

Skill Level: ADVANCED Try these projects after you have a collection of DIY successes under your belt, and make sure you're ready for a challenge. You'll need experience with a wide variety of specialized tools, and it may take several days to finish. If you've built a deck or installed an irrigation system, these projects probably match your abilities.

Before winter arrives, there are several steps you can take to help make your home more energy efficient and lower your utility bill. From locating areas in your home that are leaking warm air to replacing your old appliances with new ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances, Lowe's will show you how to reduce cold-weather energy costs.

01 Energy Checkup

- An Energy Checkup consists of locating areas where excessive electricity is being used and where warm air is escaping.
- Find the air leaks.
 1. Turn on the exhaust fans in your house to lower the air pressure in the home.
 2. While maintaining a safe distance from the wall and draperies, hold a lit candle near the edge of the window trim. The flame will quiver if you have an air leak.
 3. Check other areas of your home using this test.
- Seal the air leaks.
 - Leaks around window trim, baseboards and doorways can be sealed with latex caulk. Apply a bead along the gap and smooth it out with a damp sponge.
 - Seal leaks around electrical plates with an outlet sealer.
 - Repair cracks in gypsum board with joint compound.
 - Make sure your fireplace damper closes tight.
 - Install door sweeps to guard against cool drafts.
- Check for leaks outside your home, too. Properly seal where pipes enter the siding and where the siding meets the foundation, windows and doorways.
- Seal air gaps inside window frames with weather-stripping. Lowe's has weather-stripping to fit most windows and doors. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation.
 1. Clean the areas where the weather-stripping will be applied.
 2. Cut a piece of weather-stripping the length of the sash.
 3. Peel off the tape and press the sticky side against the bottom of the sash.
 4. Apply a piece of weather-stripping to the top sash as well.
- Check for leaks in the attic.
 1. Seal any small gaps or cracks with the proper sealant.
 2. Check the insulation. If the level of the insulation is below the top of the floor joists, add more insulation.



IMPORTANT

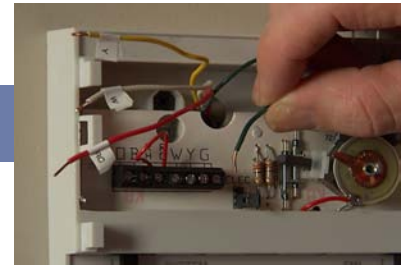
As for any project, follow the manufacturer's instructions and use proper safety precautions. Be sure to follow local building codes as well. If you are ever in doubt about doing a project, contact a licensed professional.

01 Energy Checkup (cont.)

- Seal leaks in the basement, too. Make sure that crawl spaces and rim sills are properly insulated.
- **Once your house is sealed, make sure gas and oil-burning appliances are properly ventilated.**
- Replace any old, inefficient appliances with Energy Star® qualified models. With Energy Star®, you can save hundreds of dollars every year in utility costs.

02 Install an Energy Star® programmable thermostat.

- These thermostats work on a timer and adjust the house temperature automatically.
- Installation:
 1. Turn off power to the furnace—it supplies electricity to the thermostat.
 2. Remove the face of the old thermostat.
 3. Detach and label the wires. Make note of the codes where the wires were connected to the old unit.
 4. Remove the wall plate.
 - Be careful when working with older models that contain mercury. Ask your local recycling center about proper disposal.
 5. To install the new unit, mount the plate.
 6. Connect the wires using the corresponding codes.
 7. Add batteries if needed.
 8. Secure the new unit to the wall plate.
 9. Turn on the power.
 10. Program the new thermostat to warm the house when you are there and to lower the temperature when no one is home.
 - An energy-efficient setting for winter is 68° F.



03 Use ceiling fans.

- Save 10% off your heating bill by setting your ceiling fan to operate in a clockwise direction, which will push warm air that has collected near the ceiling back down into the room.
- If you don't have a ceiling fan, watch **Lowe's How to Install a Ceiling Fan** for the step-by-step instructions.

04 Conserve hot water. By using less water, you not only save water but also the energy used to heat it.

- Add a water heater blanket to your water tank. They are inexpensive and install in minutes.
- Consider turning the water temperature down to an energy-efficient 120° F.



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04 Conserve hot water. By using less water, you not only save water but also the energy used to heat it. (cont.)

- Insulate your hot water pipes.
 - Add pre-formed sleeves to pipes that run through unheated areas of the home, like your basement.
 - Most simply snap on the pipe and are self-sealing.

- Consider installing a low-flow showerhead. These fixtures regulate water flow and can cut your water usage nearly in half.

05 For other ways to help save energy and more money, download our Energy Guide at [Lowes.com/Energy](https://www.lowes.com/Energy).

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