

# Be prepared for a cosy winter

Warwickshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (WEEAC)

August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006

Householders across the Rugby area are being urged to think ahead to the chilly days of winter - and save themselves up to £200 a year on their gas and electricity bills.

The call comes from the Warwickshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (WEEAC) which is funded by Rugby Borough Council and the government's Energy Saving Trust. WEEAC is dedicated to helping residents save money on their energy bills and reduce the carbon emissions responsible for climate change.

Their advice is that carrying out energy efficiency measures such as installing cavity wall and loft insulation or replacing the boiler with an energy efficient one before the weather turns really cold is a shrewd move to avoid the queues for contractors during the winter.

They can also send you information about the Green Loan Scheme available through Rugby Credit Union which can help with the cost of installing energy efficiency heating and insulation measures.

And carrying out these measures, combined with a number of other cheap and simple changes, can save around 20% on fuel bills - that's £200 based on the average household bill of £1,000, according to the Energy Saving Trust.

"There are a number of reasons for carrying out work now rather than waiting for the cold weather," explains WEEAC chief executive David Jullien.:

"You do not want to be without a working boiler in the middle of winter but you can manage for a few days in the late summer early autumn, especially if the work is planned. In fact, if your boiler is more than 15 years old it definitely needs changing. It will be wildly inefficient by now and will be costing a fortune - on your pocket as well as the environment. Installing an energy efficient condensing boiler can save around 32p per pound on gas bills. If every household in the country had a condensing boiler installed it would save the people in Rugby over £12 million a year - to spend locally rather than wasted "up the flue."

You should have insulation installed before changing the boiler. Installing loft and cavity wall insulation can see householders reduce their fuel bills by around £100 a year. Most homes in Rugby with cavity walls have had them insulated, but if the remaining 12% of homes invested in the measure, their households could save a total of £450,000 in money wasted unnecessarily on fuel bills.

Waiting periods for heating and insulation contractors are quite long in the winter so you're more likely to be able to get hold of someone when it's convenient for you the sooner you book. You will then be prepared and ready to fight the chill the moment the nights start drawing in.

Just one phone to WEEAC's office on 0800 085 0289 can get you on the list to have your cavity walls and loft insulated.

Non-means-tested grants which will reduce the price of installation by 30 – 40% are available. WEEAC can also give you a list of heating contractors who belong to their Installer Network, a group of reputable heating and insulation contractors dedicated to helping customers save energy.

Householders can save even more money by replacing old white goods with new A rated models. An A-rated fridge freezer can save around £35 a year on fuel bills and low energy lightbulbs will save around £10 per year per bulb. If every household installed just three low energy bulbs they'd save enough money to power all the street lighting in the UK for a year.

Make a note today to contact WEEAC on 0800 085 0289 or log on to [www.weeac.org](http://www.weeac.org) to arrange to have cavity wall and loft insulation installed, get a list of heating contractors, find out about Green Loans or receive general advice on how to avoid wasting energy.

**End**

### **Getting Your Home Ready for the Cold Weather**

Here are some fuel saving tips for your home heating bills:

1. Draw your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping and to reduce draughts.
2. Ensure curtains are fully lined to save heat.
3. Never cover radiators with curtains or furniture as this reduces their efficiency.
4. Put a draught excluder on your letterbox. You can buy one from most DIY shops.
5. Buy a secondary glazing kit from the DIY shop to reduce draughts through windows if you do not have double glazing.
6. Make sure your hot water cylinder has a well fitted jacket on it.
7. Wrap all exposed pipes in insulation material to keep the heat in and stop them freezing.
8. If you use electricity to heat your water make sure you are on an off-peak tariff (say Economy 7).
9. Invest in cavity wall insulation and/or loft insulation. There are excellent non means tested grants available for everyone.
10. When you have invested in all the above you should be able to turn your central heating down by 1°C and save about 10% on your fuel bills.

**For more information about saving money on your fuel bills or to find out about the grants telephone the Warwickshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on 0800 085 0289.**