

A tenant's guide to AFFORDABLE HEATING

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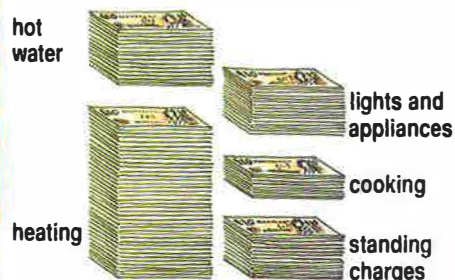
HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO KEEP WARM?

It depends on:




- the fuel you use
- the sort of heating you have
- the standard of insulation in your home

Your costs will also depend on the size of your rooms, the numbers in your household and the amount you use your heating. Shown below are average figures to keep warm.

How your money goes on fuel



The greater part of your fuel bill goes on heating and hot water.

	MAINS GAS		ELECTRICITY			SOLID FUELS		OTHER FUELS		
	gas fire	gas wall heater	central heating	fan heaters and bar fires	off-peak (Economy 7)	open fire	open fire with back boiler	room heater with back boiler	Color gas cabinet heater	paraffin heater
 living room only	£5.30	£3.80	£4.50	£13.50	£7.00	£11.10	£5.90	£5.10	£11.70	£7.30
 1 bedroom flat	£6.20	£4.60	£5.70	£16.00	£7.70	£13.00	£7.80	£6.70	£13.60	£8.50
 3 bedroom house	-	£8.80	£10.25	£30.30	£15.50	-	£14.40	£12.10	-	-

The costs are for an average winter week (1990 prices), and for all day heating. They do not include standing charges or maintenance costs. The fuel costs were calculated on the Energy Targeter computer program.



Use a low setting for a long time - its cheaper and more comfortable.



Draw the curtains when it gets dark. Make sure they don't hang in front of radiators.

Tuck the bottom of the curtains onto the window sill - this will help to stop cold down draughts.

Switch off the heating or turn down the setting on your heater when no-one is at home.



Turn off heating in rooms not in use for long periods and close the door.



Make the most of the warmth from the sun - draw the curtains back and plan to spend most of your time in the sunny rooms.



Don't put furniture in front of radiators or heaters.

MONEY SAVING TIPS

Write down the meter reading at the same time each week - especially when you change heating arrangements. This allows you to see what difference it makes to your fuel payments.



THE VALUE OF INSULATION

A well insulated house:

- keeps heat in - like a tea cosy.
- has warmer room surfaces, making you feel more comfortable
- is less likely to have condensation.

WHERE TO START



FIT A CYLINDER JACKET

If your water tank has no insulation or the jacket is old and thin (1" or 2" thick) - a new jacket is a must - it will keep the water hot for much longer and pay for itself in a few weeks

LAY LOFT INSULATION

If you have a loft, it should have insulation at least 100mm (4") thick to keep the heat in. If your insulation is 2" thick or less, you may be eligible for a grant.



CUT OUT DRAUGHTS

Draughts are one of the main reasons why homes feel cold and cost a lot to heat. Draughtstrip windows, outside doors and the loft hatch and fill gaps in the ground floor floorboards and below the skirting board.

HOW INSULATION AFFECTS YOUR HEATING BILLS

A typical 3 bedroom house with.....	weekly winter heating costs
<p>.....gas fire in the living room, no insulation</p>	<p>= £6.25</p>
<p>.....central heating and 100mm loft insulation</p>	<p>= £10.25</p>
<p>.....central heating, loft and wall insulation and draughtstripping</p>	<p>= £6.50</p>

You can see that it costs about the same to heat a well insulated home as it does to heat just the living room in a poorly insulated house.

If you plan to do these jobs yourself, useful leaflets in **Your home energy survey** pack tell you how to do them properly - see the HELPLINE section. You may find you can get a grant to help towards the cost.....**check**

WARNING

It is a danger to your health to block up airbricks or 'spinner' vents in rooms that contain an open fire, gas fire, water heater (eg Ascot), flued

boiler or where you use a bottled gas or paraffin heater. The vents are there to supply air to burn the fuel safely and avoid the build up of dangerous fumes.

