



Energy Management for Home

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For more energy information, go to <http://energy.tennessee.edu>.

Saving Energy

In older homes, about 54 cents of every home energy dollar goes for heating your house. There are several low- and no-cost strategies you can employ to keep heating costs under control. Here's how to get started saving energy.

All heating systems

Never use an unvented (without an exhaust) combustion heater in your home.

- If you suspect fuel or exhaust leakage with any combustion heating system, contact a heating contractor at once.
- The simplest and easiest way to save money this winter is to turn down your thermostat. A setting of 68°F during the day is both comfortable and economical. Even lower is possible, if you wear warm clothes. You can also save money by turning your thermostat down a few degrees when you are away from the home during the day.
- Many people find that a setting as low as 55°F at night is both energy saving and refreshing. If that is too cold, find the lowest setting possible while still maintaining your comfort. With gas forced air furnaces you can expect to save one percent on your energy bill for every degree you turn your thermostat down at night. If you want to wake up to a warm and toasty house, you can invest in a programmable thermostat, available from hardware stores for less than \$75. These thermostats automatically lower and raise the temperature setting at the times you specify. If you want more than one time setting or different weekend settings, pick a thermostat with that feature. Of course, settings for those with infants or elderly persons cannot be as low and you should always make sure that pipes sensitive to freezing are not at risk.
- If you have a boiler, you can still save money by turning your thermostat down. Since the water in a boiler takes time to return to a temperature suitable for heating your home, you may not be able to lower the thermostat as much as with a forced air furnace.
- Vacuum around furnace air intakes, vent registers, baseboard heaters and radiators. Even a little dust can alter air flow to and from the heating system.



Electric baseboards and hot water radiators

- Keep them clean!
- For proper air circulation and heating keep furniture and draperies away from the baseboards and radiators.
- For hot water heating systems insulate pipes running through unheated spaces.
- Place a sheet of aluminum foil or other non-flammable reflective material behind the radiator; it will reflect heat back into the room.
- To improve the efficiency of a hot-water heating system, if it is possible bleed the air from your radiators once or twice during the heating season. Turn the air valve or the key on each radiator until water comes out. Hold a bucket under the valve and remember that the water is hot. Shut the valve tightly when the water stops spurting.

