

## Seasonal Home Energy Efficiency Tips

When the summer heat sets in or the winter weather snaps, we turn to our thermostats. As the temperature outside becomes more extreme, so do our electric bills. It can be quite a shock to see your electric bill after summer or winter begins. Immediately, you may say to yourself: Is this correct? Why is it so high? That can't be right!

Many people suspect their high bills are caused by inaccurate or broken meters. However, Oncor meters are highly reliable and accurate. In fact, between 2013 and 2017, Oncor tested approximately 58,000 meters at our customers' request. 99.90% of the tested meters met the industry's strict standards for accuracy. As you can see, testing the meter rarely results in lower electric bills. The most likely cause of your unexpectedly high bill is the outside temperature.

Temperatures during summer and winter can heavily influence your monthly electric bill. The following energy efficiency tips can help you to reduce your energy consumption and lower your electric bill.

### Summer Home Tips

**Air Conditioner** - Cooling makes up 40% of residential energy use. Consider using a programmable thermostat which can help reduce cooling costs because it will allow you to control when you cool your home. You can allow the temperature to increase when you are away and decrease to 78 degrees when you return for optimal efficiency and comfort.

**Air Ducts** - Ducts leaking 20 percent of the conditioned air pushing through them cause your system to work 50 percent harder. Sealing a leaky duct can save you an estimated 10 to 20 percent on your cooling bills. For more information on air duct inspections, please contact an air conditioning professional to do an inspection of your ductwork to check for leaks, capacity issues, and to ensure all registers are attached and sealed.

**Air Filters** - Dirty or clogged air filters can make your air conditioner work harder by restricting the amount of air that passes through. Replacing your clogged filters with clean ones can lower your air conditioner's energy consumption.

**Attic Insulation** - Have the insulation in your attic checked and make sure the rating is between R-30 to R-38. Refer to Oncor's Take A Load Off, Texas website to find a service provider who can evaluate your current insulation level.

**Ceiling Fan** - A ceiling fan moving in a counterclockwise motion allows you to raise the thermostat setting by four degrees with no reduction in comfort. Remember to turn off your ceiling fans when you are away.

**Electronic Appliances** - On average, 10% of an entire household's energy consumption comes from phantom loads. Even when turned off, your electronic appliances (TVs, media players, computers, routers, phone chargers, etc.) continue to consume energy. This is referred to as phantom load. Unplug electronic devices when you are no longer using them or when you leave for the day.

**Lights** - 90% of the energy used in an incandescent bulb is given off as heat. Switching to an LED light bulb will use 75-80% less energy. If you are looking for an LED light bulb that is similar to an incandescent, look for LED bulbs that have a color of 2700K to 3000K. (Noted on the box.)

**Pool Pump** - Variable speed pool pumps allow the pump to operate as needed and not more than needed.

**Refrigerator** - A new refrigerator with the ENERGYSTAR label uses 20% less energy than required by the current federal standards and 40% less energy than conventional models sold in 2001.

**Washer/Dryer** - Switch the temperature in your washer from "hot" to "warm" or "cold" to cut down on the energy consumed to heat the water. Clean the dryer lint filter after every load to improve air circulation and shorten drying times. Look for the ENERGYSTAR label the next time you purchase a washing machine.

**Water Heater** - Water heating represents 19% of residential energy use in Texas. If you have an electric water heater, consider investing in a water heater insulation jacket or blanket to improve the efficiency of your hot water tank.

**Weatherization** - All homes have a certain amount of leakage, but a well weatherized home can help reduce the amount of leakage and ensure your air conditioner operates more efficiently. For example, a quarter inch gap around your front door can let in as much air as a softball-sized hole. Consider using weather stripping to seal gaps around doors and caulk to fill in gaps and cracks around doors and windows.

## Winter Home Tips

**Attic Insulation** - Have the insulation in your attic checked and make sure the rating is between R-30 to R-38. Refer to Oncor's Take A Load Off, Texas website to find a service provider who can evaluate your current insulation level.

**Electric Heater** - Your electric heater can easily use three times the energy per hour for heating during the winter than cooling in the summer. A heat pump can significantly offset the costs of using an electric heater. Avoid using space heaters when not needed. Consider using a programmable thermostat which can help reduce heating costs because it will allow you to control when you heat your home. It can allow the temperature to decrease when you are away and increase to 68 degrees when you return for optimal efficiency and comfort.

**Ceiling Fan** - Change the direction of your ceiling fan during the winter to turn clockwise to help pull the cooler air up and push the warmer air down. Remember to turn off your ceiling fans when you are away.

**Electronic Appliances** - On average, 10% of an entire household's energy consumption comes from phantom loads. Even when turned off, your electronic appliances (TVs, media players, computers, routers, phone chargers, etc.) continue to consume energy. This is referred to as phantom load. Unplug electronic devices when you are no longer using them or when you leave for the day.

**Heat Pump** - Heat pumps take heat from the outside air, condense it, and push it into your home. This process is highly efficient and can help save up to two-thirds of the energy traditionally required to heat your home with an electric heater.

**Lights** - 90% of the energy used in an incandescent bulb is given off as heat. Switching to an LED light bulb will use 75-80% less energy. If you are looking for an LED light bulb that is similar to an incandescent, look for LED bulbs that have a color of 2700K to 3000K. (Noted on the box.)

**Natural Light** - You can supplement your heating demand by opening your curtains and blinds to allow in more natural light. During the winter, the natural light passing through your windows adds a small amount of heat to the interior of your home and can slightly reduce your heating demands.

**Pool Pump** - Pool equipment with freeze protection can require an additional one to one and a half kWhs per hour for each hour below 35 degrees, depending on the size of the equipment and the settings. Variable speed pool pumps allow the pump to operate as needed and not more than needed.

**Refrigerator** - A new refrigerator with the ENERGYSTAR label uses 20% less energy than required by the current federal standards and 40% less energy than conventional models sold in 2001.

**Washer/Dryer** - Switch the temperature in your washer from "hot" to "warm" or "cold" to cut down on the energy consumed to heat the water. Clean the dryer lint filter after every load to improve air circulation and quicken drying times. Look for the ENERGYSTAR label the next time you purchase a washing machine.

**Water Heater** - Water heating represents 19% of residential energy use in Texas. If you have an electric water heater, consider investing in a water heater insulation jacket or blanket to improve the efficiency of your hot water tank.

**Weatherization** - All homes have a certain amount of leakage, but a well weatherized home can help reduce the amount of leakage and ensure your heater operates more efficiently. For example, a quarter inch gap around your front door can let in as much air as a softball-sized hole. Consider using weather stripping to seal gaps around doors and caulk to fill in gaps and cracks around doors and windows.