

## 5 Easy Ways to Help Take Control of Your Utility Bill

On average Montanans spend around \$1000 a year heating their homes. The following tips won't take much time but they are sure to help lower your heating bill this month. Some recommendations require basic supplies such as caulk and filters (available at most hardware stores), but these soon pay for themselves in energy savings.

- 1) **Seal up air leaks.** Look around and feel for drafts or places where hot air could be lost. Fill the air space around plumbing fixtures. Seal around light fixtures. Make sure your fireplace damper is closed when not in use. Remove window AC units in the winter. Weatherstrip windows and exterior doors and caulk around door and window trim. Plugging major leaks can save you easily save you hundreds of dollars in one season.
- 2) **Insulate your windows.** Replace screens with storm windows. Consider using heavy curtains or blankets to better insulate windows.
- 3) **Turn down the heat.** Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. Turn the heat down when the house will be unoccupied and at night. If you have a programmable thermostat, use it. Rebates are available to help offset the price of a new thermostat. The average person can save \$50-\$150 in one heating season by simply programming their thermostat.
- 4) **Replace furnace filters regularly.** Set a schedule and remember to change filters, the price you pay will be recouped by the energy savings of an efficient furnace. If you haven't had a furnace tune up in the last few years schedule one.
- 5) **Use free heat.** Open curtains and blinds on south facing windows on sunny days to take advantage of the sun's heating power.

For more information, contact AERO, the Alternative Energy Resources Organization:  
[www.aeromt.org](http://www.aeromt.org) or (406) 443-7272

