



NINE WAYS TO KEEP YOUR HOME WARM THIS WINTER WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK

For many outside the South, the assumption is that Texas enjoys year-round warmth. However, we all know better—winter can be surprisingly chilly! While it's tempting to crank up the heat, the spike in energy bills often prompts a search for cost-effective alternatives. To help you maintain a warm home this winter, we've compiled a list of nine cost-effective and energy-efficient tips.

1. CLOSE VENTS IN UNUSED ROOMS

Save on energy costs by directing airflow to the areas you use most, like the kitchen, bedrooms and living rooms. Close vents in unused spaces to focus your heating system's output where it's needed.

2. LAYER UP WITH WINTER CLOTHING

Cozy up with soft sweaters, socks and layered outfits during the winter months. Keeping warm in layers allows you to set your thermostat lower during the day. At night, invest in warm comforters, blankets or even a heated mattress pad to stay snug.

3. UPGRADE TO ENERGY-EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

Old appliances can drain energy and inflate your utility bills. Opt for Energy Star-rated models, which use approximately 50% less energy than standard options. Although the initial cost is higher, the long-term savings are worth it.

4. INVEST IN HIGH-QUALITY INSULATION

Proper insulation is a game-changer during winter. While the upfront cost can be significant, the Department of Energy states that insulation can save homeowners up to 30% on their energy bills. It's a worthwhile investment to go green if you plan to stay in your home long-term.

5. BE MINDFUL OF HOT WATER USAGE

On chilly mornings, a hot shower can feel like a luxury, but keeping it short or opting for cooler water can help cut energy costs. Make small adjustments to your water usage for noticeable savings.

6. REPLACE FURNACE FILTERS REGULARLY

A clean furnace filter can lower energy consumption by up to 15%, according to the Department of Energy. Replace your furnace filter every two months to ensure your system runs efficiently and avoid costly repairs.

7. SWITCH TO LED LIGHT BULBS

LED bulbs use about 80% less energy than traditional lightbulbs and last significantly longer. While they may cost a bit more upfront, the energy savings and durability make them an excellent investment for your home.

8. USE CEILING FANS IN REVERSE

Ceiling fans aren't just for summer. Set your fan to rotate clockwise at a low speed during winter. This helps circulate warm air that collects near the ceiling, evenly distributing heat throughout the room.

9. HARNESS THE POWER OF SUNLIGHT

Texas winter still brings plenty of sunshine. Open your curtains on sunny days to let natural light and warmth flood your home—free heating at its finest.