.
- Professional weatherizing can decrease a home's annual heating consumption by up to 20 percent and annual energy consumption by up to seven percent.

Citizen's Role:

Annual weatherizing is a simple, low-cost way for homeowners to reduce energy consumption.

Simple things to check at the beginning of each heating season:

- Make sure that your attic hatch, crawl space and basement access doors are closed.
- Check to be sure that all upper sash and self-storing storm windows are in the fully closed position and that any locks are engaged.
- Open heating system registers and remove anything covering them, like carpets or furniture.
- Close fireplace dampers when not in use.

**Easy, no-cost things to do:**

- Turn down your heating or air conditioning two degrees or more when away or sleeping.
- Reduce your water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Wash laundry and rinse dishes in cold water.
- Take short showers.
- Unplug electronics and chargers when not in use.
- Run bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans only when needed.
- Clean clothes dryer lint traps and dryer outlet pipes.
- Use a rolled bath towel or "draft snake" to seal the bottom of drafty doors.
- In the winter, open drapes when the sun shines and close them when it doesn't.



Easy, low-cost things to do:

- Clean or replace your furnace filter regularly.
- Replace regular incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light (CFL) or light emitting diode (LED) bulbs which use electricity more efficiently and economically.
- Install shrink-wrap interior storm window kits on leaky windows.
- Plug holes and utility openings on exterior walls and ceilings with expanding foam.
- Caulk interior edges along baseboards and window trim.

Easy, moderate-cost things for do-it-yourselfers:

- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Install a water heater tank wrap if you have an older, fiberglass insulated unit, being sure to follow the manufacturer's safety guidelines. Insulate hot water pipes and ducts.
- Install proper door latches to keep doors closed securely.



Moderate-cost things that may require a technician or contractor:

- Install attic and exterior wall insulation.
- Clean and tune-up furnaces. Having a regularly serviced HVAC system is both safer and more efficient.
- Install air flow dampers for the duct system and add duct sealing.

Additional safety considerations:

- When using space heaters, never leave them unattended, never use them at night, and keep them away from furniture, draperies and rugs.
- Do not use ovens or cooking stoves as a heating source; carefully monitor open flames.
- The exhaust from petroleum-based heaters must be properly vented to keep deadly carbon monoxide from building up indoors, even in garages.
- Install, test, and maintain carbon monoxide and smoke detectors.

Agency's Role:

- Hoosiers Care is an educational effort designed to teach Hoosiers about simple daily actions that they can take to save money and the environment. Each simple step can help improve air and water quality; conserve water and energy; and, reduce waste. Each person's individual actions can add up to make a large, positive environmental change.
- Hoosiers Care is a collaborative effort among the Indiana Department of Environmental Manage, the Indiana Office of Energy Development, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor.

More Information:

- For more information about weatherization, energy conservation and other ways to help protect Hoosiers and our environment, visit the Hoosiers Care Web site at www.HoosiersCare.IN.gov or call (800) 451-6027.

