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November 2016

Fall Energy Efficiency Tips

As cooler weather is quickly approaching so will rising utility bills. Following is a list of some energy saving tips for the fall and winter seasons.

1. Seal all leaks around doors, windows, and electrical outlets.

Heat from your home escapes out of these cracks. By sealing these leaks, you can save tremendously on your heating bill, and the cost of materials to seal these leaks is very minimal.

2. Fall is the best time to clean the chimney and get vent systems checked.

Pipes must be properly connected and there should be no signs of rust or damage.

3. It's also time to remove the window air conditioners for the winter.

If they must stay in place, be sure to seal them with caulk or tape and cover them with an airtight, insulated jacket.

4. If you are thinking of replacing your furnace, consider getting one that is 90% or higher in efficiency.

Replacing your old furnace with a new, more energy efficient one can save up to 30% of your heating costs. Remember to look for the ENERGY STAR label.

5. Is your insulation up to par?

For a minimal cost, you can upgrade the insulation in your exterior walls, crawlspaces, basements and attics. Insulation may come in batts or loose fill, which can be blown into place and get those hard to reach places.

6. Did you know you can lose heat through your electrical receptacles, light switches and lighting fixtures?

Consider installing foam gaskets behind these receptacles and switches or install plastic security caps to reduce heat loss.

7. If you have single-pane windows, add storm windows to cut heat loss by up to 50%.

Better still, replace single-pane windows with energy-efficient double pane windows with inert argon gas fill, warm-edge spacers, and low-e coating.

8. Make sure your heating vents are not blocked by furniture or drapes and the dampers are open.

Vacuum out dust and pet hair from the warm air registers and the cold air returns so your furnace runs more efficiently. Change your filter monthly or as needed.

9. It's time to take a look at your water heater.

If its surface is hot or even warm to the touch, some of the energy used to heat the water is being wasted. Wrap the heater in an insulating blanket. Be sure to check your user manual and labels on the tank first.

10. If your building a new home, make sure you place the water heater as close as possible to the kitchen, laundry room, and bathrooms.

Heat is lost as it moves through long pipes, so the closer the unit is to these rooms, the more money you could save.

11. Did you know that if you never run out of hot water, then you have probably set your water heater thermostat too high?

Before winter arrives, set your thermostat between 110 degrees F and 120 degrees F.