

December 2024

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# ONE RED initiative launches first program, announces website upgrades

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy has begun rolling out its [ONE RED](#) programs.

The ONE RED initiative (Opportunity for Nebraska: Reducing Emissions and Decarbonization) was selected to receive a [\\$307 million grant](#) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in July 2024. These funds are being used to develop and administer voluntary, incentive-based [programs](#) that will reduce emissions, promote energy efficiency, and bolster Nebraska's economy. NDEE officially received the grant funds in October.

Since the update from our September Nebraska Energy Quarterly, NDEE has launched the first ONE RED program and has updated its website to provide information about the others.

## **ONE RED Irrigation Engine Program**

On Nov. 14, 2024, NDEE [announced](#) it is accepting applications for the ONE RED Irrigation Engine Program.

The Irrigation Engine Program provides rebates to assist farmers with replacing agricultural irrigation pump diesel engines with all-electric equipment. NDEE will reimburse 60% of the cost of the electrical equipment, installation, and required electric utility costs up to a maximum rebate of \$23,000. Applications are due Jan. 16, 2024.

This program builds off the existing Nebraska Clean Diesel Rebate Program, which NDEE has administered since 2017. The Clean Diesel Rebate Program receives federal funding through the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. In addition to providing rebates for irrigation engines, Nebraska's Clean Diesel rebates have also been used to fund the replacement of school buses and trucks with old diesel engines.

For the next five years, funding to replace irrigation engines will be come from the ONE RED program, while buses and truck replacement rebates will continue to be administered through the Clean Diesel program. The ONE RED initiative has funding for an estimated 250 irrigation engine replacements by 2029 and anticipates funding at least 50 replacements in this year's cycle.

## *ONE RED Program History*

NDEE applied for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program in the spring of 2023. The CPRG program awarded funds to state and local governments to develop Priority Climate Action Plans (PCAP) and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans (CAP) that propose measures to achieve short-term and long-term emissions reductions, respectively.

After a year-long planning effort and gathering input and advice from citizens and stakeholders throughout Nebraska, NDEE submitted its [PCAP](#) to the EPA on March 1, 2023. Nebraska's PCAP proposes voluntary, incentive-based measures that not only reduce air emissions, but provide economic benefits, as well.

Submittal of the PCAP made NDEE eligible to apply for the CPRG Implementation Grant. This grant provides funds for awardees to carry out the emissions reductions measures identified in their PCAPs. In July 2024, the EPA announced NDEE received \$307 million in implementation funds for select measures in the state's PCAP — these measures are being developed into programs overseen by NDEE's ONE RED initiative.

NDEE is currently working to roll out the ONE RED programs, as well as working on the [CAP](#) funded through the initial CPRG planning grant.

NDEE has [an overview](#) of the ONE RED Irrigation Engine Program on its website, as well as [application information](#).

