

Tips to Lower Your Heat Bill

Heating is the biggest part of a Minnesotan's home energy bill. There are several free (or very inexpensive) things you can do to lower your heating costs.

The Thermostat

- You've heard it before, but the savings make it bear repeating: Turn down the thermostat. Reduce the temperature from 70° to 65° while you're home, and turn it down to 60° or 55° while you're away or asleep, and cut your heating bill by about 25 percent.
(To explain the potential savings by way of example: If you currently keep your thermostat at 70° and spend \$800 a year to heat your home-you could save around \$150 to \$250 by reducing your normal setting to 65 and setting it back an additional 10° at night and while you're away.)
- Close a bedroom door and heat register during the day, or close off an unused room entirely, and save about \$50 a year.
- Open shades to let in the sun's warmth-close them at night to keep heat inside.
- Lock windows. It tightens the seal to stop heat leaks.

Furnace Maintenance

- With a warm air system, clean or replace the furnace filter every month during the heating season. An even slightly dirty filter will block air flow and send heat up the chimney instead of into your home.
- Keep easily accessible mechanical parts clean if you know how to first turn off the electricity to the furnace for safety purposes.