

Tips for Minimizing Heating Costs While Absent from Your Home

Although it seems a waste to pay a hefty heating bill while your home is unoccupied, it remains critical to maintain moderate temperatures in order to prevent pipes from freezing and damage to susceptible elements of your home. Setting thermostats between 12-16° (55-60 F) is generally acceptable as this range will not only ensure that pipes do not freeze but will protect valuable furniture and hardwood floors from damage sustained from fluctuations in temperature.

Fortunately, there are simple steps that can be taken to maximize your heat and reduce costs during colder weather. Before you depart for the winter, take these measures and you will see a discernable difference in your heating bill.



A few simple steps can help significantly reduce heating costs this winter

- **Caulk those cracks** – feeling a draft is the easiest way to detect an air leak through a crack but holding a candle next to areas that have a potential crack (usually where different types of building materials meet) will reveal an air leak through a flickering flame. Sealing cracks with a flexible, durable caulk can be a considerable help in sustaining temperatures.
- **Weather strip doors and windows** – if your windows and doors are not forming a tight seal when closed you are letting dollars slip through the cracks with every passing day. Select a weather stripping that will withstand the elements and repeated opening and closing if it is a frequently used location.
- **Use plastic sheeting to insulate** – if there are doors or windows that do not need to be opened for extended periods of time, plastic sheeting can be an effective way to insulate from the cold.
- **Change your furnace filter** – not only is it critical to change your furnace filter regularly in order to prevent your furnace from overheating, but a lesser consequence is higher utility bills from unnecessary stress to your system. Filters should be inspected on a monthly basis and changed approximately every 1-3 months.



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- **Maintenance your thermostat** – a thermostat that is not accurately calibrated can result in significantly higher heating bills. Dirt and dust can affect the thermostat's performance, making it best practice to check its accuracy before the heating season begins.
- **Cover your attic entry** – although it is ideal to air seal and insulate your attic entry, even simply covering it with plastic and/or pieces of insulation will help prevent some of the warm air loss into this space that is notorious for sucking up heat.

Guardian Property Services, Inc. can help you save money on your heating bills this winter. Call to find out more about how implementing these measures will keep your heating costs down.