### ONE RED webpages and NDEE’s new website

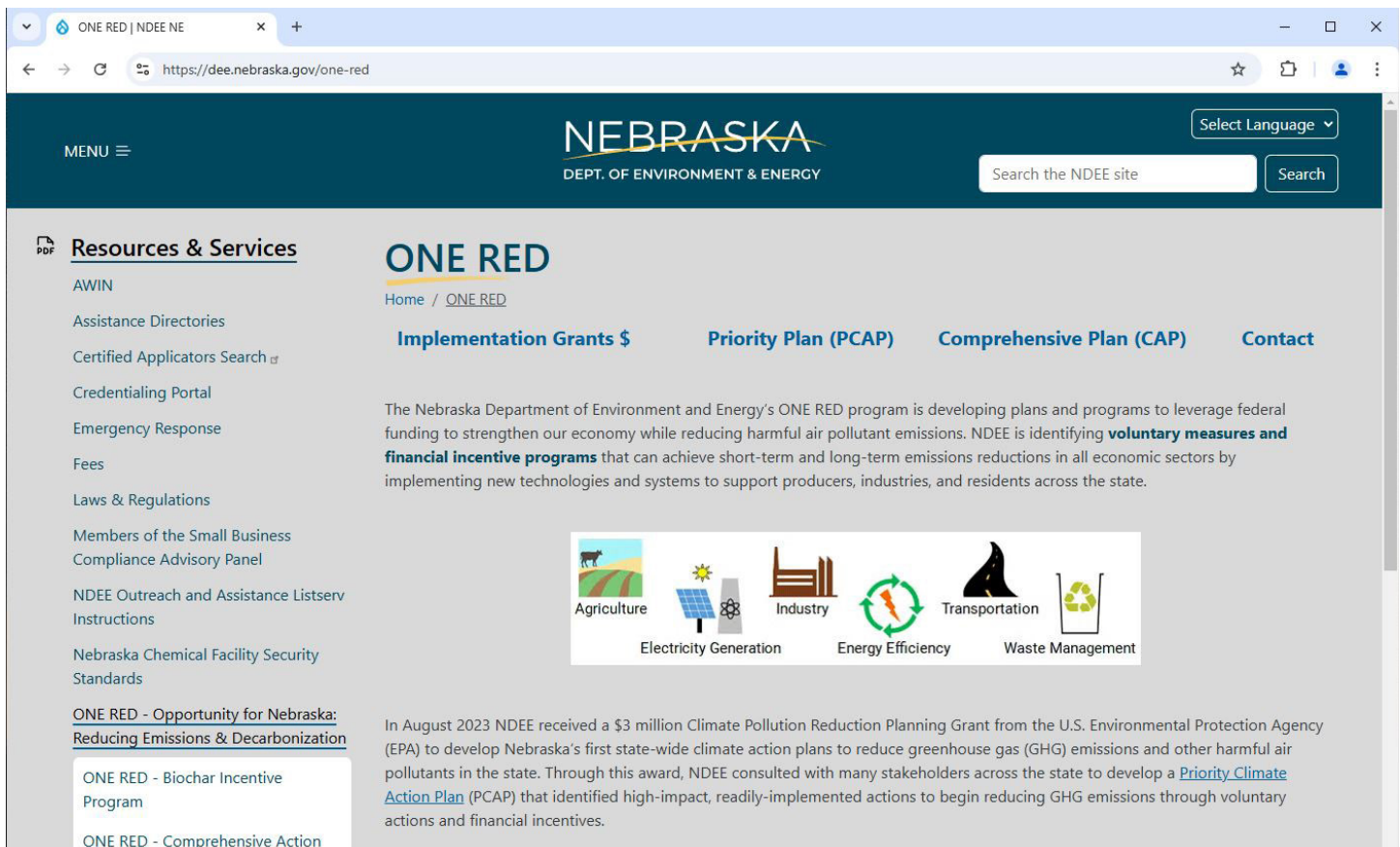
Following receipt of the \$307 million EPA grant, NDEE updated its ONE RED pages. These updates include up-to-date information on the ONE RED [Implementation Page](#), as well as informational pages about each of the ONE RED programs. Those programs include:

- [The Non-Residential Energy Efficiency Program](#)
- [The Residential Pre-Weatherization Program](#)
- [The ONE RED Irrigation Engine Program](#)
- [The Rural Community Solar Program](#)
- [The Non-Residential Solar Program](#)
- The Ag Registry and Grants Program
- The Anaerobic Digester/Biogas Hub Program
- [The Biochar Incentive Program](#)

Links to these programs can also be found on the left menu on the implementation page. Pages for the Ag Registry and Grants Program and the Anaerobic Digester/Biogas Hub Program are still in development.

Additionally, NDEE launched its new website on Dec. 2, 2024. The agency’s new URL is <https://dee.nebraska.gov/> and the old website’s URL redirects to the new site.

