

Save* on home heating costs.

In homes built before 1992, space heating/cooling accounts for about 60 percent of annual home energy costs. There are several ways to manage these costs while making your home more comfortable.

Energy evaluation

- The starting point for a solid home heating cost reduction program is an on-line analysis of your home's ability to efficiently retain heat and/or cool air. This is achieved through a home energy audit or analysis. A trained inspector examines your home's overall condition and generally details energy saving options available and estimates costs involved to make improvements and the respective return on various levels of investment. For guidance on residential audit availability contact the Energy Trust of Oregon at 1-888-368-7878.

Rebates, loans, tax credits

- Tax credits on selected energy-efficiency improvements may be available through the State of Oregon. Check with the Energy Trust of Oregon on the availability of rebates or loans for weatherization improvements.

Heating

- Central heating systems include a central heater (e.g. furnace or heat pump) and a distribution system (e.g. hot air ducts).
- Space heaters (baseboard, wall heaters, fireplaces, etc.) can heat individual rooms.
- TIP: Keep space heaters and heating systems efficient by cleaning/replacing furnace air filters or vacuuming baseboards. Turn thermostats down to about 55 to 60 degrees when sleeping or when no one is home.

Insulation

- Heat transmission through ceilings, floors, walls and ducts is the single major cause of winter heating energy loss.
- Insulation keeps homes warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.
- TIP: Contact your heating utility or a weatherization contractor for more information on bringing your home insulation up to current standards.

Windows

- By area, windows transmit more heating energy loss than any other home surface.
- Windows also gain solar heat in the summer.
- TIP: If you have single-pane windows, replace them with double-pane windows that have a "U factor" (heat loss rate) no greater than 0.35. Contact your utility, or a window replacement contractor, for more information on bringing your home windows up to current standards. Argon gas and low-E coating help increase new window energy efficiency.

Duct sealing

- Disconnected or leaky heating ducts can be a major cause of home heating energy loss.
- A professional blower door or duct blaster test will identify duct leaks, which should then be repaired or sealed.
- TIP: Contact your utility, or certified pressure diagnostics contractor, for more information on testing and sealing your ducted heating system.

Air leak sealing

- Drafts around windows, doors, pipes and framing can account for 5 to 40 percent of home heating energy loss.
- Proper air sealing, such as caulking, can also reduce entry of noise, moisture, pollution and pests.
- The best way to locate hidden home air leaks is by having a professional blower door test conducted on your home.
- TIP: Contact your utility, or a certified pressure diagnostics contractor, for more information on identifying and sealing your home's air leaks.

For more information on managing home costs and how to get rebates and tax credits for making your home more energy efficient, call one of PGE's home energy experts, Monday – Friday at 503-612-3500. Or reach us online at PortlandGeneral.com/Energy.

* Individual savings will vary depending on home size, usage and application.

Space Heating
Statistics from the book, "Residential Energy, Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings," second edition, by John Krigger, published by Saturn Resource Management.

