

**Aquariums:** Keep aquariums covered to reduce the amount of moisture escaping. Elevated humidity levels in the home increase human discomfort.

**Fireplace/Wood burning stove:** Check to make sure the damper is closed when the fireplace is not in use and keep wood stove doors closed.

**In the kitchen:** Do not use the oven or stove for heating the house.

In general when cooking, using a microwave oven instead will be less expensive.

A dishwasher uses the same amount of electricity whether it is fully loaded or only contains a few items. Therefore, run full loads to save energy.

Clean off freezer and refrigerator coils every six months. The dust that accumulates on the coils reduces efficiency. Also, a full freezer runs less, even if that means filling up water jugs and freezing them. Place these containers beneath food so that they're not in the way.

**Hot Water:** Turn off the water heater if you will be away from home for two or more days. The thermostat should be set between 120 and 140 degrees. The lower the setting, the more energy it will save.

## District Offices

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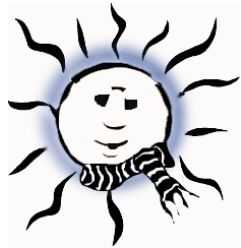
***Orange Park District Office***  
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Orange Park, FL 32065  
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Low-cost and  
No-cost Ways  
to Save  
Energy This  
Winter





## Welcome to winter in Florida!

While winter here isn't nearly as bad as in other parts of the country, it still gets cold. And your home energy consumption is likely on the rise, mostly from heating expenses. There are some small steps you can consider at little to no expense to trim back energy use.

### Around the house...

**Lighting:** Fluorescent lights are ideal for use in place of incandescent lights that are used frequently (more than about 3 hours a day). But, whether you use fluorescent lights or not, remember to turn off lights in unoccupied rooms.



**Windows:** Keep windows closed while heating the house. Also keep curtains closed during hours of extreme cold temperatures. If using venetian blinds, adjust them so that they reflect sun rays inward. Also, awning and jalousie windows should be closed as tight as possible to reduce air leaks. Open windows for natural ventilation only during mild weather.

## Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC): The largest electricity consumers in the house

Basic maintenance will go a long way to enhance the system's efficiency and prolong the life of the HVAC unit. Heating units should be serviced annually. Clean filters monthly and replace when needed. A dirty filter restricts airflow and causes the unit to lose efficiency.

Throughout the house, it's important to keep all air supply registers to all rooms open and the return air pathways free from obstructions (furniture). Also, doors should be kept open to any room that has a supply air register but no return air vent within the room.

Outside, it is wise to keep plants and other obstructions at least three feet away from the outside unit to prevent interference with air circulation.

Temperature settings play a significant role in a home's energy consumption. For each degree you set the heating thermostat below 68 degrees, you will see up to a 4% savings per degree. With this thought in mind, consider lowering the thermostat a few degrees and using blankets during sleeping hours. Also, lowering the thermostat by five degrees when away from your home can generate a savings. While you can adjust the settings



manually, you might also consider installing an electronic programmable thermostat to manage your temperature setting throughout the day and night. Many of these are suitable for the do-it-yourselfer to easily install.

You will find it is less expensive to use a small heater to warm the temperature in one room of the house than it is to heat the whole house to the warmer temperature using the central system.

### Fanning up more savings...

**Fans:** Bathroom exhaust fans play an important role in increasing the comfort of your home and should run for approximately 20 minutes to effectively remove the excess humidity from the area. To operate most efficiently, if there is an operational window in the bathroom, open the window slightly while the fan is running so that less heated air is pulled from the rest of the house. Do not run the fan longer than about 20 minutes and remember to close the window when you turn off the fan.

When cooking, kitchen exhaust fans should likewise be run for about 20 minutes to effectively remove extra humidity added to the room.

### More ways to save

**Computers:** When not being actively used, turning off the computer is most economical, however; if the computer must be left on, turning off the monitor will cut the electricity consumption in half.