HOW CAN I GET AFFORDABLE HEATING?

If your landlord is planning full modernisation of your home, or simply planning to add central heating, ask for your home to be insulated at the same time - it may cost very little extra and is your best chance to be warm and get value for money from your heating.

The following examples show where landlords have provided affordable heating. These are not isolated examples, local authorities and housing associations up and down the country are improving the insulation standards of their housing stocks.

The Brades Rise estate in Sandwell, near Birmingham used to have expensive electric underfloor heating that tenants could not afford to use. As a result the flats were cold and suffered from condensation and



Sandwell

mould. Following consultation with tenants, the Council installed new Economy 7 electric heating, insulation and draughtstripping. The improvement has been dramatic. The houses are now warm and condensation and mould are just a memory.

There is a similar story for some inner city housing in Liverpool run by Merseyside Improved Houses. Here a new heating, insulation and double glazing package provide good heating for under £3/week for a 2 bedroom terrace house.



Liverpool

GETTING FINANCIAL HELP WITH INSULATION

→ Tenants receiving Income Support, Housing Benefit, Family Credit or Community Charge Benefit may be able to get a grant under the **Home Energy Efficiency Scheme** towards the cost of draughtstripping, loft, tank and pipe insulation and energy advice. This scheme will start on 1st January 1991.

For Home Energy Efficiency Scheme grants contact Energy Action Grants Agency, PO Box 1NG, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE99 1NG.

Tenants of private landlords and housing associations receiving the above benefits may

be entitled to a **Minor Works Assistance** grant to meet the cost of a range of energy efficiency measures (including improvements to heating systems for tenants aged 60 or more).

Private tenants with a repairing obligation in their lease may also be eligible for a **House Renovations Grant** which is for major repairs and improvements. This could include insulation and a new heating system. There is a means test for this grant.

See the **HELPLINE** section for where to apply for these two grants.

AN ACTION PLAN FOR TENANTS

If a landlord is short of money for maintenance and improvements, it may be decided to put heating and insulation schemes at the bottom of the priority list. If you can't afford to keep your home warm:

- point this out to your landlord
- get organised with other tenants
- make sure your views and priorities are known.

Government legislation obliges Councils and Housing Associations to involve their tenants when making decisions.

You are entitled to ask for information on:

- how money is being spent
- what future plans there are for your estate.

Work with your Councillors to influence the Council's plans.

Some grants to Councils depend on them showing that tenants are taking an active part in managing their schemes.

Contact other tenant groups to find out what is happening elsewhere. For instance, the 'Modernisation Modules' in Eastbourne, where tenants choose which improvement items they want for a set increase in rent, or the 'Total heating' scheme in Birmingham.

Finally, if your home suffers from damp which affects your health, complain to your landlord. If nothing is done, contact a law centre or legal aid lawyer for advice.

HELPLINE

For more energy efficiency advice...

contact Neighbourhood Energy Action, 2/4 Bigg Market, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 1UW. Tel. 091-261 5677

For grants other than the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme...

contact the Environmental Health Department of your local council.

For advice on tenant participation...

contact the Tenant Participation Advisory Service, 48 The Crescent, Salford, M5 4NY. Tel. 061 745 7903

For information on Eastbourne's Modernisation Modules...

contact, Mick Bryan, Eastbourne Tenants Association, 11 Hampshire Court, Etchingham Road, Langney, Eastbourne, BN23 7DP Tel. 0323 764975

For services that the fuel industries provide...

contact your local gas or electricity showroom.

In the case of disputes...

contact your Gas Consumers Council or Office of Electricity Regulation (OFFER) - their addresses are on the back of your bill.

Pensioners with heating problems...

A Winter Warmth Line is run from mid October to the end of March each winter by Help-the-Aged, Freephone 0800 289 404 in England and Wales 0800 838 587 in Scotland 0800 616 757 in Northern Ireland

Useful leaflets...

Your home energy survey pack, and *Handy hints to save energy in your home*, are available from Housing Advice Centres, or Energy Efficiency Office, Blackhorse Road, London SE99 6UB. Tel. 081-691 9000