

UF College of Dentistry Green Team

Green Tips of the Month



October 2009

Get your home in shape for winter!

It still feels sultry outside—but the little bit of winter we get is right around the corner! These easy and affordable fixes (for renters as well as homeowners) will help keep you toasty warm (and your utility bills low) through those chilly nights.

Stop those leaks

Large air leaks in a typical house can add up to the equivalent of leaving a window open all winter. Close that window with a tube of caulk and some weather stripping. EnergySavers.gov offers [instructions on how to detect and seal leaks](#).

Cost: Less than \$15. Time: 1-3 hours

Freshen that filter

If you're running your heating system (or air conditioner—not unheard of in December!), change the air filter every 30 days to maintain system efficiency. Set your calendar to send you an e-mail reminder each month, and you'll never forget.

Cost: \$2-5 a month. Time: 5 minutes

Treat your windows right

Blinds, drapes and window film can do more than look nice and give you privacy. The right window coverings can also help keep the outside cold or heat where it belongs: outside! Visit EnergySavers.gov for [suggestions on energy-saving window treatments](#).

Cost and time: vary depending on type of window covering and number of windows.

Go outside! And put on a sweater.

Your mother was right: dressing in warmer clothing (or snuggling up under a blanket) instead of turning up the thermostat can lower your heating bill while reducing fossil fuel use and emissions. Also, once it's finally nice out, take advantage of it! Throw on a hat and gloves and get outside for a walk, run, bike ride or play with the kids—you'll warm up quickly.

Cost: the price of a sweater (free, if you can get Aunt Hilda to knit you one!) Time: none!

More investment, more reward

If you've got a little more time and money to invest, consider these upgrades to get some real bang for your buck.

- [Seal and insulate your heating and cooling ducts](#). According to EnergyStar.gov, about 20% of the air that moves through a typical home's duct system is lost because of poorly maintained ducts. If your heating system's on its way out, replace it with an [Energy Star](#) qualified model. GRU offers [rebates for homeowners](#) who install energy-efficient appliances.
- [Insulate your attic](#). Blown-in or fiberglass roll insulation can be installed by you or a pro, and it's one of easiest places in your home to insulate.
- If your windows are very old or inefficient, invest in new energy-efficient windows.

Office of Sustainability events in October

- [Faculty Forum on Sustainability and Academic Programs at UF](#): Thu Oct. 3, 3:30-5:30 pm, 349 JWRU
- [One Less Car Day](#): Fri Oct 23, 9am-5pm
- [Complete Events Calendar](#)