Along with a more modern look, NDEE’s new website is secure and mobile-responsive, with a goal of being user friendly so the public can easily find the information they need. If you find web links that are broken or do not redirect to the new website, please alert NDEE by emailing [ndee.assistance@nebraska.gov](mailto:ndee.assistance@nebraska.gov).



A screenshot of NDEE’s ONE RED home page.

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# Federal funding updates from NDEE

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) has pursued several federal funding opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). In all, NDEE has applied for roughly 30 grant programs, both competitive and non-competitive, and has been awarded more than \$552 million as of Dec. 9, 2024.



*Photo by Chad Peltola on Unsplash*

**The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy continues to make progress on federal funding opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.**

To help the public keep track of these grant programs, NDEE regularly updates a PDF on the [its website](#) titled “NDEE IIJA/IRA Grant Funding Status.” It encompasses NDEE’s IIJA /IRA applications to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Below are updates on NDEE’s energy-based programs funded through IIJA/IRA grants since the last Nebraska Energy Quarterly was published in September:

## **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant**

On Nov. 12, NDEE [announced](#) additional awards through its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program, funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Eligible projects included upgrades to energy efficient lighting; installation of renewable energy systems on government buildings; development of alternative transportation infrastructure such as pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths; and public education to promote energy efficiency and conservation.

The two additional grant awards are:

### **Nov. 12 EECBG recipients**

Grant Recipient	Funding Amount	Project
Emerson	\$100,000	A 500Kw (AC)/650kW (DC) photovoltaic solar tracking facility at the village’s wastewater treatment facility
Glenvil	\$55,434	Updates to sidewalks and pathways throughout the community

The agency first announced EECBG awards on [Aug. 19](#). Awards made at that time are listed on the next page. To date, NDEE has awarded EECBG grants to 12 communities, distributing more than \$1.1 million.

## Aug. 19 EECBG recipients

Grant Recipient	Funding Amount	Project
Beatrice	\$58,041	Energy efficient lighting in the city's auditorium and police station
Bloomfield	\$71,682	Energy efficient lighting and windows in the city library
Curtis	\$87,871	Energy efficient streetlights on Highways 18 and 23
Hickman	\$100,000	Energy efficient streetlights and street signs
Mitchell	\$24,324	Energy efficient lighting at city hall, the police department, the senior center, and the library
Nebraska City Utilities	\$100,000	Energy efficient streetlights along the main streets or entrances to Bennet, Douglas, Palmyra, Unadilla, Otoe, Lorton, Julian and Brock
North Platte	\$100,000	Energy efficient lighting at city hall, fire stations #2 and #3, the rec center, the senior center, and the ball field
Peru	\$81,731	Energy efficient streetlights along the downtown/business district
Shickley	\$83,148	Energy efficient streetlights
South Sioux City	\$100,000	Energy efficient lighting at the ball field
Wahoo	\$100,000	Energy efficient streetlights
Walthill	\$51,696	Solar streetlights

### **Energy efficiency revolving loan fund capitalization grant program**

On Nov. 1, NDEE received an award of \$5.8 million through the IIJA's Energy efficiency revolving loan fund capitalization grant program. The agency plans to use these funds to support energy efficient measures in public buildings, with an emphasis on K-12 schools, by providing low interest loans to finance projects. The program is currently in development.

*Keep up with NDEE's energy IIJA/BIL & IRA Formula Funding grant applications on our [update page](#).*



# United Way of the Midlands selected to provide weatherization services in Douglas County

NDEE [announced](#) it has selected [United Way of the Midlands](#) to administer the Low-Income [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) in Douglas County.

The Weatherization Assistance Program enables low-income individuals and families in Nebraska to reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient at no cost. To be eligible, household income must fall below 200%, or double, the federal poverty level.

Since the program began in 1977, it has invested \$240 million in making energy efficiency improvements in 71,576 homes.

UWM's 211 Helpline is now accepting weatherization applications for households in Douglas County. The helpline will also assist with determining eligibility for the program, making it easier for families in need to access this vital service.

