



## Keeping your Home Warm

As outside temperatures drop, the desire to keep our homes warm rises. 70 percent of household energy consumption is spent on heating the home, forcing homeowners and renters alike to continually look for ways to improve efficiency. Here some of the most underrated ways to keep your home warm throughout the winter with suggestions ranging from simple to difficult. By implementing any of these strategies you will be able turn down the thermostat and research shows that turning your thermostat down by just 2°F could cut your heating costs by up to 10 percent.

If you're home has ceiling fans, consider reversing the direction of air flow. This simple trick makes installing ceilings fans in your home worth the effort. In warmer months, ceiling fans rotate counterclockwise in order to create a draft by pushing air downward. During the colder months, you can reverse this rotation which allows falling cool air to mix with rising hot air. This mixed air will make your whole room feel warmer and reduce cold spots.

Keeping the warm air circulated is great, if, you can keep it from escaping or getting overrun with cold air coming in. You can use heavy curtains to stop that warm air from escaping through your windows. The amount of heat that escapes through windows is estimated to be about 40 percent of your total heat loss, making this relatively inexpensive fix priceless. Using heavy fabrics to insulate your windows helps keep the warmth in, and the draft out.

For a bigger boost in the efficiency of your home, you could consider adding more insulation. If you live in an older home, you may find that the amount of insulation behind your walls and ceilings is less than the standard for newer homes. The Home Depot endorses 12 inches of insulation as the industry standard. If your current insulation is only 5 inches deep, you may want to consider adding an additional 7 inches of insulation to maximize warmth. Making the choice to install insulation is undoubtedly an investment, but will pay for itself with the amount of money you save by reducing your energy bills.

Lastly, maintain your heaters. It's as simple as that. Getting your heater serviced professionally at least every two years will keep it running more efficiently. Between services, be sure to keep heaters free of dust and clean or replace any filters regularly.

To ensure a job well done, consider letting a NARI-BIE professional help you out! We have a varied membership to serve your needs of any level- whether it's shopping for curtains, installing ceiling fans or insulation, or having your heater serviced.