



WINTER WISE

Easy ways to be more Winter Wise with your energy usage

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:

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.

Pull back the covers

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

Don't heat your heater

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.

Be humble with the humidity

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

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 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.

Don't overset it and forget it

Space 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.

ELECTRICITY

Air it out



It's dry during a Calgary 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 – 50 per cent, depending on the machine.

Be a real turn 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. Taking that extra step to turn off lights when not in use can make a real difference, and if you can't always remember to flip the switch when you leave a room, timers and sensors can take care of efficiency for you.

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.

Be a bright bulb



Energy Star 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 incandescents.

Be a smarter bulb



Different lights have different purposes. Choose brighter bulbs for task lighting in areas where you read or do detailed work. 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 – 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 put to use for something else.

Clean up with this tip



Finding change in pockets is great, but 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.

enmax.com/winterwise

WINTER WISE

