



FALL HOME IMPROVEMENT

5 Simple Ways to Increase Energy Efficiency and Savings

Fall and winter can be tough on your home and your wallet. As temperatures drop, chances are your furnace will be working overtime. This results in two things, greater energy consumption and higher heating bills. In fact, costs associated with heating and cooling a home year-round typically comprise two-thirds of the average energy bill.

Try these easy DIY projects to help cut down on energy loss and expenses:

1. Replace worn weatherstripping around doors and windows. Worn weatherstripping can create drafts and let heated air out, stressing your furnace and compromising your comfort. Replacing it takes little time and is a low-cost, high-impact solution.

2. Top up or replace old insulation in your attic. A poorly insulated attic is a primary source of energy loss. Also, over time, some types of insulation can settle and compact, allowing heat to escape through gaps. Experts recommend topping up or replacing attic insulation with a dimensionally stable batt insulation like Roxul Comfortbatt. Aim for an R-value of at least

R-50 or a depth of roughly 16 inches.

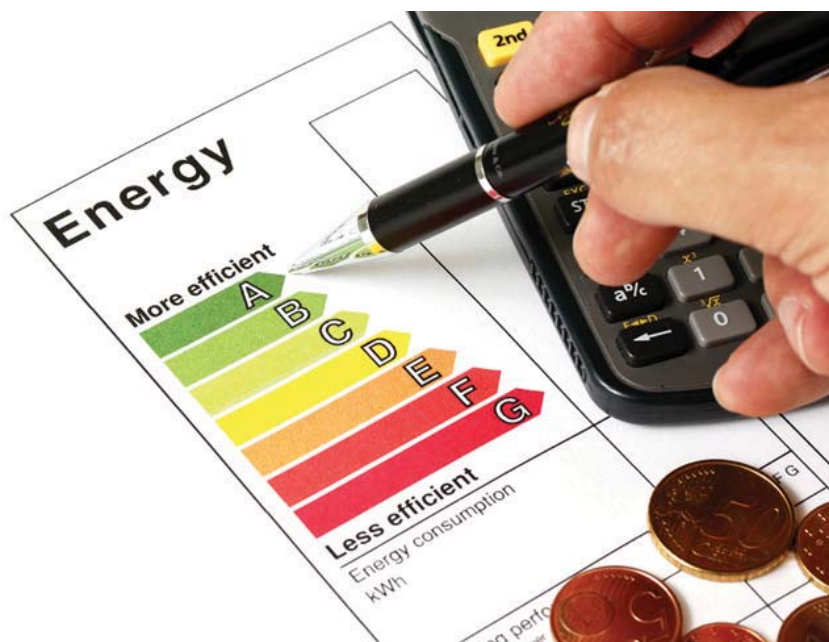
3. Insulate basement headers and walls. Uninsulated basement headers are common, especially in older homes. They can act as a gateway for heated air to escape. Fixing the problem is fast and easy. Simply cut Comfortbatt mineral wool insulation to fit the cavity and compress into

place. Doing this throughout your basement will prevent heat loss and can potentially save hundreds of dollars each year.

4. Caulk around windows. Cracks and crevices are a source of heat loss. They can also be an entry point for water/moisture, as well as for unwelcome insects. Preventative maintenance, such as

caulking, can improve energy efficiency and prevent costly repairs.

5. Change your furnace filter. Make it a point to check your furnace filter monthly, always changing it when it's dirty. This will improve the performance and efficiency of your furnace, saving you money.



Earth-friendly Tips for Autumn

Autumn is upon us, and with the change of seasons comes the fall to-do list that must be completed before the arrival of winter weather. Many outdoor jobs are best completed before temperatures drop, while others can be tackled indoors to help save energy and prepare for increased time spent inside the home.

Outdoor cleanup

Autumn means leaves are falling from trees and littering landscapes. Cleaning up leaves can be a time-consuming task, but it's necessary to promote the health of lawns and other plants. Grass that is completely matted down with leaves can become starved for light and moisture, and lawns may even rot when forced to spend winter beneath fallen leaves.

One eco-friendly timesaver is to shred leaves with a mower (a manual mower is preferable) and leave them as topdressing for the lawn. As long as the grass blades can be seen within the leaves, the lawn should be fine. Shredded leaves will decompose and add necessary nutrients and organic matter to the soil naturally.

Leaves also can be used in annual flower and vegetable gardens to improve the soil. Mulch made from shredded leaves can be placed on the soil around trees and shrubs. This helps to reduce weed problems and protects root systems from harsh temperature fluctuations.

Clothing donations

It's time to pack away summer clothing and once again fill closets and drawers with sweaters and jeans. Before packing away your summer wardrobe, conduct an inventory to determine if there are any items you no longer use. Donate these items or use them as rags when cleaning.

Keep some short-sleeved shirts accessible so you can layer them under sweatshirts and sweaters. The heat from layering will be trapped against your body and keep you cozier, reducing your reliance on HVAC systems to stay warm.

