



Home Heating Tips

for Nova Scotians

conserve

it starts with me

Keep Warm. Save Energy. Save Money.

Contents

Contents

Energy Efficiency Upgrades	2
Building a New Home	4
Replacing Your Heating System	6
Home Heating Tips	8
- Electric Heating	9
- Wood Heating	10
- Oil Heating	12
- Gas Heating	14
- Solar Heating	15
- Water Heating	16

www.conservens.ca
toll-free 1-800-670-4636

Keep Warm. Save Energy. Save Money.

With rising energy costs, improving the energy efficiency of your home will help you keep warm and save energy and money.

This booklet contains information to help you keep warm, take control of your energy costs, reduce your energy use, and improve the energy efficiency of your home.



Keep Warm. Save Energy. Save Money.

Before you begin your energy efficiency upgrades ...

If you're planning to make energy efficiency upgrades to your home, you can qualify for up to \$1,500 in provincial rebates and up to \$5,000 in federal rebates by participating in the **Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses/eo-ENERGY** program.

Participating in the program can cut your annual energy costs by as much as \$1,000 or about 30 per cent, on average, and reduce your greenhouse gas emissions by about five tonnes every year.

Remember, in order to qualify for rebates, homeowners must complete an initial EnerGuide evaluation before making energy efficiency upgrades to their home. The initial evaluation costs \$150, and quickly pays for itself in savings.

If you are a homeowner with a net single income of less than \$25,000/year, or a net family income of less than \$40,000/year, Conserve Nova Scotia will rebate the full cost of your EnerGuide evaluation, and you will qualify for an additional \$400 grant.

Applications for low-to-modest EnerGuide programs are available online at www.conservens.ca/energguide, or you can call **1-800-670-4357** or visit any Access Nova Scotia centre.



Book your EnerGuide for Houses evaluation today.

Call 1-800-670-4636 or visit www.conservens.ca/energguide for more information and to find a certified EnerGuide evaluator near you.

Building a new home?

If you're building a new home, you have an ideal opportunity to make the most of your new home's energy performance and comfort—and do it at the lowest possible cost.

The EnerGuide for New Houses program helps homeowners make better energy choices at the planning stage, before the house is built.

Your investment in energy efficiency upgrades may cost a little more up front, but quickly pays for itself through energy savings.

The EnerGuide rating is based on a scale of 0 to 100. A rating of 80 corresponds to the minimum energy efficiency performance standard of an R-2000 home.

Starting April 1, 2009, a completed house with an EnerGuide rating of 80 or more will receive a \$250 rebate to cover the cost of registration.

An EnerGuide rating of 83 or higher will result in an additional \$500 rebate. R-2000 homes with an EnerGuide 83 are eligible for a \$1,000 rebate.

Program participants can save as much as \$2,000 on annual energy costs.



Visit www.conservens.ca/energiguide or call Conserve Nova Scotia at 1-800-670-4636 for more information on the program and to learn how to get started.

Thinking about replacing your heating system?

If you're looking to save energy and money on home heating costs, start by improving the energy efficiency of your home before considering replacing your heating system.

Improving the energy efficiency of your home can be easily achieved by upgrades like increasing your insulation levels and draft-proofing your home.

Air leaks can cause uncomfortable drafts in your home and are a primary source of heat loss. Air leakage around doors, windows, attic hatches, and floor joists can add up to a hole the size of a basketball. In older homes, air leakage accounts for 30 to 40 per cent of total heat loss.

To draft-proof your home, determine where air is leaking into and out of your home. By participating in the Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses/ecoENERGY program, you will receive expert advice about where you are losing heat in your home.

Cut your energy use by reducing this heat loss. Sealing your home with caulking and weatherstripping is often the least expensive way to achieve significant savings on your heating bill.

Air sealing your home

- Use weatherstripping to control air leakage in areas that open and close, such as doors, windows, and attic hatches.
- Use caulking to reduce air leakage in areas where two surfaces are permanently sealed, such as gaps, cracks, and openings in walls and floors.
- Electrical outlets can also be a source of air leakage. Install foam gaskets and childproof plugs to help reduce heat loss in these areas.
- Apply shrink-wrap film to windows to further reduce drafts and heat loss.
- Increase your insulation levels in areas such as your attic, basement, and exterior walls.

Refer to Conserve Nova Scotia's Sealing, Caulking and Weatherstripping booklet at www.conservens.ca for more information on preventing unnecessary heat loss in your home.



Visit www.conservens.ca to watch a series of how-to videos to learn more on draft-proofing your home.

Home heating tips

You don't have to spend a lot of money to make smart energy choices. Sometimes the most efficient changes are the ones that cost the least.

Whether you heat with electricity, wood, gas, or oil, or you live in a house, apartment, or other living arrangement, here are some simple, low-cost or no-cost changes you can make to help keep warm during the winter months while reducing your energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

- Open blinds and curtains to allow sunshine in during the day. This natural heat source is free. At night, be sure to close the curtains to keep the heat in.
- If cold floors are a concern, consider laying some carpet or placing area rugs in your home. Keep a pair of cozy slippers on hand to keep your feet warm.
- Dress according to the outside temperature. On cool days, wear a warm sweater around the house instead of turning up the heat.
- Check around your home to make sure furniture is not blocking or trapping the heat coming out of your baseboards, radiators or floor vents.