In fiscal year 2024, Nebraska's Weatherization Assistance Program received funding from four sources: the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program, U.S. DOE's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and State Petroleum Violation Escrow Funds

These funds are then allocated to eight regional non-profit agencies across the state. United Way joins seven Community Action Partnership organizations in providing weatherization services to Nebraskans, serving Douglas County specifically. NDEE selected United Way as a sub-grantee through a request for proposals process. Regional weatherization service providers include:



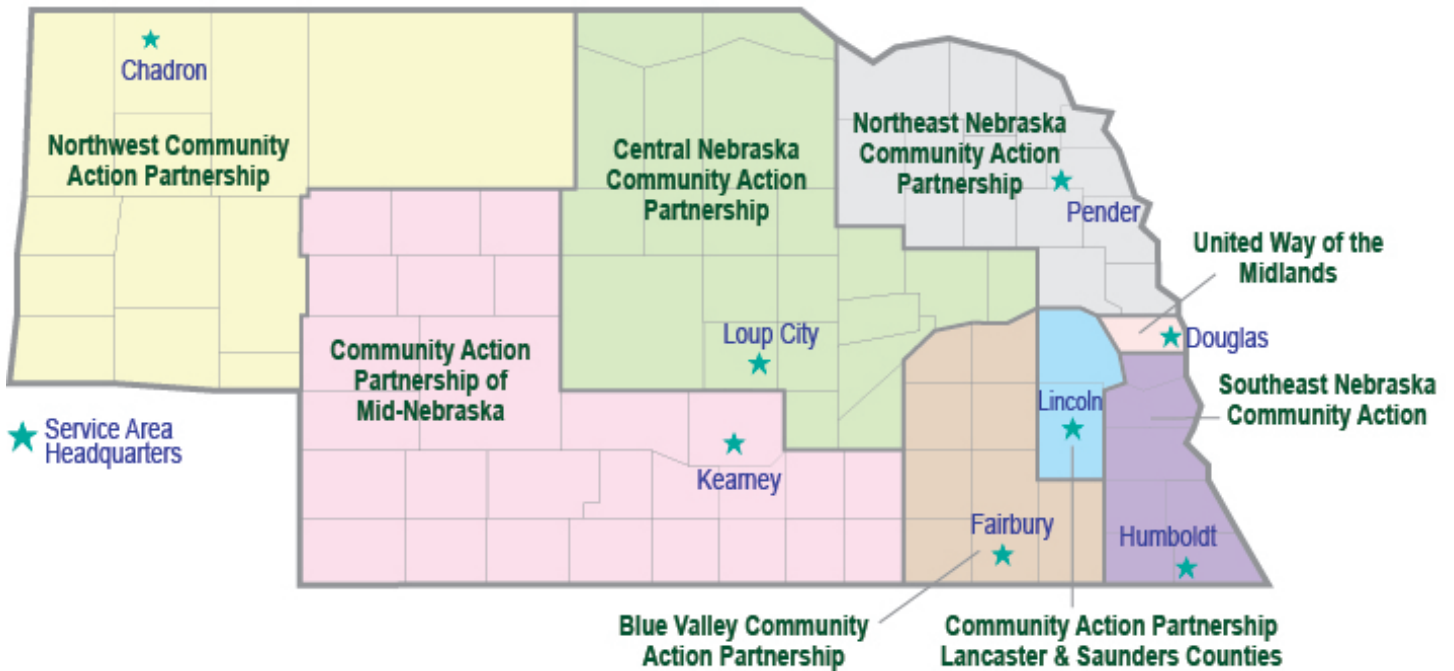
- [Blue Valley Community Action Partnership](#)
- [Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership](#)
- [Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership](#)
- [Lancaster and Saunders Counties Community Action Partnership](#)
- [Mid-Nebraska Community Action Partnership](#)
- [Northwest Nebraska Community Action Partnership](#)
- [Southeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership](#)
- [United Way of the Midlands](#)

*Photo by Dennis Schroeder, NREL*

Improved insulation is one of the services NDEE and its subgrantees provide through the Nebraska Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program.

