

TIPS FOR REDUCING ENERGY USE

Some basic steps

Although none of us has control over energy costs we can all take steps to control what we use. There are plenty of sources of advice on this subject, and we've set those out below, but here are some examples of what you can do.

- Turn down your thermostat.
- Only heat the rooms you use regularly.
- Take a shower rather than a bath.
- Wash clothes at no more than 30 degrees and on a full load.
- If possible dry clothes outside.
- Don't overfill the kettle.
- Avoid having appliances on standby.
- Wear an extra layer of clothing in winter.

However, just a few points you need to consider. If you are elderly or suffer from a chronic illness then staying warm becomes more important and you should aim to **keep your living room at no less than 20 degrees** centigrade and the bedroom at 18 degrees. Cold housing can be a significant health hazard which increases the risk of heart attacks, strokes and falls.

Drying clothes indoors can lead to **condensation dampness and mould growth** if there isn't sufficient ventilation. If heating is being turned down at the same time then the risk will be higher.

DIY measures

- Fit LED lightbulbs where you can.
- Fit draughtproofing to doors and windows.
- If you have a hot water cylinder, make sure it has an insulated jacket.
- Top up loft insulation and aim to have around 250mm thickness.
- When you replace electrical appliances, make sure they have a high energy efficiency rating.

As we've mentioned before, if you rent your home you will need the **permission of the landlord** first for some of the above measures but the landlord can't unreasonably withhold consent. We have set out the responsibilities of landlords for energy efficiency measures in a further article below.

Other sources of advice on energy efficiency

South London Healthy Homes is an energy advice centre which is supported by both Lewisham and Bromley councils and provides a service for their residents. Their services are available to those who are either aged 66 and over, on low incomes, disabled or with long-term health conditions. <https://cact.org.uk/swtw> or call 0808 169 1779

Upper Norwood Library, 39 Westow Hill, SE19. The Big Energy Saving Network provides a range of energy related services for vulnerable customers to help them save money on their bills and assistance with signing up to the Warm Homes Discount scheme and Priority Services Register . Telephone 0208 8670 4321.

<https://www.uppernorwoodlibraryhub.org/big-energy-saving-network>

National Energy Action is a charity which works to reduce fuel poverty and can provide advice by telephone on 0800 304 7159 (10-12) or <https://www.nea.org.uk/advice-support/>

Energy Savings Trust is a national independent body which provides a range of advice <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/top-10-energy-saving-actions-for-your-home/>