



## WARMING YOUR HOME IN WINTER

### FAST FACTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Winter is when we're likely to stay indoors and use extra power to heat our homes. The good news is that it's possible to use **less power** and keep bills down and still stay warm and comfortable during the colder months.

Households use around one third of all the electricity consumed in NSW. The less electricity we use, the lower the impact on our environment – and the **lower our power bills** will be!

There are many simple actions we can do around our homes in winter to reduce our power bills, while still keeping warm.

Most of these actions don't cost anything. The ones that do cost are more energy efficient and can save money in the long run by reducing power bills.

### TURN DOWN THE HEAT AND THE BILLS

- Keep your heater's thermostat set between 18°C-21°C in winter. Decreasing your temperature setting by just one degree can reduce your power bill for heating by up to 15 per cent. Use a thermometer to see how warm your rooms are – you should be comfortable in winter clothes, not in shorts and t-shirts!
- Put on some extra layers – wearing warmer clothing or putting an extra blanket on your bed keeps your power costs down and keeps you cosy too.
- Install a timer or program your heater's thermostat so it turns itself off when it's not needed.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Turning your heating down by a few degrees could reduce your power bill by up to \$150\* every year.

Around a third of your home's heat can escape through doors, windows, walls and ceilings. **Draught-proof your home** to heat it more efficiently.

### CLOSE THE DOOR

Saving power at home can be as easy as closing a door! Closing areas of your home that aren't in use, like storage areas or spare bedrooms, is an easy way to avoid wasting power and money on excess heating.

- Use **curtains**, particularly thick ones, to reduce heat loss on winter evenings. Just by closing your curtains you can save around \$55\* a year. During the day, let the natural light and sunshine stream through your windows to naturally heat your home.
- Block off unused fireplaces during winter to prevent heat escaping.
- Consider installing double glazed windows. These are two sheets of glass separated by 12mm to 20mm with a pocket of air between them. This may cost more, but it is a highly effective way to stop heat escaping in winter.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Closing off any rooms that don't need heating can save up to \$75\* a year on your power bill.

Sealing draughts and gaps around external doors and windows can save up to \$20\* a year on your power bill.

Keeping curtains and external blinds closed at night and on cloudy days keeps the cold out and the warmth in; closing curtains can save around \$55\* a year.

### INSULATE YOUR HOME – AND YOUR WALLET

**Insulation** is one of the best ways to keep your house warmer in winter and cooler in summer – reducing the need to spend power and money on heating and air conditioning.

- Having ceiling insulation professionally installed is the easiest and most cost-effective way to keep your home warm in winter.
- Up to 35 per cent of heat loss and gain from a house can be through a ceiling that's not insulated, which means you could be paying much more than necessary to heat and cool your home.
- There are two types of insulation on the market – bulk and reflective. Bulk insulation is designed to trap pockets of still air within its structure preventing heat



There are simple things we can all do that will lower power bills and reduce our impact on the environment.

loss/gain. Reflective insulation reflects heat away from its surface and works most efficiently when there is enough room in the roof cavity. The best insulation for you will depend on the climate you are living in and the design of your home.

- Choose a reputable insulation installer. For a safe and effective result, ceiling insulation should be installed according to the appropriate Australian Standard (AS3999 – installation of bulk insulation) or the insulation instructions provided by the manufacturer on reflective insulation. Check with the installer that they have covered the whole roof area. Even if only 5 per cent of the area is left uninsulated, up to 50 per cent of the potential benefits may be lost.
- In winter, your heating costs can increase by up to 25 per cent because of draughts. If you are considering upgrading or installing insulation in your home, draught-proof your home first to get the best result. Even if you cannot insulate (e.g. if you are renting), draught-proofing will help heat your home more efficiently.
- Check doors, windows, fireplaces, air outlets, vents and skirting boards for gaps and choose from the wide range of draught-proofing products to seal areas.

For more on insulation visit [savepower.nsw.gov.au](http://savepower.nsw.gov.au) and download our [Insulation fact sheet](#).

**DID YOU KNOW?** A well insulated home is about 10°C warmer in winter and about 7°C cooler in summer. This can save you up to \$125\* per year on your electricity bill.

## HOT WATER SYSTEMS

Electric hot water systems account for about a third of a household's power use. Switching from an electric hot water heater to [solar](#), [heat pump](#) or [gas](#) can make big savings to your bill.

- A [solar hot water system](#) uses the sun's energy to heat the water and can meet 50-90 per cent of your household's hot water needs.
- A solar hot water system can be tailored to your family's needs. Choose an appropriate tank capacity and number of panels. Make sure your supplier gets the right size.
- Heat pumps are an efficient type of electric storage water heater that draws heat from the air, water or ground to heat water – using about one quarter to one third of the energy of a standard electric storage system. They work best when installed where there is good air flow.
- Solar or heat pump systems have a longer life expectancy than most electric systems, giving you greater savings in the long run.
- If you're buying a new gas hot water heater, compare systems using the [Gas Energy Rating label](#). Aim for a system with the highest number of stars.

To find out the best system for you and to get the best out of your hot water system visit [savepower.nsw.gov.au](http://savepower.nsw.gov.au) and download our [Hot Water](#) and [Solar Hot Water](#) fact sheets.

Households who replace an existing electric storage hot water system with a solar or heat pump hot water system may be eligible for a rebate under the [Renewable Energy Bonus Scheme](#). Find out if you are eligible by visiting [www.climatechange.gov.au/government/programs-and-rebates/solar-hot-water.aspx](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/government/programs-and-rebates/solar-hot-water.aspx)

Join the NSW homes that have pledged to save power by using the Power Pledge tool at [savepower.nsw.gov.au](http://savepower.nsw.gov.au)

Choose from a list of energy efficient actions you can do to save power, money and our environment. Use the Power Pledge tool to track your progress and see how much you can save.

**[savepower.nsw.gov.au](http://savepower.nsw.gov.au)**

\* Savings based on household electricity price July 2011.