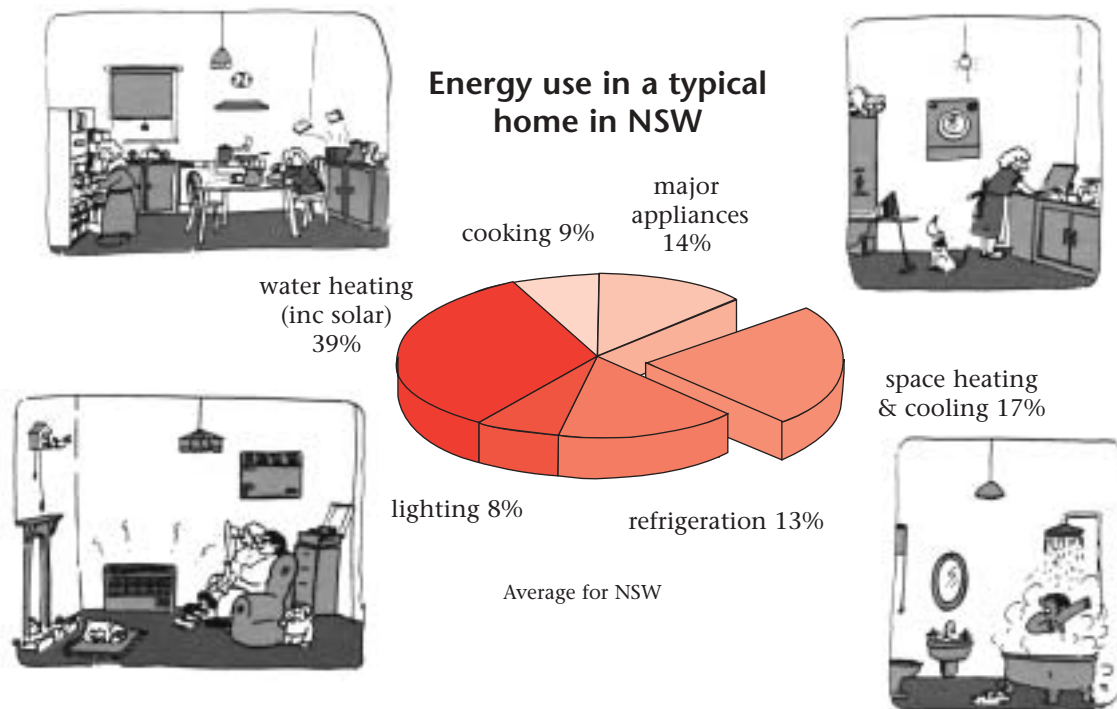


Home heating hints



If you have bought an existing home or are renting, you may have inherited an inappropriate and expensive heating system. However, there are things you can do to reduce your heating costs without sacrificing your personal comfort. In fact, you can easily and cost effectively improve your comfort by paying particular attention to:

YOUR HOME: Ensure your home retains the heat you put into it. (Insulation, effective window coverings and draught-proofing are all vital).

YOUR HEATING SYSTEM: The way you maintain and operate your heater can influence its running costs. Learn the right methods, and you'll find that your heating system costs you less to run while providing more useful heat.

Your home

Insulate

Uninsulated ceilings, walls and even floors can account for over 70% of total heat loss from a home. See our brochure *Insulating your home* for further details on insulating products and procedures.

Seal out draughts

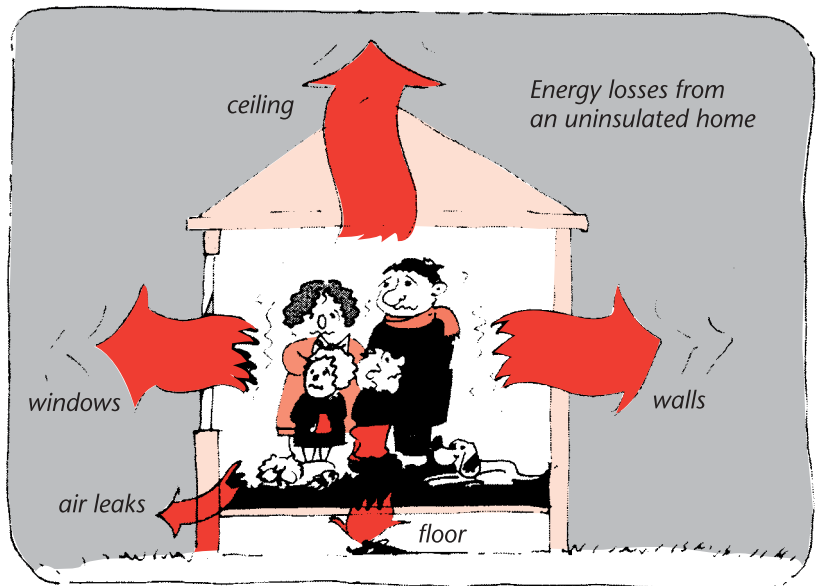
Air leaks can account for 15 – 25% of heat loss from an uninsulated home, and create uncomfortable draughts. Our brochure *Sealing out draughts* pinpoints common problem areas and suggests cost-effective methods for dealing with them.