Electric heating

If your home is electrically heated, replace the conventional thermostat with an electronic model. It will improve comfort and save energy.

An electronic thermostat costs about \$40, and quickly pays for itself in energy savings. Turn down the temperature by 5°C overnight and when you're away. This simple change can cut heating costs by about 10 per cent.

Consider using a portable electric heater as opposed to heating your entire house. Be sure to close the doors to any unoccupied rooms and closets to maximize your heat use.



Wood heating

Thinking of using a wood-burning appliance to reduce the cost of energy? Burn hot, burn clean, and you'll save some green.

- If you're buying a new wood-burning appliance, invest in an EPA-certified model or pellet stove. EPA-certified stoves reduce wood use by 25 per cent and can reduce smoke by as much as 90 per cent. EPA-certified wood stoves can heat the average new home for as low as \$600 a year.
- To ensure peak performance and safety, insist on having a technician certified by Wood Energy Technology Transfer (WETT) install your new wood-burning appliance.
- Be sure your appliance is the proper size. Bigger is not better—a bigger wood-burning appliance may overheat today's well-insulated homes.
- Install your wood-burning appliance in the space where you spend the most time. A basement installation distributes heat poorly and can result in heat loss, especially if your basement is poorly insulated.
- Never use freshly cut or green wood; it contains a lot of water and burns inefficiently.
- Season your firewood to reduce your heating costs by an additional 20 per cent. You should buy your wood in the spring and shelter it from the weather to allow at least six months of seasoning before it's time to turn up the heat.



Did you know?

Homeowners can qualify for federal rebates under the Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses/ecoENERGY program for installing qualifying wood-burning appliances. Please visit www.conservens.ca/energuide for a list of qualifying systems and rebate amounts.

Oil heating

Schedule a furnace or boiler tune-up annually to maintain top performance of your oil heating system. An annual efficiency tune-up can help you save up to 5 per cent per year in heating costs.

Speak to your service technician about installing a smaller fuel nozzle and adjusting the air/fuel mixture. These changes can save you as much as 15 per cent per year in heating costs.

Today's ENERGY STAR qualified systems can achieve efficiencies of about 85 per cent. If your furnace or boiler is more than 15 years old, you may want to consider upgrading to a high-efficiency, ENERGY STAR qualified oil-fired system.



ENERGY STAR qualified systems can save homeowners between 20 and 25 per cent or up to \$500 in annual heating costs.

Increase the life of your oil heating system by installing your oil tank indoors. An indoor installation will keep your heating oil at a more consistent temperature, improving the energy performance of your system.

Be sure to change your oil heating systems air filters regularly; at least three times during the heating season. Check your owner's manual for instructions and recommended replacement frequencies.



Did you know?

Homeowners can qualify for federal rebates under the Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses/ecoENERGY program for qualifying oil-fired furnaces and boilers. Please visit www.conservens.ca/energguide for a list of qualifying heating systems and rebates.

Gas heating

Ensure your gas appliance is serviced annually to ensure top performance.

- Turn off the appliance's pilot light when the unit is not in use during the summer months to conserve fuel.
- Be sure to keep your furnace's air filters clean. Check your owner's manual for instructions and recommended replacement frequencies.

Did you know?

Homeowners can qualify for federal rebates under the Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses/ecoENERGY program for installing qualifying gas furnaces and boilers. Please visit www.conservens.ca/energguide for a list of qualifying heating systems and rebates.



Solar heating

Looking to harness this natural source of warmth to help heat your home?

Solar heating can be used to supplement the heat required in your home for space heating and domestic water heating. Using this natural source of heat can help reduce the amount of energy your regular heating system uses.

Conserve Nova Scotia offers a 15 per cent rebate of the installed cost of solar air and water heating systems for residential, institutional, industrial, or commercial use. The maximum provincial rebate is \$20,000. Through EnerGuide there is a \$1,250 rebate for solar water heating systems.

Water heating tips

Wasted hot water is money down the drain. Here's how to tap into savings.

- Take a shower, not a bath. A typical bath uses approximately 75 litres of hot water. A five-minute shower with a low-flow showerhead will use about half that.
- Wrap your electric water heater with an insulating blanket. This can reduce its electricity use by about 5 per cent.
- Put foam insulation on your copper hot water pipes and the first three metres of your cold water pipes to reduce heat loss and save energy.
- Install a low-flow showerhead. If you take one five-minute shower each day, it could save you as much as \$50 a year.
- Turn off your water heater if you are away from your home for more than four days.
- Reduce the water temperature from 60° to 50°C. This can cut water-heating costs by about 12 per cent.
- Fix leaky faucets. A steady drip of hot water can cost you as much as \$100 a year.
- Install faucet aerators in your bathroom. They pay for themselves in less than a year.



Did you know?

Conserve Nova Scotia offers a 15 per cent rebate of the installed cost of a solar water heating system for residential, institutional, industrial, or commercial use. The maximum provincial rebate is \$20,000.

Homeowners can also qualify for a federal rebate under the Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses/ecoENERGY program for installing a qualifying solar domestic hot water system. Please visit www.conservens.ca/energuide for more information.

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