



# news release

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With almost half the energy in homes used for heating and cooling, making smart decisions to weatherize a home can mean significant savings for consumers. The Southeast Alabama Gas District recommends taking steps now to implement energy-saving strategies before the coldest temperatures of winter arrive.

“Even with natural gas rates stable and low, it never hurts to make your home as efficient as possible,” says Greg Henderson, SEAGD’s President and CEO. “Along with the energy savings and financial savings winterizing your house can bring, there’s also the added comfort value associated with reducing drafts and boosting insulation.”

Changing the furnace filter regularly will help keep clean air flowing throughout a home. If the filter becomes dirty or clogged, it will restrict airflow and cause the furnace to stay on longer – using more fuel. Fiberglass filters trap 10-40% of debris, and should be changed monthly. Electrostatic filters, while more expensive, trap around 88% of debris, and are also proven to control bacteria, mold, viruses and pollen.

Another low-cost way to improve a home’s efficiency is to ensure that all air leaks are sealed. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, simple leaks can impact a home’s energy efficiency by as much as 30%. Sealing gaps around doors, corners, chimneys, where pipes or wires exit the structure and along the structure’s foundation with caulk or weather stripping is one way to minimize air leaks. These improvements are also eligible (through December 31, 2011) for a tax credit amount of 10% of the materials cost, up to \$500, when the products used to make the seals come with a Manufacturers Certification Statement.

Also eligible for 2011 Federal tax credits for consumer energy efficiency are upgrades in insulation. “Adding more insulation between walls, to attic floors and basement or crawl-space ceilings is one of the most cost-effective home improvements that you can make,” Henderson notes. Typical bulk insulation products (batts, rolls, blow-in fibers, rigid boards and expanding spray) can qualify for tax credits. For products placed in service in 2011, consumers may file the 2011 version of IRS Form 5695 and submit it with their 2011 taxes (by April 15, 2012). The 2011 version of Form 5695 will be available in early 2012.

While it may seem insignificant, one no-cost way to circulate heat, and cut heating costs as much as 10% is by reversing the direction of all ceiling fans in a home to a clockwise position. This allows warm air that is pooled near the ceiling to circulate back into the occupied space of the home.

“We are committed to providing quality natural gas service at a fair price to almost 30,000 customers throughout Southeast Alabama,” explains Henderson. “Helping anyone in our community see how easy it is to save money and be more comfortable, is definitely a priority for us.”

Additional energy-saving tips may be found on The Southeast Alabama Gas District’s webpage, [www.SEAGD.net](http://www.SEAGD.net), or on the company’s Facebook page.

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