



ENERGY SAVINGS IN HOME HEATING

Residential heating consumes about 11% of the nation's energy budget...as well as a big share of the operating budget for the average family's home. Energy conservation is an important part of everyone's responsibility. Residential gas heating equipment is already relatively efficient...as much as 80% efficient...but other factors enter into home heating costs. Things you might not usually associate with heating have an effect on your monthly fuel bill. Here are 10 ways to get maximum home comfort while reducing fuel usage:

1. Turn thermostat down during daylight hours to reduce fuel consumption. A thermostat set at 70 degrees instead of 76 degrees can save on your fuel bills. Set it a few degrees lower at night to save even more. A clock thermostat automatically sets thermostats for daytime and nighttime requirements.
2. Adjust your individual wall register openings correctly. Prevent your heating system from working overtime to keep one room warm while causing others to be too warm or too cold.
3. Keep heat in the house as long as you can. The difference between proper and inadequate home insulation can easily be 40% of your fuel bill. Storm windows can reduce heat loss through windows by as much as 50% and cut the difference between room air temperature and window temperature. Plant evergreen trees as a windbreak to help reduce heat loss from your house.
4. Reduce amount of cold air infiltrating into the house. Caulking and weatherstripping around doors, windows, room air conditioners, and pull-down type attic doors keep cold air out, lessening the workload of your furnace.
5. Seal and insulate ductwork running through unheated areas such as attic or basement. Insulation improves heating and cooling efficiency, minimizes condensation problems in cooling system. Sealing ductwork prevents entry of moisture and insects into airstream.
6. Raise the humidity level. When indoor relative humidity is too low, the body readily loses moisture to the dry air in the form of perspiration. That makes even a warm room seem chilly. With a higher indoor relative humidity, there is less body moisture lost, and a room seems comfortable even at a lower temperature.
7. Lower your thermostat to a minimum level when you are away from home for 24 hours or more. This keeps fuel use down, yet the house can be brought back to comfortable temperature with minimum furnace operation.
8. Don't block registers with draperies or furniture. This obstructs the flow of warm air to the interior of the room.
9. Turn off furnace pilot light during the summer (furnaces with continuously burning pilot light only.) This saves about 24 cubic feet of natural gas per day and eliminates condensation of flue gas products - a major cause of heat exchanger corrosion. When the furnace is part of a cooling system, elimination of the pilot flame could save about 3200 watt-hours of electricity per day (the amount of energy required by the cooling system to overcome heat generated by the pilot light.)
10. Plant deciduous (leaf-shedding) trees around the southern and western sides of the house. They allow winter sun into windows, keep summer sun out, and thus ease the workload of heating and cooling equipment.