



Reduce Your Energy Bill During Winter Months

Southern Pine wants you to save on your energy costs by reducing consumption in the winter months as much as possible. Heating costs account for approximately 30 percent of the average home's electricity bills. These tips can help you save energy, save money, and stay comfortable during the cold winter months ahead.

Take Advantage of Heat from the Sun

- Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home.
- Close curtains at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

Cover Drafty Windows

- Use a heavy-duty, transparent plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the cold winter months. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.
- Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.

Adjust the Temperature

- When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. Southern Pine recommends no higher than 68 degrees.
- When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10° to 15° for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills. A smart or programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature.

Find and Seal Leaks

- Seal the air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes ("plumbing penetrations"), gaps around chimneys and recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cabinets and closets.
- Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.

Maintain Your Heating Systems

- Schedule service for your heating system.
- Furnaces and heat pumps: Replace your filter once a month or as needed. Find out more about maintaining furnaces or boilers and heat pumps.

Reduce Heat Loss from the Fireplace

- Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney.

- **If you never use your fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue.**
- **Check the seal on the fireplace flue damper and make it as snug as possible.**

These cost-saving measures will reduce your energy consumption and, in turn, your energy bill. For more tips, visit www.southernpine.coop.