

BE PRO-ACTIVE ABOUT HOME HEATING

At the anticipated prices of home heating fuels it's time to seek out every way to save energy.

If you have never upgraded your attic insulation, now's the time. Most heat is lost through the ceiling not the walls. Also investigate your roof and soffit venting.

Install a programmable thermostat. This lets you set the temperature permanently so that it automatically lowers the heat while you are sleeping or while you are at work. You can set it to raise the temperature a half hour before the family arrives home or before you rise in the morning.

Make sure you have your furnace serviced annually by a reputable company. They can clean and adjust the pilot burner and the fan etc. They can adjust your furnace so that it will perform to its maximum potential efficiency. They'll inspect the fan belts and change the filters.

Many of us are still not replacing older furnaces just because they are running reliably. This is a big mistake. The newer mid to high efficiency models perform much better than the oldies and will pay for themselves in a very few years. Be careful how you select your new furnace. Only a qualified professional can properly assess the size of furnace you'll require. Factors such as the number, size and type of your windows, the size of your home and the quality of the insulation, and your ductwork design are all variable factors that need to be considered by a professional.

Another tip is to keep your heating system clean. Have your furnace ducts vacuumed. The cost varies with the size of your home and the number of heating ducts.

Up to a third of your heat registers can usually be closed off without forcing your furnace to cycle too often. So, close the heat registers in at least some of the rooms you are not using.

It may well be time to upgrade those older windows. I think thermal sealed units are now a necessity.

Also upgrade the weather-stripping on your doorways and windows.

It may be the time to consider electric heat or a dual system that can switch from gas to electric. You could choose to run on whichever fuel is cheaper from one year to the next.

If you implement these appropriate energy saving ideas you'll have the proper defense against the new energy rates.

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