

Wrap your house up **warm** ahead of winter

Summer is the right time to get your home prepared for the cold

It might be warm outside at the minute, but now is the ideal time to prepare your house for the cold months ahead, particularly given that last winter was the coldest in Northern Ireland for more than 40 years. As a result of the last cold snap, many people in Northern Ireland were stung with higher fuel bills in an effort to keep warm, particularly in homes which are poorly insulated.

To avoid such a hike in fuel bills next winter, the Energy Saving Trust is calling upon householders throughout Northern Ireland to winter proof their homes now by insulating their property to the recommended standard and updating old and inefficient heating systems or boilers.

Noel Williams, Head of the Energy Saving Trust in Northern Ireland, commented: "The summer months offer an excellent opportunity to make your home more energy efficient.

"For example, old inefficient heating systems can be replaced as they are not generally in use during the warmer months.

"Furthermore, installing loft and cavity wall insulation can reduce the amount of heat lost in your home by 50 percent, meaning it will cost less to heat and will retain warmth more easily during the winter."

"It makes sense to plan ahead, and by insulating our homes, we can help ensure that a cold snap next year doesn't bite our pockets too badly.

"The better insulated your home, the less energy you need to keep it warm and the more money you'll save in the long run," concluded Mr Williams.

Should householders wish to check which grants are available to them regarding gas connection, insulation and micro-generation they can call the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre on 0800 512 012.

TWO SIMPLE STEPS TO A WARMER, MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT HOME

Replacing old oil or gas boilers

Switch to an 'A rated' condensing boiler with a full set of heating controls and save up £210 on your heating costs and 1.5 tonnes of CO₂. 60 percent of CO₂ emissions from your home are down to your boiler. If your boiler is over 15 years old it is probably not as efficient as it could be and is therefore costing you more than it should.





Insulate your home

Uninsulated walls can account for up to a third of heat loss in your home. Cavity wall insulation helps reduce the amount of energy you need to heat your home and saves approximately £100 a year and 710 kg CO₂. For older homes with solid walls insulating the inside or the outside of the walls can save around £345 a year on your home heating bill and 2.5 tonnes of CO₂. On top of this, 26% of the heat in your home could be escaping through your roof. Loft insulation is one of the most cost-effective energy saving measures and is the easiest to install. Insulating

your loft to the recommended depth of 270mm can cut your heating bills by £130 a year and saves around 930 kg/CO₂.

There is information available on grants and rebates to insulate your home by contacting the Energy Saving Trust advice centre on 0800 512 012. The National Insulation Association is working in conjunction with the Energy Saving Trust in Northern Ireland to promote the benefits of insulation and the professionalism of their installer members who carry out work on the grant and rebate schemes.

Neil Marshall, Chief Executive, NIA stated "Insulation is the most efficient way of reducing your carbon footprint and lowering your energy bills. All our members offer a free, no obligation survey of your property and work to the industry best practice requirements and can advise householders of the best type of insulation to suit the property. The Energy Saving Trust advice centre can provide lists of accredited installers to help make your home warmer and cheaper to heat".

For more information visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk or freephone 0800 512 012 to speak to the Energy Saving Trust advice centre

