



# Winter Energy Saving Tips

For every 10 degree drop below 0°C, the average home uses 40 per cent more natural gas and 8 per cent more electricity. Take control of your energy use this winter with these simple and low-cost actions:

## ELECTRICITY

### Clean up with this tip

Energy savings can add up in more significant ways with three simple changes to your laundry routine: running the washer on cold, hanging your laundry on a drying rack or throwing a dry towel in the dryer to help your clothes dry faster.

### A bright idea

EnergyStar® certified LED bulbs use 90 per cent less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs. As old bulbs burn out, replace them with LEDs, which, in addition to using less power, also last 15x longer than incandescent bulbs.

### Enjoy the right light

Different lights have different purposes. Choose brighter bulbs for task lighting in areas where you read or do office or schoolwork. Select bulbs with lower brightness for hallways or general areas, provided they don't affect safety.

### Pull the plug on wasted power

Standby power can add up to 5 to 10 per cent of an average home's electricity use. Unplug electronics when not in use and you can translate that 10 per cent to savings you can use for something else.

### Join the slow food movement

Preparing meals in a slow cooker instead of on the stove is a great way to save energy – it's also super convenient. Plus, making stews, chilis or other winter comfort foods in larger batches means leftovers that can be easily warmed in the microwave, which also uses far less energy than your stove.

### Switch it off

Lighting can account for up to 10 per cent of your electricity costs, and it's easy to overlook, especially during the longer nights of winter. So, taking that extra step to turn off lights when not in use can make a real difference, and if you forget to shut the lights off, timers and sensors can take care of that for you.

### Air it out

It's dry during an Alberta winter, so why not use it to your advantage? Turn off the heat dry function on your dishwasher and let your dishes air dry. At the end of the wash cycle, open the dishwasher door and you'll be surprised by how fast the moisture evaporates. Doing this can cut dishwasher energy use 15 to 50 per cent, depending on the machine.



## NATURAL GAS

### A seal of approval

Over time, any home will develop gaps that let cold air in and warm air escape. Sealing up obvious areas around windows, or adding weather-stripping around exterior doors, can help save up to 30 per cent on your heating use. And adding gaskets to electrical outlets, stopping chimney drafts or sealing dryer and fan vents can help even more.

### Don't overset it and forget it

Heating accounts for 63 per cent of home energy use – and even a difference of two degrees (from 20 to 22) can add up. On cold days, it might be tempting to set your thermostat high, but your home won't heat up quicker.

### Hello sunshine

Alberta towns and cities rank amongst the sunniest in Canada. Make the sun work for you in winter by opening your blinds and curtains during the day. This will allow the sun's energy to help heat your home and take some of the load off your furnace. At night, close your blinds and curtains to help keep the heat from escaping too quickly.

### Give yourself some space heating

Even though it can increase your electricity use, selective use of a space heater is a better way than heating your whole home if you're only typically in one room.

### Be humble with the humidity

Humidity helps minimize itchy skin and static cling in dry Alberta winters. Too much humidity can actually make you feel colder because the moisture draws heat away from your body. If you use a humidifier, keep humidity between 30 to 40 per cent, which should keep you comfortable, without making you reach for the thermostat to deal with a chill.

### Pull back the covers

Take a look around your house and make sure that furniture, rugs or other items have not been placed over your vents. Air flow is one key for heating efficiency. If a vent must be under furniture, purchase an air deflector, which will send the warm air out into the room.

### Don't heat your heater

Take a look and make sure that there isn't a vent or heating source close to your thermostat. This will cause your thermostat to misread the true temperature in your house and result in you turning up the heat higher than needed to compensate.