

Energy Saving Tips

from the MSU Extension Housing and
Environmental Health Program



The lower the thermostat, the lower the energy bill

The simplest way to save money on winter heat bills is to turn down your thermostat. A setting of 68 degrees during the day is both comfortable and economical. Even lower is possible, if you wear warm clothes. You can also save money by turning your thermostat down when you are away from the home during the day.

Sleep cool to save cash: With gas forced air furnaces you can expect to save one percent on your energy bill for every degree you turn your thermostat down at night. If you want to wake up to a warm house, you can purchase an electronic thermostat, available from hardware stores for less than \$75. These thermostats automatically lower and raise the temperature setting at the times you specify. If you want more than one time setting, pick a thermostat with that feature. Of course, settings for homes with infants or elderly occupants cannot be as low. Be sure that pipes sensitive to freezing are not at risk.

If you have a boiler, you can still save money by turning your thermostat down. Since the water in a boiler takes time to return to a temperature suitable for heating your home, you may not be able to lower the thermostat as much as with a forced air furnace.

Remember that a thermostat is simply an on and off switch. It is not like a car accelerator. Turning it up higher will not heat the home faster than putting it a more reasonable setting.

For free information and energy saving tips, contact the MSU Extension Housing and Environmental Health Program at (406) 994-3451. To download free energy brochures, go to www.weatherization.org/energytopics.htm