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Winter Energy-Saving Tips

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Family, Food & Finance

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- Use a programmable thermostat with your heating system to automatically lower the temperature at night or when no one is home.
- Keep the warm air in and the cold air out by adding insulation, caulking and weather-stripping around doors, attic access, windows, outlets and any area that can let the cold air in and the warm air out. Or, call a Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® contractor to access your home's efficiency.
- It's a good time to check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and replace old batteries. Remember – as you seal up leaks in your home this becomes even more important.
- Make sure floor and wall vents are not blocked by draperies, furniture, or rugs. Vents should also be cleaned regularly with a vacuum or broom.
- Keep blinds and drapes of sun-exposed windows open in the daytime and closed at night.
- When the fireplace is not in use, keep the flue damper tightly closed.
- Have your heating system inspected by a Home Performance ENERGY STAR® contractor. If you have a forced-air heating system, check your air filters once a month and replace if dirty.
- Make sure outdoor portions of your heating system are not blocked by leaves, shrubbery, or other objects.
- If you have a window air conditioning unit, remove it for the winter months to prevent heat from escaping through and around the unit. If it can't be removed, buy an inexpensive cover to prevent drafts.
- Install rubber gaskets behind outlets and switch plates on exterior walls. Gaskets can be found in most home improvement stores.
- Ceiling fans can keep you comfortable in the winter too! Reversing the direction of the blades pushes warm air down in the room.
- Lower your water heater temperature to 120 degrees.

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension in Niagara County provides equal program and employment opportunities.

Home Energy Use

Did you know?

- You could use 30% LESS energy in your home just by using energy more wisely and purchasing products with the ENERGY STAR® label. You can find the ENERGY STAR® on refrigerators, clothes washers, computers, dishwashers, room air conditioners, TVs, VCRs, dehumidifiers, lighting, ceiling fans and more!
- Where does your home use energy?
 - 60% - Air conditioning/heat
 - 16% - Water heater
 - 12% - Refrigerator
 - 7% - Lights
 - 5% - Computers, TV, etc.
- The amount of electricity you use is measured in, and price by kilowatt-hours (kWh). When you pay for a kilowatt-hour of electricity, you are paying for 1,000 watts of electricity used continuously for one hour.
- You can calculate the operating cost of any electrical appliances by checking its wattage and using these formulas:
 - wattage x hours used / 1,000 = kWh
 - kWh x cost per kWh = operating cost



Lighting: Did you know?



- Replacing your current incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) will save you nearly \$30 over the life of each bulb.
- ENERGY STAR® CFLs use 75% less energy than a standard incandescent bulb and last up to 10 times longer. This means that over the life of one CFL, a consumer can avoid replacing up to 10 incandescent bulbs!
- ENERGY STAR® lighting fixtures put out the same amount of light as

standard fixtures while providing excellent color rendering and light temperature. Colors appear true and natural.

- ENERGY STAR® fixtures operate at much lower temperatures than many traditional lamps, drastically reducing the risk of fire in your home.

Lighting Energy-Saving Tips

- Turn off unused lights and electronics (TVs, radios, computers) when you leave a room.
- Use timers on indoor and outdoor lights.

10 Holiday Survival Tips

Submitted by Chris Brown



1. **Enlist the help of a buddy** help keep you on track with exercise habits during the holidays.
2. **Enjoy the outdoors as much as possible.** Bundle up and go for a walk or try skating or sledding. Any extra activity helps.
3. **Join an exercise class** for fun and socialization while you stay fit. Community, health and fitness centers offer a combination of cardio and resistance-training opportunities, as well as group fitness classes and personal training.
4. **Limit holiday baking** to just one or two favorites and make those in small quantities. Holiday baked goods can pack a big punch when it comes to fat and calories.
5. **Eat a high-fiber, low-fat breakfast** each day. Whole grain cereal, skim milk and fruit provides a good start.

6. **Choose a low-fat healthful lunch** – low-fat soups and salads, baked potatoes with low-fat toppings, low-fat chili and low-fat pasta are all good choices.
7. **Keep fruit with you for snacking** so you do not get tempted by “mall choices”.
8. **Limit alcohol consumption.** Alcoholic drinks can be high in calories, and they can cause you to make poor food judgments. Choose water or club soda with lime at parties.
9. **Eat a nutritious meal or snack before you attend events or parties.** Try to eat a large low-fat salad before every meal so you will fill up on fewer calories.
10. **Bring a nutritious dish to parties** so you have something you can eat that is healthful. Raw veggies, fruit and salads make great choices.

Breakfast: The Right Start Every Day

Submitted by Katherine Streeter, R.D.

As the colder weather settles in and times become busy for many of us, it's important to remember that a good breakfast can set the tone for the day ahead. Breakfast is important for everyone – adults and children alike – for good health and performance. After eight to twelve hours without a meal or a snack, your body needs to replenish its glucose, also known as blood sugar, the main energy source for the brain and other body organs.

Studies show breakfast eaters tend to have more strength and endurance, and better concentration and problem-solving abilities. On the flip side, those who skip breakfast feel tired, irritable or restless in the morning.

Breakfast is essential to children's health and nutrition and gives them a jump-start on their daily requirement for vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Don't forget who else should eat breakfast: You! Kids who see adults eat breakfast are more likely to eat breakfast too.

If time is a concern in the mornings, start the day with quick options such as:

- Whole-grain cereal with fruit and milk
- Whole grain cereal with a cup of yogurt
- Toasted waffles with peanut butter
- Instant oatmeal with milk and dried fruit
- A whole-wheat pita with sliced hard-cooked eggs

If your taste buds just don't crave breakfast foods, enjoy a sandwich or leftovers like pizza, pasta, or rice in the morning. Just make sure to start your day the healthy way!



Modified from:

http://eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/home_8981_ENU_HTML.htm

Ten Benefits of Serving Others

Submitted by Kathy Bowers

To many children, the world is small. It is made up of their school, their home, and their neighborhood. They may assume all schools are like their school. And they tend to think the world revolves around them.

When children start to reach out and help others, their world grows and so does their confidence. Independent Sector, an organization that studies nonprofit groups, surveyed teenagers

who volunteer to help others. The young people said that through their volunteer experience they:

1. Learned to respect others.
2. Gained satisfaction from helping.
3. Learned to be helpful and kind.
4. Learned how to get along with and relate to others.
5. Learned new skills.
6. Learned to understand people who are different from them.
7. Learned how to relate to younger children.
8. Developed leadership skills.
9. Became better people.
10. Became more patient.

By giving their time and energy, many said they received more in return. By serving others, they felt they made a difference in the world.

Three ways to encourage your child to serve others:

Together help a neighbor. Maybe an elderly neighbor would appreciate your mowing the lawn or shoveling snow.

Help your child put together a weekly schedule of activities that includes some kind of service to others.

Together think of 10 ways your family can serve others. Choose one idea. Pick a date to do the activity. Afterward, talk about your experience.
Source: Connecting Lewis County

Know The Terms

Submitted by Diane S. Orr

Familiarize yourself with these terms to help identify a winter storm hazard:

- **Freezing Rain:** Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees and power lines.
- **Sleet:** Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
- **Winter Storm Watch:** A winter storm is possible in your area. Tune in to weather radio, commercial radio, or television for more information.



- **Winter Storm Warning:** A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
- **Blizzard Warning:** Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
- **Frost/Freeze Warning:** Below freezing temperatures are expected.

Resource: www.fema.gov/areyouready