



Don't Get Left Out In the Cold: Homeowner Suggestions Released In Light of Record High Winter Energy Costs

New Energy Study Determines Ways to Reduce Energy Bills This Winter

Peachtree City, GA – With winter heating costs projected to reach all-time highs this year, many Americans will have more to shiver about than just the cold temperatures.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates the country's winter fuel spending will exceed \$1 trillion this year – a 24 percent increase over last year and the largest share of U.S. usage in two decades. In dollars and cents, households heating with natural gas will pay an average of \$350 more to heat their home and those relying primarily on heating oil will pay about \$378 more.

Combined with the high cost of gasoline, consumers are facing an unprecedented double whammy this winter. In an effort to provide some relief, Congress passed the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which gives homeowners who make energy-efficient improvements to existing homes such as installing an HVAC system with a programmable thermostat or a tankless water heater a 10 percent tax credit up to \$500.

A recent study sponsored by Rinnai North America, a leading tankless water heater manufacturer, and conducted by ConSol, one of the country's largest energy consulting firms, offers several energy saving recommendations to give this year's winter heating bill the cold shoulder.

The study titled "*Energy Conservation for California Builders*" offers several energy conserving recommendations for consumers and builders. While the suggestions are based on California-specific research, the energy saving tips are applicable nationwide.

- Reducing HVAC system duct leakage by mechanically fastening all connections with UV-resistant zip ties and sealing all duct connections with an approved tape or sealant. Duck leaks can increase heating and cooling consumption by 25 to 50 percent.

- Installing a centrally located, high-efficiency natural gas tankless water heating unit in place of storage tank water heaters. Rinnai manufactures natural gas tankless water heaters that are up to 50 percent more energy efficient than a traditional natural gas water heater and up to 70 percent more efficient than an electric water heater. Unlike storage tank water heaters that heat and reheat the same water 24 hours a day, tankless systems have on-demand water heater technology that more efficient because it only heats water when it is needed.
- Installing a radiant barrier on attic surfaces to reflect heat before it can collect in the attic. Installing a radiant barrier will reduce a home's energy usage by nearly five percent.
- Applying external foam sheathing to homes. A home with external foam sheathing conserves 10 percent more energy than a home without.
- Properly installing ceiling and wall insulation. The difference between an inferior installation and a quality insulation job for a typical home is five percent less energy usage.

In a speech given last month to California building, community and political leaders, former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich addressed the importance of becoming a more energy independent country. "We need to begin exploring modern approaches to decreasing dependence on foreign energy sources across a range of areas," said Gingrich. "We need to incorporate how homes and buildings are designed and constructed with the appliances and products that are on the inside to make the entire structure as energy efficient as possible. Businesses and builders can play a pivotal role in educating consumers on what types of energy efficient products they should consider putting inside their homes."

For many Americans, becoming more energy conscious is driven by the short-term need to manage their energy costs; however, making energy wise decisions can impact long-term issues such as the environment and economy. In a recent speech to the National

Press Club announcing October as National Energy Awareness month, U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman said, "Consumers are the critical key to lowering overall energy demand in the U.S. quickly, which will, in turn, improve our economy, our national security, and our environment."

According to estimates from the Energy Information Administration, in just two decades U.S. energy consumption will increase by nearly 40 percent. That is equal to the energy used today in California, Texas, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

According to Ervin Cash, senior vice president of heaters and tankless water heaters manufacturer Rinnai North America, "There are energy efficient technologies available today that are in wide use in other parts of the world that can help our country assert its energy independence. Becoming energy independent doesn't require huge sacrifices; however, it does demand use of the best available energy efficient technologies, continued innovation and a long-term commitment to changing the way America consumes energy. If we, as individuals, begin to make wiser energy decisions, we can change our country's course and have a safer, more secure tomorrow."

The energy conservation study is available for download at www.foreverhotwater.com.

About Rinnai

Rinnai North America Corporation, a subsidiary of Rinnai Corporation in Nagoya, Japan, was established in 1974 and is headquartered in Peachtree City, GA. Rinnai Corporation manufactures gas appliances, including tankless hot water heaters, ductless heaters, fireplaces, and cooking appliances. Today, Rinnai is the single largest gas appliance manufacturer in the world and is the technology leader in the tankless water heating industry. Annual corporate revenues including those of its subsidiaries are in excess of \$2 billion USD. With a global perspective to create 21st century products for the home and office, Rinnai Corporation commits itself to safety and the pursuit of comfortable lifestyles. For more information about the Rinnai Corporation and the Rinnai tankless water heater product, visit www.foreverhotwater.com.

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