

As temperatures fall, FirstEnergy Corp. (NYSE:FE) customers can take steps to manage their energy usage while keeping warm.

Cool temperatures can often lead to rising energy usage for customers as the need for heat increases and HVAC systems strain to keep up with higher demand. While customers are unable to control the weather, there are several things they can do to keep their homes warm without relying solely on their home's heating unit.

Implementing the following tips will help customers use electricity wisely during the cold winter months:

- Turn your thermostat down. Reducing your setting by just one degree can lower heating bills by 3 percent.
- Dress for the weather. Wearing an extra layer or wrapping up in a blanket while you're relaxing can help you feel more comfortable without turning up the thermostat.
- Close the fireplace damper when it is not in use to keep cold air out.
- Close the drapes at night. During the day, only open those that receive direct sunlight.
- Turn off lights when you aren't using them, and use a timer for outdoor lighting.
- Change furnace filters regularly to ensure your heating system is working efficiently.
- Keep registers for supply or return air free of obstructions like curtains or furniture.
- Seal any leaks with caulk or weather stripping to prevent cold air from sneaking into your home.
- Wrap exposed pipes and water heaters that are in unconditioned spaces.
- Make sure your home is properly insulated. If you have less than six inches of insulation, you'll benefit by adding more.
- Locate your thermostat on an inside wall and away from windows and doors. Cold drafts can cause the thermostat to keep the system running unnecessarily.

- Consider investing in ENERGY STAR® appliances or heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. FirstEnergy's utilities may offer rebates on these purchases and tax deductions may apply as well.