

## FALL Checkup TIME

Fall is a good time to evaluate your home's energy efficiency. It's not too early to winterize your home. Homeowners have many preparatory steps to take in anticipation of winter's arrival. A winterized home will keep you out of the cold, beat rising energy prices, and leave a few extra dollars in your pocket if you follow these helpful tips:

- ✂ Make sure to seal any cracks in your home that let cold air in. Use standard caulking to seal leaks around windows, electrical sockets, pipes, and ductwork. Keep an eye out for cracks and peeling in caulk.
- ✂ Check the level of insulation in your exterior and basement walls, ceilings, attick, floors, and crawl spaces.
- ✂ Check your basement foundation for cracks, and repair any you find with heavy caulk or ready-mix cement.
- ✂ Inspect the roof. You want to ensure protection overhead. Even a sound roof can leak if certain conditions exist. Clean out your gutters regularly.
- ✂ Keep your heating system running efficiently with a professional inspection, and changing or cleaning filters regularly will improve the air quality in your home and keep your heating system from overworking.
- ✂ Insulate your water heater and pipes to prevent heat loss through the plumbing.
- ✂ Consider investing in an automatic thermostat that will lower the temperature in your home slightly when no one is around and bring it back up when people return. It's less expensive to raise and lower the temperature of your home than it is to keep it constant throughout the day when no one's around.
- ✂ Make sure furniture or curtains are not blocking heating vents or radiators. This will allow the heat to circulate more freely throughout the room.
- ✂ Close tightly the fireplace damper, kitchen vent, and closet doors when not in use.
- ✂ Study your family's lighting needs and use patterns, paying special attention to high-use areas such as the living room, kitchen, and exterior lighting. Look for ways to use day lighting, reduce the time the lights are on, and replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFL's) or standard fluorescent lamps.
- ✂ Adjust outdoor light timers for length of day and/or daylight savings.
- ✂ Allow the sun to shine in your home by keeping your windows clean which will increase the temperature. (And you'll enjoy watching the beautiful fall leaves as they change colors!)

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