

December 2014 EnergyWiseSM Tip: Holiday Heat

Oh, the weather outside is frightful, but the fire is so delightful. That is, unless your festivities and habits are driving your heating bills through the roof. Then, it's not so pleasant when you get your utility bills after the holidays.

It's common to blame holiday lighting for an increase in your electric bill during the winter months, but many other factors, including heating your home, affect your monthly bill. As you probably intend to keep toasty this holiday season, you should keep energy efficiency in mind. Here are a few efficiency tips during the holidays and throughout the winter season:

Sun Heat – It's Free!

Open curtains on south-facing windows during sunny days to allow sunlight to heat your home naturally. Be sure to close them at night to reduce heat loss back through the windows.

Drafty Windows + Plastic Film = Comfort

Ensure windows are tightly closed, locked, and then secure clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the winter. Be sure the plastic is tightly sealed around the entire perimeter of frame to help reduce infiltration. Most hardware stores carry inexpensive kits for this purpose.

Blankets for Windows

Install insulating drapes or shades on all windows to further reduce heat loss.

Dial Up the Right Number

Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable, when you are home and awake. At most, 68°F is recommended. When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat down. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to adjust your home's temperature to its most efficient range.

Furnace Tune Up

Schedule service for your heating system, if necessary. Find out what maintenance is required to keep your heating system operating efficiently. Replace your furnace filter once a month or as needed.

Old Flames

If you have a wood or pellet stove, or fireplace, clean the flue regularly to ensure your home is heated safely and efficiently. After holiday festivities, do not burn used wrapping paper as it produces little heat but may possibly release toxic fumes. Close the flue tightly when not in use.

Cold Duct

Un-insulated and leaky ducts in unconditioned spaces such as attics and crawl spaces can lose 10-30% of the energy used to heat your home. Fortunately, sealing and insulating is fairly easy and does not require any special carpentry skills.

Your local utility and Nebraska Public Power District wish you and yours the very best during the holidays. Part of our commitment to providing you outstanding customer service includes helping you make the most of the energy you use throughout the year. For more ideas on how

you can make your home or business EnergyWiseSM, contact your local utility or visit www.nppd.com.