“NDEE is excited to add United Way of the Midlands to the Weatherization network,” NDEE Interim Director Kara

## Weatherization Service Provider Region Map



Valentine said. “UWM joins a group of deeply committed weatherization professionals who provide an important service to our neighbors in need. With this partnership, eligible Douglas County residents can access this service to save money on their energy bills while also making their homes more comfortable.”

The types of energy-efficiency improvements made through the weatherization program are determined based on an energy audit analysis completed on each home and the type of home construction. Weatherization costs per house averages between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per home, excluding the cost of health and safety improvements, such as furnace repairs or replacements. The average cost per home is set by the DOE annually based on the Consumer Price Index. In homes, the most common improvements generally are;

- Adding insulation
- Replacing and repairing furnaces
- Reducing air leakage
- Installing high efficiency lighting
- Insulating water heater tanks and pipes
- Repairing cracked windows

Mobile homes are also eligible for weatherization services, including underbelly insulation, window sealing and sealing air leaks. Renters are eligible, as well, but require written permission from their landlords and some restrictions apply.

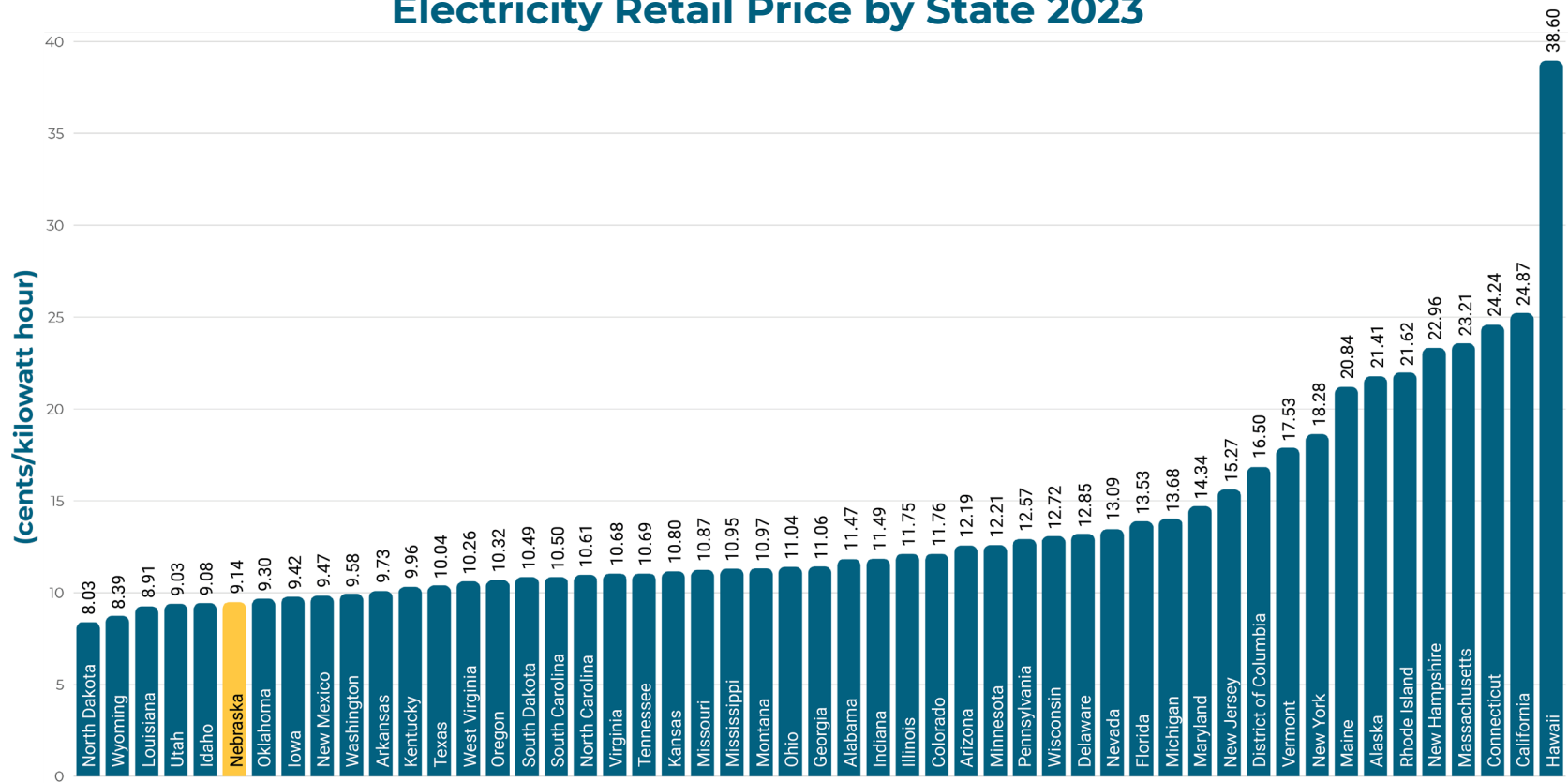
Homes with significant health and safety issues must be deferred from the weatherization program, pending rectification of these issues. To help low-income Nebraskans overcome this hurdle, NDEE’s ONE RED initiative is developing a [Residential Pre-Weatherization Program](#), which will address critical home repairs. These repairs will make the home safer and make more individuals and families eligible for weatherization services to improve energy efficiency. More information will be made available as the program is developed.

