



ICC Offers Consumers Winter Energy Savings Tips

Springfield, IL – The war on Ukraine and supply chain constraints are key drivers of rising energy costs globally and here in Illinois. To keep your home warm this winter and save money by reducing energy costs, the Illinois Commerce Commission is offering a few tips to help homeowners prepare for freezing temperatures.

- Install smart thermostats that automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings.
- Check with your utility company about enrolling in time-based electricity rates programs to reduce energy usage during peak hours or to learn about energy efficiency services they may offer.
- Set your thermostat at 68 degrees while you are awake and home, lower at night and when you are away.
- Water heating accounts for 14-18% of homeowner's utility bill. Turn down your water heater to 120 degrees to save money.
- Cover the inside of drafty windows with heavy plastic and seal tightly to the frame to avoid air infiltration. Check exterior door and window frames for leaks, use caulk or weather stripping to seal. Use insulated curtains, shades, or other energy-efficient window treatments.
- Schedule a maintenance service call for your heating system. Be sure to change filters on furnace and heat pumps at least once a month. For wood and pellet-burning heaters, clean the flue vent regularly, and clean the interior of appliances with a wire brush.
- If you have an older water heater tank, consider adding an insulated jacket or blanket. Insulating a water tank can save between 7 – 16% in water heating costs.
- On sunny days, allow natural light to filter in south-facing windows to help warm your home. Reverse the direction of ceiling fan blades to circulate warm air.
- If you have a fireplace, keep the damper closed unless a fire is burning. If using the fireplace, close off the room, and if possible, open a nearby window slightly, and lower your thermostat setting between 50-55 degrees.
- Lower holiday decorating costs by using LED holiday light strings.

If you are interested in learning more about ways to save, visit the U.S. Department of Energy website at: <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver>. If you are struggling to afford your utility bill, the application window for enrolling in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is now open until May 31, 2023, or until funding is exhausted.

Visit the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunities (DCEO) [website](#) to learn more about LIHEAP and the Community Services Block Grant program to help eligible Illinoisans cover costs related to utility bills. Click [here](#) for more information about how to apply for LIHEAP.

Additionally, the ICC has a dedicated [Utility Assistance webpage](#) that includes information about winter disconnection prohibition rules in Illinois, bill payment assistance programs, and energy efficiency

savings as well as contact information for the state's largest-regulated utilities and the utility assistance programs they offer customers.

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