

Energy and money saving tips

October 2018



If you're looking for ways to save energy and money then you've come to the right place. One Parent Families Scotland has received funding support from the Big Energy Saving Network to support single parent families by helping to prevent, and providing solutions to, issues with fuel within the family home along with raising awareness of simple steps to becoming more energy efficient within your household.

We work in partnership with the Home Energy Scotland Hotline from the Scottish Government; it's your one stop shop for free and impartial energy saving advice and support. Have a chat with a friendly advisor over the phone by calling OPFS on 0141 847 0444 (www.opfs.org.uk) and visit www.greenerscotland.org/saving-energy for lots of ideas and tips. We could help you save up to £250 a year on your energy bills.

Easy ways to save energy

Be a bright spark: Switch your ordinary light bulbs for energy saving ones. They last around 10 times longer, and using one can save you around £45 over the lifetime of the bulb.

Keep it bite-sized: Chopping your vegetables into smaller bits, keeping lids on pans and only boiling the water you need means less energy wasted, and less time waiting for your dinner too.

Choose a fan setting if you have a multifunction oven: This will cut consumption by 20%. Using a microwave to cook or reheat smaller food items generally uses less energy.

Cosy up: Close your curtains at dusk to keep the heat in. And keep outside doors shut and block up draughts.

Make the most of radiators: Turn down or off in rooms which you only use occasionally. Move furniture away from radiators to allow heat to circulate around the room.

Switching off: The average Scottish household wastes around £40 each year by leaving appliances on standby. Make sure you turn your TV, PC, etc. off at the wall.

Regularly defrost your freezer to make sure it is operating efficiently: Use a vacuum cleaner to clean the condenser coils at the back or underneath your fridge or freezer.

Talk to an expert: The OPFS Energy Finance Team can give you advice on how to use heating controls and other easy ways to save energy and money.

Keep the heat in

Do a good turn: turn your thermostat down by 1°C and save around £50 a year on your heating bill. Insulate your hot water pipes and you can save another £10 a year.

Wrap up your home: cavity wall and loft insulation can save you up to £150 a year on your heating bills, which means it could pay for itself in only two years.

Hot water tank: make sure your hot water tank is insulated with a lagging jacket at least 3 inches thick. It reduces the need to reheat water for your shower or washing up so you'll save around £35 a year.

Draft proof: Draft proofing around windows and doors could save you £20-£50 per year. DIY draught proofing typically costs between £120-£290 for the whole house.

Be well timed: fitting heating controls like automatic timer switches (known as programmers), room thermostats and thermostatic radiator valves will keep room temperatures more comfortable without wasting too much energy.

Invest: replace that old boiler with a new condensing one. A condensing boiler is incredibly energy efficient and, with a new set of heating controls, could knock up to £225 a year off your bill. It's important to insulate your home before installing a new boiler as in an insulated home a smaller boiler will be just as effective.

Water matters

Heating water makes up around 30% of an average household's heating bills - that's around £200 a year.

Use these tips to save energy and to save those precious drops.

- Every minute you cut off your daily shower could save you between £5 and £10 off your energy bills over the year.
- Mend any leaky taps to stop around 5,500 litres of water going down the drain each year.
- Why use hot when cold will do? Rinse plates and wash vegetables in cold water.
- Washing cars, with a bucket and sponge uses around 90% less water than a hose.
- Use a bowl to wash up twice a day rather than leaving the hot tap running and it can save you around £25 a year on your household gas bills.

Grants and offers in Scotland

Our Advisors, funded by the Big Energy Saving Network, can help you.

Call 0141 847 0444 or 0808 801 0323.

It's a free and impartial service for single parents, offering you a one stop shop for advice on saving energy, saving money and keeping your home warmer.

Free insulation and energy efficiency measures

By calling One Parent Families Scotland, you might be able to get help with free or discounted loft and cavity wall insulation thanks to funding from the Scottish Government. Some people can even get a whole new heating system and other measures that make a home more energy efficient.

A number of different offers are available, depending on your own circumstances and where in Scotland you live. Older people and families living in hard-to-heat homes might be entitled to a lot of help, so it's worth getting in touch with us, or alternatively, the Home Energy Scotland Hotline.

Discounts and extra benefits

If you get help with benefits and tax credits, our advisors can help check if you're entitled to any more benefits that you may be missing out on. You might also be entitled to discounts from your own gas and electricity supplier. We will give you information and advice on Warm Home Discount and Cold Weather payments.

Money saving advice

There are dozens of energy saving hints and tips that you could put into action today, like lagging your pipes and water tank, turning down your thermostat 1°C to save 10% on your yearly bill and only boiling the water you need when making a cup of tea.

These may not sound like much, but if you add together several small changes like this you could save around £190 a year on your fuel bills, (on average, homes can save £250 a year by improving their insulation, upgrading their heating systems, replacing old appliances and lightbulbs with new energy saving ones and using energy carefully).

Local Authority programmes

Some Local Authorities offer grants or other financial assistance to install energy saving measures and central heating but this depends on individual circumstances and funding available.

Check with your Local Authority about options or call 0808 808 2282 and the advisors from the Home Energy Scotland Hotline may be able to help you find out.

Dampness and condensation

Dampness and condensation problems can affect you both financially and health wise. To get advice about condensation and dampness in your home, you can contact our advisors on 0141 847 0444, or if you live outside of Glasgow, please contact the Home Energy Scotland Hotline on freephone 0808 808 2282 for local information.

Training Courses

If you are a single parent living within Glasgow and would like further information on our Energy Efficiency and Managing Your Family Finances training courses, please contact us on 0141 847 0444, or speak to one of our advisers on our freephone helpline: 0808 808 0323.

OPFS advice and helpline

OPFS Financial Inclusion Team

Tel: 0141 847 0444

4th Floor, Waterloo Chambers, 19 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 6AY

Lone Parent Helpline

Helpline: 0808 801 0323

Web: www.opfs.org.uk

Lines are open Mon-Fri 9.30-4.00pm

Calls are free from all UK landlines and mobiles.

Home Energy Scotland Hotline

Hotline: 0808 808 2282

Web: www.greenerscotland.org/saving-energy

Supporting and inspiring single parent families across Scotland

For further information about OPFS or our services, please contact:

One Parent Families Scotland,
2 York Place, Edinburgh EH1 3EP

Tel: 0131 556 3899

Email: info@opfs.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 801 0323

Helpline Email: helpline@opfs.org.uk

Visit our website at www.opfs.org.uk

More energy help from OPFS

You may also be interested in these related energy factsheets available from OPFS:

- Payment methods, discounts and switching
- What to do about fuel debt
- Useful contacts on fuel issues

Call the helpline on 0808 801 0323

