



ENERGY CONSERVATION WITH NATURAL GAS APPLIANCES

If you have natural gas appliances in your home, take these steps to ensure that you will save energy. Not only will you save money, you will use less natural gas. As a general rule, you should hire licensed professionals (such as gas fitters and plumbers) to do repairs and installations; however, there are simple steps to properly maintain, increase efficiency, and save energy with your natural gas appliances.

GAS FURNACE

- ▶ Hire a professional contractor to inspect your home's system at least once a year. It takes discipline and planning, but it will pay off in the long run.
- ▶ Make sure you properly upkeep the sheet metal as well as the ductwork of your furnace to guarantee the heat is most efficiently delivered throughout the home.
- ▶ Change or clean your furnace filter – A clean filter means a more efficient process of heating your home.
Inspect a clean filter monthly and change them at least every three (3) months.
- ▶ Clear the outdoor exhaust vents. Certain fumes must exit the furnace, having clear exhaust vents helps this happen.
- ▶ Check your owner's manual to see if there is any additional maintenance that is recommended.
Some examples:
 - ▶ Replace frayed belts
 - ▶ Check flues or vents for cracks or blockages
 - ▶ Check the condensate drain

GAS STOVE AND OVEN

- ▶ You can regularly clean your gas burners and grates on your stove. This can be done by removing the grates and soaking them. About 25 minutes in hot water then scrubbing with a soft brush will usually do the trick.
- ▶ Some stoves have a removable metal ring with holes in it that can become clogged and produce a yellow or orange flame. To clean it, remove the ring and insert a fine wire or paper clip (nothing that will break off) in the holes. When you finish cleaning it, rinse it with hot water, let it dry, and put it in place.
- ▶ Cleaning your stove and oven can extend the life of your appliance as well as increase the efficiency so you can save energy.

GAS DRYER

- ▶ The most important aspect for conserving energy in a gas dryer is cleaning the lint trap. Make sure that every time you put a new load into the dryer, the lint trap is clean.
- ▶ Also, your dryer should be vented outside. Make sure your vent is unclogged and pointed through an exit hole.

GAS FIREPLACE

Check to see if the damper on the fireplace is open. When you are not using the fireplace, the damper should always be closed; it allows heat or conditioned air from your home to escape. If your fireplace does not have a damper, cover the fireplace opening with a snug fitting cover.

GAS WATER HEATER

- ▶ Use pipe insulation to cover the first three to six feet of the cold water pipes entering the water heater and all water pipes exiting the unit to keep your water hotter and save energy. Without pipe insulation, water can lose heat as it travels through pipes, resulting in cooler water and higher energy bills.
- ▶ Insulate your storage water heater with an insulation blanket. These blankets prevent heat from escaping the tank and reduce the amount of energy the unit uses to keep water hot. Your water heater can probably benefit from added insulation, especially if the storage tank feels warm to the touch, is more than ten years old, or is in an unheated space. The cost is usually around \$20.
- ▶ **NOTE:** Some manufacturers do not recommend installing blankets on gas, propane, and oil water heaters. If you do, be sure to do the following:
 - ▶ Read the instructions carefully and follow all safety guidelines,
 - ▶ Cut insulation away from the burner and place the blanket so that it cannot drop in front of the burner.
 - ▶ Do not place insulation on top of the heater.
- ▶ Lower the temperature to 120°F. This is the Normal or Low setting, and will provide adequate hot water for most household purposes. However, if your dishwasher does not have a booster heater (or preheater), then set your water heater to 140°F.

SOURCES

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