# Energy Statistics

## Nebraska by Numbers - Electricity Retail Price

One of NDEE's duties is to maintain a collection of energy data to assess trends in the availability, consumption, and development of all forms of energy. This information can be found on [NDEE's statistics page](#). This edition's Nebraska by Numbers will focus on retail electricity costs and how Nebraska stacks up against other states and Washington, D.C. This information and more can also be found on the [Energy Information Administration's website](#).

### Electricity Retail Price by State 2023



**9.14 cents/kWh**—Nebraska's average electricity retail price

Nebraska had the 6th lowest average electricity retail price in the U.S. In 2019, Nebraska's average electricity retail price was 9.08 cents/kWh.

**12.68 cents/kWh**—U.S. average electricity retail price

North Dakota had the lowest price at 8.03 cents/kWh, and Hawaii had the highest price at 38.60.

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## Home heating tips can save money

Information from the [U.S. Department of Energy](#)

Heating your home consumes more energy and costs more money than any other system in your home, typically accounting for about 42% of your utility bill. Learn how to save money and increase your comfort with these tips and recommendations.

### **Heating Tips**

- If you have a conventional heating system, set your programmable thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter and lower the setpoint when you're sleeping or away from home. For heat pump systems, however, the temperature does not need to be lowered when you are sleeping or away from home. Heat pumps are so efficient the rule for these systems is to "set it and forget it". Just be sure to set the temperature at a reasonable temperature.
- Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as recommended.
- Clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators as needed; make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting, or drapes.
- Eliminate trapped air from hot-water radiators once or twice a season; if unsure about how to perform this task, contact a professional.
- Place heat-resistant radiator reflectors between exterior walls and the radiators.
- Turn off kitchen, bath, and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking or bathing; when replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.
- During winter, keep the draperies and shades on your south-facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.



Photo by Toa Heftiba on Unsplash

Setting your thermostat to a lower temperature when you're not home, cleaning warm-air registers, and keeping shades on south-facing windows open are easier ways to increase to make your home more comfortable in the winter.

### **Energy-Efficient Products**

Select energy-efficient products when you buy new heating equipment. Your contractor should be able to give you energy fact sheets for different types, models, and designs to help you compare energy usage. See the [efficiency standards](#) for information on minimum ratings and look for the [ENERGY STAR](#) label when purchasing new products.

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