Protect your windows

Up to 30% of total heat loss from a home occurs through uncovered windows. Close-fitting, heavy drapes or blinds, or double-glazed windows reduce heat loss. If you are replacing windows or building consider installing high performance windows to reduce your heating needs. Refer to our brochure *Energy saving for windows* for more details.

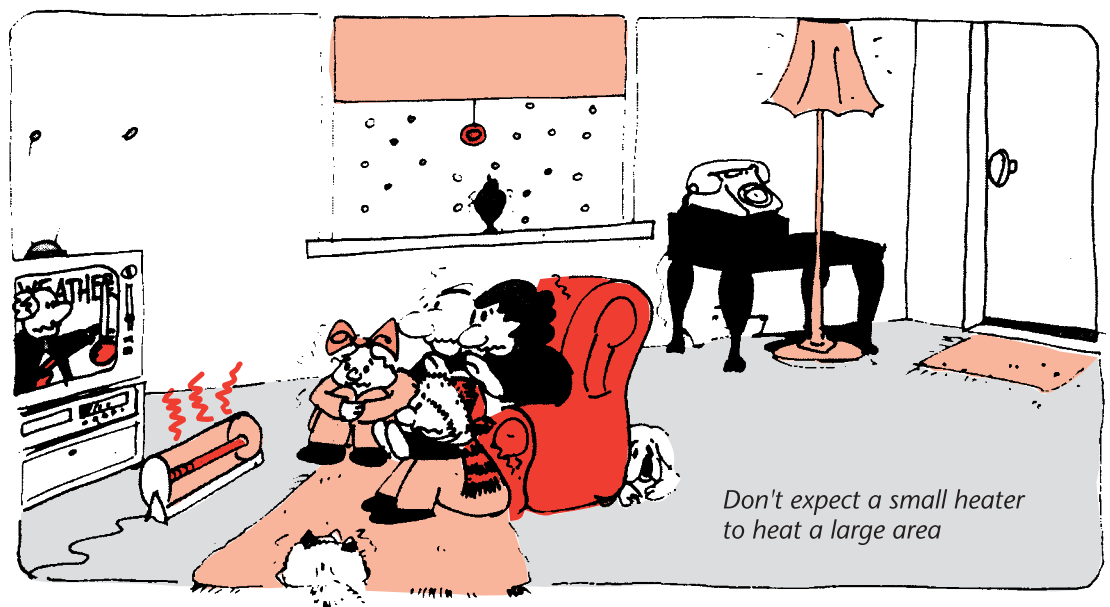
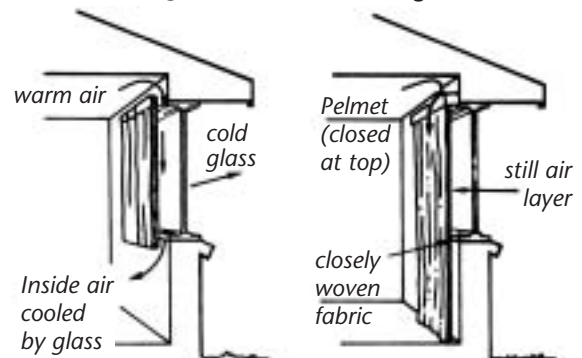
Zone your home

Being able to close off different areas of your home allows you to heat only those areas in use at any one time. Open-plan homes without zoning mean that the whole house will be heated at once, regardless of which areas are being used—a costly and wasteful exercise. Install doorways or other barriers between different areas of the home, e.g. between living and sleeping areas, and informal and formal areas. The 'wet' areas of your home, e.g. bathrooms and laundries, should also be a separate zone as they are usually unheated and well ventilated.



