

Tips to keep Seniors Warm & Save Money

Seniors can be especially susceptible to even slightly colder temperatures, even when they are indoors. As we age, we need to be warmer to stay comfortable. For many older folks it is more than just a matter of comfort. They need warmth to stay healthy. It is recommended that seniors set their home thermostats for at least 68 to 70 degrees in the winter. For seniors on fixed incomes, the energy costs to keep a home this warm may be too expensive. Here is a list of no-cost or low-cost ideas that can increase a senior's comfort in the home:

- When heating a house, you may be able to save energy by reducing the heat in unused portions of your home. Create a "warm room" in areas where you frequently spend time. Turn down the thermostats in closed-off rooms. Remember during frigid weather to provide enough heat to prevent water pipes from freezing.
- Move furniture that you use the most away from drafts. Your favorite chair will seem that much cozier when it is placed in the warmest spot in a room.
- When you turn in for the night, pre-heat your bed with a hot water bottle, electric blanket or electric mattress pad. Adding an extra blanket or a quilt will let you stay warm while your thermostat is turned down for the night.
- Reverse the rotation on your ceiling fan to push warm air down into the living area. Run it on the slowest speed so you don't feel a draft.
- Wear several layers of thin clothing that will help insulate your body by trapping warmth in the air pockets between the layers.
- Wear warm clothing to bed to maintain body temperature while you sleep. Wear socks to bed. They keep you warm.
- Keep throws and shawls near-by to drape across your lap or shoulder to help you stay warm.
- Wear fleece slippers around the house to help keep your feet warm. Look for non-skid bottoms to help prevent slips and falls.
- Your head can also be a significant source of heat loss. Wear a warm comfortable hat to keep warmer.
- Use insulated drapes. Close them at night and on cloudy days to reduce heat loss through windows. Keep curtains open on the south side of the house during the day to let the warm sunshine in.
- Block any drafts blowing into your home.

- Close the damper on your fireplace when not in use.
- If you have an attached garage, keep the garage door closed.
- Caulking and weather-stripping doors and windows are low-cost measures that can reduce drafts and make your home warmer. Seal doors and windows with draft reducing weather-stripping and door sweeps.
- Make a draft stopper for your doors and windows. You can also roll up a bath towel and place it up against the door to block the draft.
- Change or clean furnace filters. Have a professional tune your furnace for maximum efficiency.