



Setting your thermostat at the right temperature is another way you can save on utility bills. A good practice is to set your thermostat at 68 degrees or lower and leave it there.

If you get cold, put on a sweater or wrap in a blanket before changing the thermostat setting.

Keep Warm This Winter: Prepare Your Home for Cooler Months

Labor Day is a reminder that summer is over, and we've traded in our bathing suits for backpacks and homework. Since we're still feeling the summer sun in September, it's hard to imagine the chilly, colder temperatures that come with a Florida "winter." However, as we transition into the fall season, cold winter weather is right around the corner. The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) encourages consumers to use fall to prepare your home for the oncoming winter weather.

One way to ensure your home is ready for winter is to "get your ducts in a row," by updating the ductwork in your home's floors and attics.

Securing your home's duct leaks can ensure that warm air stays in and cold air stays out. Leaky ducts can reduce heating and cooling system efficiency by as much as 20 percent. Sometimes your ducts are hard to see, so consider hiring a professional heating and cooling contractor to inspect and repair your ductwork.

Before you put the fireplace to use again and invite friends and family over for holiday gatherings, check to make sure all smoke and fire alarms are working properly. Consider hiring a professional to have your heating and air system, furnaces, boilers, and chimneys serviced and checked, to prevent against possible fire and smoke damage. Also, now that your home is tightly sealed, it's a good idea to place a carbon dioxide detector in your home.

Winter is also a good time to examine your electronics and appliances for worn cords or exposed wiring, and to check your outlets for cracks. Remember not to overload extension cords and wall outlets, and keep all curtains, rugs, and clothing at least three feet from portable heaters. Call an electrician if you experience flickering of lights or electrical shortages, to see if there could be an electrical problem behind the walls.

The PSC also urges you to change or clean the air filters of your central heating and cooling system, and to clear the outside unit of plants or brush. Keeping dust and dirt out of your filters will make sure that your home is circulating air as efficiently as possible, and reduce the amount of energy it takes for your heater to work.

To learn more about the PSC's monthly energy saving tips and to discover new conservation habits, visit our website at

www.floridapsc.com/consumers/tips.