Poorly fitted curtain; allows warm air to contact the cold glass

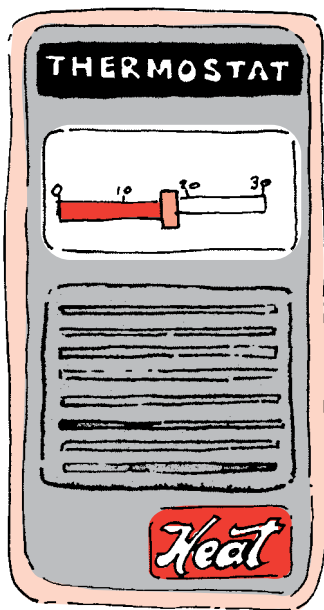
Well fitted curtain with closed pelmet; creates a still air space between the glass and curtain



Things we can all do

Minimise the area to be heated. Doubling the size of the heated area also doubles the heating cost! So close doors to unheated areas, or install curtains across open archways leading to other rooms.

Use a correctly sized heater. Don't expect a small heater to heat a large area. It is unlikely to reach a comfortable temperature, making running costs unnecessarily high without providing adequate heat. Similarly, try not to use a large heater when only a small area needs heating. If only one small area of a centrally heated home is to be used, it may be cheaper to use a portable heater for a short time, or even invest in a small space heater, than to unnecessarily heat the whole house.



Use the thermostat correctly. For every degree you increase the thermostat setting, your bill may increase by up to 15%. Set your thermostat at a reasonable temperature of 18 – 20°C for living areas.

Thermostats should be placed in living areas, where you spend most of your time.

Ensure they are protected from draughts, as well as heat sources such as heating outlets or direct sunlight. Thermostats should not be located on external walls.

Don't leave your heater running on low overnight or while you are out during the day. It is cheaper to turn the heater off while you are out or sleeping, and on again when you return or wake up in the morning. (This pattern of use is not applicable to storage type heating such as in-slab systems which have a very slow response time).

Install a timer or programmable thermostat to turn your heater on and off automatically, say 20 – 30 minutes before rising in the morning or getting home in the evening. And of course, don't forget to turn the entire system completely off if you are going away on holidays.

Run the heater fan on its highest setting for best efficiency and heat distribution. Fans cost only 1 cent an hour to run.

Turn off the pilot light (if fitted) over summer. This alone could save you \$15 or more each year!

Maintain your heater. Keep reflectors shiny and free of dust, and clean air-filters regularly. Service all heaters according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Close windows and doors in heated areas while the heater is on.

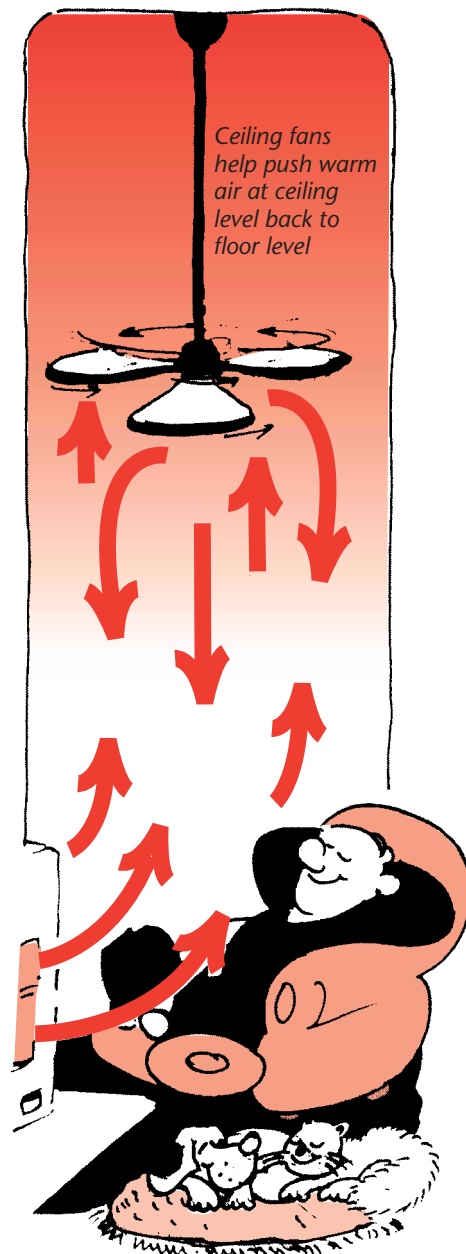
Close drapes or blinds when you're heating,

especially at night. By leaving them open, you're wasting over \$2.00 for each square metre of glass per billing quarter! That's around \$80 per quarter for the average home.

Open up curtains to north-facing windows on sunny winter days to let in the free, natural solar energy to warm your home.

Ceiling fans, heat shifters or personal fans set about 2.1 m above the floor are useful ways to return heat that has risen up to a second storey, or collected at the top of ceilings, back down to floor level again. This can save over 10% of heating costs.

Wear appropriate clothing. Wearing warmer clothing is free, easy and will let you turn down your heater just those few degrees more. Throw an extra blanket on the bed and you can turn off your electric blanket too!



