

Homeowner Prep Checklist for Cold Winter Weather



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Winter is coming and, along with it, will come its cold temperatures.

As temperature fluctuates between seasons, so too does energy usage. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), nationwide residential electricity use can vary by as much as 67 billion kilowatt hours (kWh) between its low point in either spring or autumn and its high point in winter. By contrast, commercial electricity use varies by about 31 billion kWh annually, and industrial energy use by only 18 billion kWh.

The wintertime energy spike is driven by an increase in heating, the single largest user of energy in a home. Luckily, there are a number of simple and easy steps that your customers can take now in order to help conserve energy and keep warm this winter.

Winter Weather Preparation Tips

- Have a **home energy audit** or heat loss report performed, either by yourself or a professional. This will give you an idea of where heat, and how much of it, is escaping your home.
- Insulate spaces, such as crawl spaces and attics, that are not already insulated — these are hotspots for heat loss. Standard fiberglass batt insulation is effective and installs easily.
- Replace any **air filters** in your heating system to improve both air quality and the energy efficiency of your system.
- Hire a technician to clean and inspect your furnace or heat pump to help ensure that it is working at full efficiency.
- Insulate** your hot water heater with a specialized wrap to reduce the energy it uses.
- Insulate hot water pipes to keep the water hotter for longer. Water pipe foam insulation tubes are inexpensive and easy to install.
- Move large pieces of furniture from in front or on top of heating vents so your room, not your sofa, is heated.
- Reverse your ceiling fan — this creates an updraft which forces risen warm air back down into a room.
- Seal all duct joints and seams with **mastic** or specialized **duct tape to prevent warm air from leaking out before it ever reaches your rooms.**
- Use specialized duct insulation to insulate all ducts after sealing them to further reduce heat loss.
- Insulate outdoor electrical sockets by backing them with foam gasket tape — heat can escape from even the smallest gaps.
- Install storm windows or, if possible, consider upgrading to energy efficient or ENERGY STAR® rated models. Windows are the worst heat loss offenders in a home.
- Your chimney is a direct passage to the cold outdoor air, so check your fireplace damper to ensure it closes fully. Hire a professional chimney cleaner if you plan on using the fireplace, or if it is required for proper damper functioning in an unused fireplace.
- Weatherize windows and doors, primary sources of leaking heat:
 - Fill outdoor gaps between the frames of doors or windows and siding with **caulks or other sealants.**
 - Use glazing putty to secure loose window panes into the frame.
 - Install **weatherstripping, sweeps, and door bottoms** to prevent head loss in gaps between doors and door frames.

Learn More

Weatherizing a home is extremely important to energy savings. When performed properly, these and other easy weatherization steps can save a household an estimated 40% of their cold weather energy use.

To learn more about how your customers can weatherize their homes for the coming winter, download our free [Energy Savings White Paper](#) or contact AM Conservation Group today.

FREE **Energy Savings White Paper**

