



Winter energy tips for apartment and condo residents

FACT SHEET

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Keeping your apartment warm and comfortable this winter doesn't mean spending more on your utility bills. Reducing your heating needs and controlling your thermostat temperature settings will help you keep your energy costs down without sacrificing comfort.

WINTER ENERGY COSTS

Heating your apartment or condo is your biggest energy cost during the winter. Paying attention to a few details will help you manage those costs—and be more comfortable.

Keep the heat in

Spend your money keeping yourself warm instead of wasting energy heating the outdoors.

- If you have storm windows, make sure they are completely closed.
- Install plastic window film kits on windows that are leaky or that don't have storms.
- Install covers on window and through-the-wall air conditioners.
- If you have a fireplace, close the damper when you're not using it.
- Pull your shades or close your drapes at night (but leave them open on east, south and west windows during the day for solar heating).

If you are renting and your apartment is too hot, don't just open a window—work with your landlord to solve the problem. Helping your landlord save on heating will also save you money. Remember, you pay for your heat either directly or through your rent, so don't throw that money out the window!

Control the temperature and humidity

The temperature at which you set the thermostat affects how much it costs to heat your apartment or condo. Regularly lowering your thermostat will save you money. Lowering the normal setting (all day, all night, every day) one degree saves three percent on your monthly heating bill. Two degrees will save six percent. You can save another one percent for every degree that you lower your thermostat for each 8-hour period you're asleep or away at work.

- Set your thermostat no higher than 72°F when people are home.
- Lower your thermostat to 65°F or less when you are sleeping or when no one is home.



DON HYNEK

- If you have baseboard heat, turn down the units in unused rooms.
- If you are a condo owner and have your own furnace, make sure it is energy efficient (90 percent AFUE* or higher). If it isn't, consider replacing it with a high efficiency unit. Also, keep your furnace filters clean.
- And remember: the thermostat is not like the gas pedal on your car—turning it to the highest (or even to a higher) setting does not warm you up any faster.

During the winter you'll feel warmer if the air in your home is not too dry. Maintaining the relative humidity between 20 percent and 40 percent can let you lower the thermostat setting without making you feel cold.

MYTH Setting back the thermostat makes the furnace work harder when you raise the thermostat back to a comfortable temperature. You really don't save energy.

FACT You save energy because your furnace uses less to maintain the lower temperature. The longer your house stays at the lower temperature, the more energy you save.

*AFUE = annual fuel utilization efficiency

COMPARE INCANDESCENT AND HALOGEN BULBS TO CFLS				
TYPE	LUMENS (BRIGHTNESS)	RATED LIFE	ANNUAL ELECTRIC COST*	YOUR SAVINGS
60 W incandescent	890	1,500 hours	\$10.51	
15 W compact fluorescent	900	10,000 hours	\$2.63	\$7.98
75 W incandescent	1,180	750 hours	\$13.14	
20 W compact fluorescent	1200	10,000 hours	\$3.50	\$9.64
300 W halogen (commonly used in torchieres)	3,200	2,000 hours	\$52.56	
65 W compact fluorescent torchiere	4,200	10,000 hours	\$11.39	\$41.17

*ANNUAL ELECTRIC COST IS BASED ON AN ELECTRIC RATE OF 8 CENTS PER KWH AND 6 HOURS OF DAILY USE.



OTHER PLACES TO SAVE ENERGY

Water heating

Use a standard meat thermometer to test the water temperature at your kitchen sink. If it is higher than 120° F, you are spending more than you need to for hot water. Water that is hotter than 120°F is a burn hazard, especially to children and older people. If you have access to your water heater, lower the temperature setting, or have your landlord do it. Lowering the temperature setting 10°F will shave 3 percent to 5 percent off your water heating costs.

A one-person household uses 20 to 35 gallons of hot water per day. A family of four uses 50 to 80 gallons. To reduce your hot water use:

- Have the landlord fix leaky or dripping water faucets—a leak of one drop a second on a hot water faucet can waste as much as 48 gallons a week of hot water.
- Install a low-flow showerhead if yours uses more than three gallons per minute (if it fills a 1-gallon jug in 20 seconds or less).
- Wash clothes in cold water when possible and always use the cold-water rinse cycle.

Appliances

Refrigerators

They use the most energy of all of your appliances. Keep refrigerator energy use down by:

- Keeping the refrigerator's fresh food compartment at 37°F to 40°F and the freezer compartment at 0°F to 5°F.
- Regularly defrosting manual-defrost refrigerators and freezers. Don't let more than a quarter of an inch of frost build up.
- Replacing dried, cracked or broken door gaskets. If you rent, have your landlord replace them.

Dishwashers

To reduce the amount of hot water used for dishwashing, run the dishwasher only when it is fully loaded. Use your dishwasher's energy-saving features (partial load setting, no heat drying cycle) if it has them.

Lighting

- Use natural light whenever possible.
- Replace incandescent bulbs with ENERGY STAR® qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) in fixtures that you use for more than four hours a day.
- Replace halogen torchiere lamps with ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent lamps.
- Turn off lights when you are not using them.

LEARN MORE

focusonenergy.com

Contact Focus on Energy to learn more about smart energy choices.

energystar.gov

This site provides information on energy efficient products that meet ENERGY STAR standards. The product information pages link to a calculator letting you compare operating costs and energy use of ENERGY STAR qualified products with non-ENERGY STAR units. You can use this site to compare costs for appliances such as air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes washers and lighting products.

www.eren.doe.gov/consumerinfo/forhome.html

The Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network links to fact sheets on energy efficiency and renewable energy for your home.

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