

Tips to Help Combat This Winter's Rising Home Heating Costs

Taking the time to ensure your home is properly heated and insulated is crucial during the blistery months of winter. Not only will this keep you warm but it will also save you money! Make sure you schedule an appointment with a professional to inspect your heating equipment to assure it is running properly for the cold weather. There are also a variety of things you can do on your own to be sure your heating unit is running safe and effectively:

- After a professional has examined your heating unit and you are ready to turn on your boiler or furnace, be sure to remove any flammable objects surrounding the unit. Giving your heating unit space allows for it to function at its fullest capacity.
- It is important to make sure every room in the house is receiving the same amount of heat. Open all of the dampers and registers and leave the heat running for a few hours. If any of the rooms are cooler than the others, adjust the thermostat so that the cooler rooms become as warm as the others. If you find that any of the rooms are particularly warmer than the



Replace your heater's air filter once a month to reduce heating costs by as much as %10.

others, adjust the dampers and registers so that they come down to the same level as the cooler rooms that you just warmed up.

- Clean the filters for the furnace. You will find most filters are relatively inexpensive, disposable, easy to clean and replace. Cleaning or replacing the filters helps improve the flow of the air and efficiency. Remember to do this at least once a month. However, if you have any pets, you should do this more often. This can really help lower your bills as well as improve your furnace's efficiency by almost 10%.

- Remove any sediment at the bottom of your water heater's tank because it reduces the efficiency of the burner.
- Be sure to take the time to check the insulation and ventilation in your attic. This will not only help warming your home but it will help prevent ice dams.
- Make sure you install your storm windows and check both the interior of your home (fireplace and chimney area and vents for the dryer, in the kitchen and in bathrooms) as well as the exterior (pipes, doors and window frames) for any cracks or openings that heat could leak from. If you find any leaks or cracks use caulk to seal them.

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HELPFUL HINT

To further reduce heating and cooling costs make sure to switch the return air vents in your home. Close the top vents and open the bottom vents in Fall/Winter. Reverse this action in Spring/Summer.

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- If you keep air-conditioning units in your window year round be sure you tightly cover them with a tarp or with its cover. Insulate any gaps between the unit and the window frame.
- While all water heaters are insulated, you might find it to be more beneficial to add to that insulation by wrapping your hot water tank with a jacket. If you are insulating a gas water heater, remember to leave the air intake vent uncovered. This will help you save almost 10% on water heating costs.
- If you have ceiling fans change the direction of the blades from counterclockwise to clockwise and set the fan at its lowest speed. This will lightly push warm air down from the ceiling.

While it is extremely important to efficiently keep your home warm and insulated during the winter, these handy tips will also help you become much more conscientious about conserving energy year round! 🏠

Cedar Chase and Landis Estates Now Reserving Homesites...

Cedar Chase Update

Located in the West Hempfield area of Mountville, Cedar Chase features 22-single family homesites with 6 fantastic floor plans. Site improvements are nearly finished and Your Towne Builders began construction on a model home in November. The featured model is The Taylor, which will be used as a sales and selection center for the project.

The community has public sewer, water and natural gas and features a large wooded recreation area with a paved walking/bike path. Homesites are ready for reservations with 4 homesites reserved.

For information on Cedar Chase contact Lori Artz, RE/MAX Associates of Lancaster at 717-569-2222.

Landis Estates Update

Tucked away in the heart of picturesque Manheim Township, yet close to everything with easy access to Routes 30 and 222, Landis Estates is a perfect location.

Your Towne Builders has 5 homesites available for completely custom building. The Your Towne Builders team, along with their skilled craftsmen and quality vendors

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Around Your Towne...

YTB Hires Office Assistant



Your Towne Builders is pleased to announce the expansion of their team with the hiring of their newest employee,

Jennifer Silzle, as the company's administrative assistant. Jennifer is a 2004 graduate of Millersville University where she earned a bachelor of science in speech communication with an option in public relations.

