

Checklist to Improve Energy Efficiency in Your Home

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Actions to Save Money and Energy

To Do

- 1 Arrange a yearly maintenance check on your furnace by an expert to ensure it's working at peak efficiency for the winter ahead. Clean or replace furnace filters every three months to improve efficiency and air quality.
- 2 Check for drafts around windows, doors, and electrical outlets. Installing an outlet and switch sealer kit will prevent cold air from entering. Caulk or seal drafts – they can account for up to 25% of total annual heating costs. Consider using heat-shrink plastic to cover windows that you are unlikely to open.
- 3 Check your insulation. The attic and basement are the first places to consider for more insulation because these areas can represent as much as 15% to 30% of your home's overall heating and cooling losses.
- 4 Install a smart thermostat. It uses sensors and Wi-Fi technology to maximize your home comfort and energy savings. Recommended settings for heating are 20°C (68°F) during the day, 18°C (64°F) for sleeping, and 16°C (61°F) when you are away from home.
- 5 Properly humidified air feels warmer and allows you to turn your thermostat down. During the heating season, the relative humidity in your home should be no higher than 30% with no condensation on your windows. In bitter cold weather, the humidity will need to fall below 30% to prevent condensation on windows.
- 6 Keep vents and air returns free of obstructions. Furniture, dust or pet hair can block vents, reducing airflow and the efficiency of the furnace.
- 7 If you have a wood-burning fireplace, be sure to keep the damper closed when it's not in use. This helps prevent cold outside air from coming down the flue, and warm inside air from rising out of it.
- 8 Replace Incandescent light bulbs with more efficient options. LED lights last 25% longer than incandescent and are 75% more efficient.
- 9 Save on your water-heating bill by insulating at least the first two metres of the hot water pipe, and the first metre of the cold water pipe that extends from your hot water tank. Wrap an insulating blanket around your electric water heater, and if possible, drain water through the spigot at the bottom to remove sediment that reduces its energy efficiency. Note: It's a good idea to have an expert technician do a maintenance check on your hot water heater. When you replace your old electric water heater, consider installing a tankless natural gas water heater.
- 10 Fix leaky taps. One drop of hot water per second for a month adds up to sixteen steamy baths! Install energy-efficient showerheads and you'll use less gas to heat your water. Commit to shorter showers. The average shower is eight minutes. Reducing this by a minute or two can make a big difference.
- 11 Wash clothes in cold water; the energy savings from switching to cold can be significant and will help preserve the colour of your clothes.
- 12 Run your dishwasher when it's fully loaded and during off-peak times. Use the 'energy' saver cycle if it has one.



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