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Get Energy Smart This Winter

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Temperatures have dropped quickly and the long winter months are upon us. This time of year, we spend more time indoors with the thermostat turned

up. Make sure that warmth is sticking around with these energy saving tips.

Start by simply changing your furnace filters. Dirt buildup in your filter can cause your furnace to work harder and less efficiently. If you haven't had your furnace serviced in a while, it is time to call a qualified HVAC company to make sure your furnace is running at its best. You can take it one step further by asking the HVAC technician to inspect your duct systems. Precious heat can escape through leaks in the duct joints especially those that may go unnoticed in an attic or crawlspace.

On every ceiling fan there is a switch that reverses the direction of the blades. Reversed fans kept on a low setting will push warm air lower in the room and force it to recirculate. This is especially helpful for vaulted or particularly high ceilings.

According to the US Department of Energy, simple air leaks can cost you 5% – 30% of your heating budget. Thermal leak detectors can be purchased for around \$25. Consider this investment to find those pesky leaks around windows, doors, vents and more. Use caulking, weather stripping, or even a simple door draft stopper to stop the heat loss.

A well-insulated house will improve energy efficiency in all seasons. Be careful as insulation can be tricky. Poorly installed insulation can actually make efficiency worse. It is important to know how much insulation you have and what kind. A local insulation installer can help you with an efficiency audit. For more information, visit the Department of Energy website.

<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/weatherize/insulation>

Today's technology has taken the programmable thermostat to a whole new level. Smart thermostats can easily be installed, adjustable from your smart phone anywhere you are, and can even learn your habits to increase energy efficiency. If you already have one, double check the settings to make sure it is adjusted properly.

