

News release – December 2009

Have a great Christmas – and save money

Christmas is an expensive time of year for many households, but you don't have to be a 'scrooge' to save money over the festive period.

There are a number of ways people can reduce their energy costs throughout the party season and into the New Year. Here are some top tips:

1) Contact Warm Streets and find out about free and discounted insulation

When you make the annual trip to the attic to bring down boxes of decorations, take a look at the depth of your loft insulation. If the floor joists are visible, you could have a top-up and save yourself up to £150 per year with reduced fuel bills! And when better time to get insulation than when the loft has already been cleared?

FREE loft and cavity wall insulation is now available to more households than ever through the local authority's Warm Streets scheme. Call: 0800 512 012 to find out more.

2) Replace your old, high-energy festive lighting with a new low-energy solution

LED Christmas lights are safer (they don't get so hot), last longer and use approximately 10 per cent the energy of old Christmas lights. Fibre Optics can light a whole tree with a single bulb and solar powered options can provide up to 10 hours of free night time illumination – even in the winter months!

3) Keep the warmth in by draught proofing your home

The postie may be working extra hard to deliver the season's greetings on time, but keeping the warmth from escaping from your house couldn't be quicker or simpler.

As much as 25 per cent of heat is lost from homes through windows, draughts and ventilation. Fitting draught excluders over letterboxes and keyholes, and filling gaps around doors and windows can save up to £25 a year. Fitting shelves above your radiators will help to direct heat back into a room and also give you extra surface space for all those cards!

4) Cut cooking times and cut costs in the kitchen

The party season means time spent in the kitchen – from preparing drinks and snacks, to the Christmas dinner. Reduce cooking times by up to 25 per cent by using lids on saucepans and keeping the oven door shut.

Your fridge works best when full, but not over-stocked. Store any items that don't need immediate refrigeration (such as eggs) in a cool dark place until you need them and

replenish the fridge as required. As supplies dwindle, use newspaper or glasses of water to fill the empty space and keep your unit running at maximum efficiency.

5) Prepare for your party and plan in advance

Ensure furniture isn't blocking radiators and turn the thermostat down a degree when guests arrive. Whilst sitting, two people produce an average of 120W heat – so get them dancing and they can produce as much as 1kW heat. That's equivalent to a one bar electrical fire!

6) Make a New Year's resolution

Make a resolution to call: 0800 512 012 and find out about other ways to save money, energy and the environment in 2010.

ENDS.

Notes for the editor:

1. For more information please contact Danni Barrett on 0117 934 1407 or you can email: danni.barrett@cse.org.uk
2. The South West Energy Saving Trust advice centre offers free and independent energy efficiency advice to tenants and householders on how to reduce energy use in their homes.
3. Warm Streets is managed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, a leading charity delivering solutions to climate change and fuel poverty (www.cse.org.uk) and funding is provided by the local authorities involved (North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, Mendip, South Somerset, West Somerset, Taunton Deane and Sedgemoor) and Scottish and Southern Energy.