



THE NEWS HUB

Insider tips for your car and home



How to save on your home heating bill this winter

It's time to get smart about heating as the cost of living rises.

While the average homeowner or renter can't control market prices of gas or electricity, there are ways to control what we use. Energy market analysts predict Canadian home energy costs will climb dramatically this winter, due to a combination of climate, domestic supply, global demand, and other factors.

According to Martin Hrobsky, vice president of public affairs at market research firm Ipsos, Canadians' anxiety levels are rising as well.

"Canadians are very concerned about the rising cost of living. In fact, inflation is the second most important issue to Canadians right now, just slightly behind health care," Hrobsky told CTVNews.ca recently. "About half of Canadians told us they are concerned about their ability to pay rising utility costs this winter."

Hrobsky told CTV the rising cost of natural gas due to inflation and the war in Ukraine will mean that "even those who use natural gas, which is historically more cost-effective, will feel the pinch this winter."

According to Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), home heating accounts for 63.6% of the energy used in homes. That means homeowners need to look for ways to keep out the chill and control costs.

Enbridge Gas recommends these tips to reduce your heating costs:

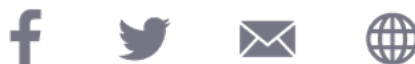
- Save energy by lowering your home's temperature by 2-3 degrees. Set your thermostat to 20°C when you are awake and at home and 17°C when you are sleeping and out of the house. Energyrates.ca reports this can yield up to 5% in savings.
- Keep air vents and baseboards dust-free and unobstructed by carpets or furniture.
- Use thick rugs to make floors feel less cold and reduce the need to turn up the heat.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors to eliminate drafts.
- Use heat-shrink plastic on windows to help keep the heat in.
- Seal the seams of heating ducts with foil tape to prevent air from escaping.
- Add insulation to your walls to improve comfort, efficiency, and protect against moisture.
- Get an energy audit done. This will give you a real sense of how much energy your home loses. It will also give you a more accurate sense of how large your heating system has to be if you are considering replacing it.
- Look for retrofit rebates. There are many grants and funding opportunities across Canada for homeowners planning energy-efficient home improvements. You can find federal grants and rebates on the NRCAN website, but some municipalities offer these as well.
- If you're purchasing a new natural gas furnace, consider a modulating type. Instead of churning out heat as soon as the temperature drops, a modulating furnace will top things up gradually, which uses less energy.

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