

Easy Ways to Lower Your Utility Bills

The average home in Buffalo can expect energy bills of \$2,267 per year. An energy-efficient home in Buffalo will have much lower bills – only \$1,451 per year. That is a savings of \$816. Here are some simple steps you can take to start saving money on your energy bills.

1. Turn your water heater thermostat down to 120°F.
2. Buy an insulating blanket for your hot water heater.
3. Wrap pre-cut insulation around the exposed pipes leading to your hot water heater.
4. Use cold water to do your laundry.
5. Install a water-saving 2.5 gallon-per-minute showerhead.
6. Install water-saving faucet heads in your kitchen and bathroom sinks.
7. Turn off the lights when you leave a room.
8. Keep lids on your pots when you cook.
9. Don't pre-heat your oven.
10. Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils once a year.
11. Use compact fluorescent light bulbs. Compact fluorescent bulbs cost more to buy, but, because they last about ten times longer and use less electricity, each compact fluorescent bulb you buy will eventually save you about \$50.
12. In the winter, open shades and drapes during the day and close them at night.
13. Move furniture away from radiators and heating vents.
14. Set your thermostat to 68°F when you're home and down to 60°F when you're out of the home or asleep. Consider buying a programmable thermostat, which will do this automatically for you.
15. Clean or change the air filter on your furnace once a year.
16. Put weather-stripping around your windows and doors.



17. Use caulk and spray-in foam to seal cracks and leaks around your windows, doors, and baseboards. Check for gaps around chimneys and where pipes enter your home. Pay special attention to your attic and basement.
18. When you need to replace an appliance, such as a refrigerator or TV, make sure to buy one with an EnergyStar label.

Help for People with Low and Moderate Incomes

- For help paying your utility bills, contact Erie County Social Services HEAP program at 858-7870. HEAP may also pay for furnace repairs or replacement where needed.
- You may qualify for free weatherization assistance, which can include adding insulation, testing and repairing heating systems, minor home repairs, etc. Call Neighborhood Housing Services of South Buffalo at 837-0071 for more information.
- You may also qualify for EmPower New York, a free program that includes free compact fluorescent light bulbs, and, in some cases, free refrigerator replacement. For more information, call New Buffalo Impact at 881-1477.
- If your income is not low enough to qualify for free weatherization service, you may still qualify for help with up to 50% of your project's cost, up to a total of \$5,000 in assistance, through the Assisted Home Performance program. For more information, call New Buffalo Impact at 881-1477.
- For information about home repair grants and loans, call Black Rock Riverside NHS at 877-3910.