Steve Gives Back to Stevens

Steve Artz, president of Your Towne Builders, has been elected to a seat on the Thaddeus Stevens Alumni Association Board of Governors, a non-profit organization that acts as the charitable division of the Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. Steve was also elected to the Thaddeus Stevens Foundation Board of Directors.

YTB Team Nails Competition

The entire Your Towne Builders Team participated in the annual nail driving competition at the Building Industry Association's annual Membership Picnic in September. Jim Giordano, Project Supervisor, earned second place in the men's competition with the top honor going to a local remodeler. We won't mention how the rest of the team did. Let's just say they will be taking pointers from Jim before next years competition. 🏠

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Although the advice and information in this newsletter is consistent with industry standards and practices, there is no substitute for professional workmanship and experience. Your Towne Builders, Inc. recommends that all home improvements and repairs be performed by a professional. Therefore, Your Towne Builders, Inc. cannot and does not assume any liability for improvements or repairs that are not exclusively performed by Your Towne Builders, Inc.

Home for the Holidays

Safety Tips for You and Your Family

For many families, the holidays are a time for putting up festive lights, lighting candles and decorating evergreens. It is important during the holidays to make sure you remember to decorate safely. Follow these easy tips to ensure your 2005 holiday experience is a pleasant one.

Hanging lights is a fun tradition many families uphold every year. However, what many people do not know is a majority of fires during the holiday season are electrical fires caused by extension cords and lights. Before stringing your lights, look over any extension cords you are using and check them for fraying. While they are convenient, avoid plugging more than three sets of lights into an extension cord. Check and make sure all of your lights are safety certified with a label that says "Underwriters Laboratories Approved" or "UL Listed". Avoid leaving the lights on while you are sleeping. Instead, try setting the lights to a timer. Using a timer to turn the lights off and on is a great and



safe way to keep your house lit for the holidays, especially if you are leaving town for an extended period of time.

Just as with lights, never leave candles burning over night. Blow out any candles that have been burning four hours or longer. Avoid putting candles near flammable objects such as curtains, lampshades or parched evergreens.

If you have a "real" Christmas tree in your home be sure to water it everyday. Watering the tree will prolong the life of it's needles and keep the tree from posing a fire hazard. If your tree is artificial, it is very important to make sure it is fire retardant.

Keep these simple tips in mind and enjoy a safe and happy holiday with your loved ones! 🏠

Landis Estates Update

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will design and build a beautiful home unique to your lifestyle.

Your Towne Builders will soon feature a gorgeously designed spec home with a warm and inviting floor plan, 5 spacious bedrooms, 4.5 baths, a large gourmet kitchen and many more amenities too numerous to mention.

Homesites are available for reservations at this time. For more information call Lori Artz, RE/MAX Associations of Lancaster at 717-569-2222. 🏠

Another Helpful Hint

Have you ever smelled something a bit foul near your bathroom vanities? Have you scratched your head and tried to figure out where the odor was coming from and how to get rid of it?

We'll let us shed some light on the mystery. The overflow channel in your vanity top can get dirty and



bacteria and odor causing residues can build up over time. To freshen up your vanities, pour about a cup of bleach down the overflow channel about every 3-4 months or as needed.

This trick also works for tub and shower drains as well as the drain pipe of your clothes washer. 🏠

In this issue...

- Tips to make your home heating system work more efficiently
- Cedar Chase and Landis Estates Updates
- Meet our newest employee
- Preview our newest model

Coming next time...

- Spring Maintenance Tips
- Information and updates on the Cedar Chase model home and Landis Estates spec home



Designed for Living. Built for Life

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Don't forget to change the batteries in your smoke detectors!

Meet Our Newest Model...The Taylor



With 2505 square feet of upscale living space and a bright, open floor plan our new Taylor model is sure to be a winner. The Taylor Features a luxury owner's suite and three additional spacious bedrooms; a two-story great room and foyer; a charming covered patio and extra storage space in the garage. The Taylor is currently being offered as one of 6 Cedar Chase floor plans and has a base price around \$280,000.