Special notes for central heating systems

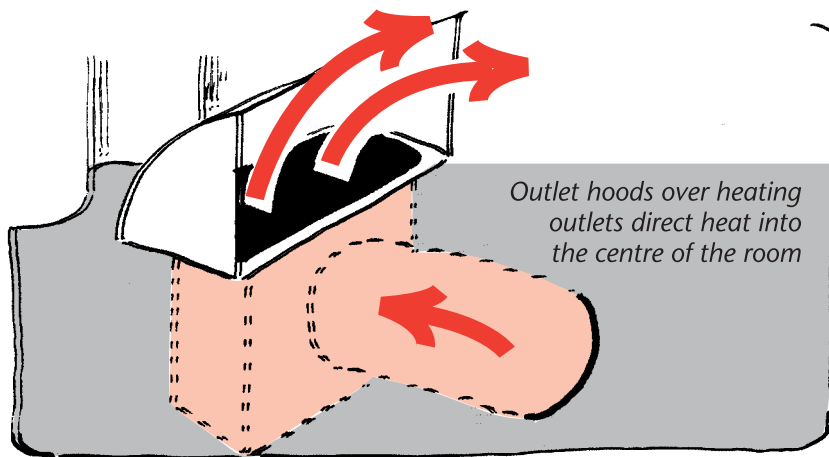
Central heating systems tend to be more expensive to run than space or room heaters as they are large units designed to heat most of the home at one time.

For example, the average size of a central heating system is three times that of a space heater, and therefore up to three times the running costs!

However, because they are bigger, central heating systems also present larger potential savings. Correct and efficient use can minimise their running costs and help you get the most benefit for your heating dollar.

Use the flexibility of your system if it is available. Most types of central heating systems have models that give you the flexibility to operate each outlet or zone independently. With these you can shut off heat delivery to rooms or zones that do not require heating. Don't forget to **shut the doors** to the unheated areas.

If not fitted with a zoning option, ducted systems must maintain at least 70% of the total number of outlets open at any one time to operate efficiently.



The information in this brochure was derived from various sources and was believed to be correct when published. All information is advisory and is published in good faith.

The manufacturer can tell you the exact number.

Close as many outlets as you can (within these limits) to areas where heating is not required.

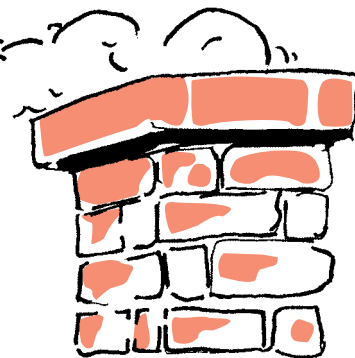
Outlet hoods fitted over floor outlets help direct heated air into the centre of the room and away from cold windows. These are available from central heating equipment suppliers.

Protect the return air grille in central heating systems from draughts. The cooler air from draughts needs more energy to warm up than does previously heated room air.

Keep curtains and furniture clear of outlets and the return grille so that they do not restrict the flow of air from the outlet and around the home.

Check for air leaks from the ducting. Escaping heat will only serve to heat your roof space or under your home instead of inside.

To reduce the running costs of in-slab systems, operate them at a low temperature to provide background heat (16 – 18°C), and top this up with supplementary spot heating when necessary.



Special notes for wood heaters

Get a good fire going as quickly as possible. This will allow the heater to draw air and function properly, with little smoke.

Load firewood correctly with approximately 25mm gaps between the logs to let in adequate air and help develop hot pockets of glowing coals.

Use only dry, untreated wood.

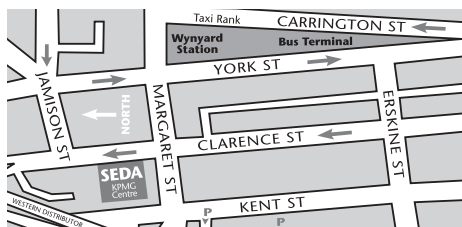
Inspect your flue or chimney once a year for blockages such as bird's nests or creosote. Have it swept if necessary.

Avoid unnecessarily running your heater on low overnight. This will save you a lot of wood, and reduce creosote formation.

Check the seals around doors and ash-removal trays.

Close off chimneys when they are not being used, either permanently or with an openable damper. This will stop major heat losses through the chimney cavity.

The Energy Smart Information Centre is a free advisory service provided by the NSW Government. Energy experts can provide information on a wide range of topics including Energy Smart design for new homes and renovations, appliance selection, solar and wind power systems, choosing heating and cooling systems, insulation, lighting and water saving devices.



www.seda.nsw.gov.au



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