Home repairs

Check the roof for any missing shingles. In addition, look for spots where animals or insects may be able to gain entry into your home. Seal these areas and repair any leaks. This will make your home more efficient later on when winter hits its stride.

Remove window air conditioners for the winter. If they can't be removed, seal them with caulking or tape and cover them with an airtight, insulated jacket. If you have forced-air systems, move furniture away from the vents so that air can flow better around the home and keep it comfortable.

Check weatherstripping around windows and doors and make the necessary adjustments. Installing additional insulation also can help reduce energy consumption.

A few tips can help homeowners prepare for autumn in eco-friendly ways.



Paint your Home's Exterior like a Pro

Painting is an inexpensive way to transform just about any space. Many people paint the interiors of their homes, but home exteriors also can undergo dramatic makeovers with fresh coats of paint. Timing the job right and heeding some tips from professionals and do-it-yourselfers who have tread the painting path before you can make the job go smoothly.

Consider the time of year

Consider local weather patterns and forecasts when planning an exterior painting project. Choose a time of year when there is little rain and low humidity, such as autumn. Keep in mind that the paint will require a couple of days to dry completely and cure, and that can be difficult in damp weather. Don't hamper the final outcome with poor timing.

Prepare the painting surfaces

Resist the temptation to start painting straight away. Paint may not adhere to unprepared surfaces, and dirt and other debris may show through and mar the finished product. Repainting a home's exterior will likely involve removing peeling or chipping paint prior to making your first strokes. Wear protective gear when scraping, sanding or brushing old paint, as such tasks can generate dust that can be dangerous to inhale, particularly if the old paint contains lead.

Employ a chlorine bleach solution to kill any mildew and to scrub any dirt from the house. In addition, repair any cracks or imperfections. For example, if you're painting stucco, you may have to fill in any pitting or holes. Use this opportunity to inspect caulking around windows and doors. Recaulk as needed to seal up drafty areas or those that may cause water infiltration prior to painting.

Prime and cover stains

It may be a little extra work, but apply a quality primer as the first coat to hide any imperfections, such as wood knots or discoloration from weathering. Primer provides a smooth, even surface upon which to put your paint color. Once you have applied the primer, test your paint color in a small, inconspicuous spot to see how the color looks in the daylight. You do not want to paint the entire home only to find out you dislike the color.

Try these painting techniques

Rent a paint sprayer for large surface areas. The sprayer will produce a more uniform application and is less time-consuming than painting everything with a brush or roller. Make sure you've chosen a high-quality paint, as the added expense is worth it if the paint lasts longer and coats more evenly. Also, if you have purchased multiple cans of paint, mix them all in one large bucket to ensure the same color; otherwise, the colors may not match perfectly.

The experts at HGTV recommend working your way from top to bottom in a smooth, controlled manner, overlapping each stroke by eight inches. Trim and hard-to-reach areas should be left for brush work so you can maintain control over your tools.

If you are painting areas like steps or staircases, consider adding a little fine-grain sand to the paint to improve traction, as paint can be slippery when wet.

If painting your home's exterior is beyond your capabilities, hire a professional. He or she will get the work done in a timely manner, and you can rest assured that the job will be done correctly.

TOP NOTCH
WINDOW CLEANING
Est. 1996

JASON ORR
OWNER/OPERATOR

INSURED
CALL OR TEXT: 605.760.3680
YANKTONWINDOWCLEANING@GMAIL.COM

Get ready for the cold weather! Call today to schedule a **Furnace Tune-Up!**



Tyler Reiser
Service Technician
14 Years Experience

Furnace Tune-Ups should be done by a Kalins trained technician. WHY?

- Because we have 95 years in the business
- Prevents costly breakdowns
- Extends the life of your equipment

Kalins Indoor Comfort services all makes and models.



When You Want Comfort...You Want Kalins!

Vermillion: (888) 871-2635 • Yankton: (888) 409-8094 • Sioux City: (888) 706-4544
kalinsindoor.com

Johnson Electric, LLP

Rural • Residential • Commercial
Electrical • Telephone • Overhead Wiring • Trenching
Bucket Truck Reaches 80' • Digger Truck

"Fast Courteous Service"

500 W. 12TH ST., YANKTON

605-665-5686

Rick Merkel • Ben Merkel
Chris Merkel



Celebrating our

50th Anniversary!

SERVING NE
NEBRASKA
& SE SOUTH
DAKOTA.
OFFICES IN YANKTON
AND NORFOLK

1-800-KIL-BUGS
OLSON'S
PEST TECHNICIANS
1-800-KIL-BUGS



The Flue Doctors

Fireplaces and wood burning stoves were responsible for some 23,600 residential fires.

P.R. Olson
Chimney Sweeps
Dryer Exhaust Technicians

Call for an appointment today!
665-5181 • 1-800-545-2847

