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Iowa Utilities Board reminds consumers of safe, cost-effective tips to reduce winter heating bills

(Des Moines) – With dangerously low temperatures and high winds in the forecast, the Iowa Utilities Board reminds utility customers of simple ways to reduce monthly winter heating bills while remaining safe and warm.

An easy method that consumers can use to save money and energy during the heating season is by simply lowering your thermostat while sleeping or away from home. You can do this automatically without sacrificing comfort by installing an automatic setback or programmable thermostat.

According to the [U.S. Department of Energy](#), heating your residence uses more energy and costs more money than any other system in your home, typically making up about 42 percent of your utility bill.

Thermostat temperatures should never be reduced to a setting that might adversely impact the health of anyone in the home and should be set to avoid pipes from freezing when a residence is unoccupied.

Other safe and efficient tips to reduce energy use and costs:

- Inspect, clean and change furnace filters as recommended.
- Have heating systems serviced annually by a qualified technician.
- Ensure air registers, heating ducts and radiators are clean and not blocked.
- Weatherize exterior doors and windows.
- If the sun is shining, keep draperies or shades on south facing windows open to let in sunlight and closed at night to help insulate from the cold and wind chill.
- Turn off unnecessary lighting, electronic devices, exhaust fans, and appliances when not in use.
- Select energy-efficient ([ENERGY STAR](#)) products when buying new heating equipment.
- Check with your local utility company about a free or low-cost energy assessment, or energy efficient programs or rebates for energy efficient investments.
- For consumers who qualify, inquire with a local [Community Action Agency](#) for information about limited heating financial assistance and heating service disconnection through the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance](#) or Home Weatherization Programs.

(More)

Tips to keep your home safe in winter:

- Never use portable combustion generators or engines indoors, which can be fatal due to carbon monoxide, fire and other risks, even when operating near open windows or doors.
- Gas or kerosene heaters, stoves and grills are not recommended for indoor use.
- Never use a gas stove or oven for space heating.
- Always ensure adequate venting and a safe spacing distance for materials that can catch fire when using a fireplace or wood burning stove.
- Never leave open burning fireplaces, candles, or active space heaters unattended.
- Make sure smoke alarms are connected and working properly.

For more information, visit the Iowa Utilities Board's [Tips to Save Energy](#) web page or contact your local natural gas or electric utility for more information about options to assist in lowering energy usage and saving money during winter and throughout the year.

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The Iowa Utilities Board regulates utilities to ensure that reasonably priced, reliable, environmentally responsible, and safe utility services are available to all Iowans.

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