



Your source for the latest news, tips, advice and information to help you save energy, money and the environment.

Dear Neighbor,

**Happy New Year!** Welcome to the latest edition of HotTopics, that features great information about our home security service. It also has helpful tips and advice on how you can protect your family and home, and tons of great ideas to help you save energy and money in the coming months.

As you know, winter is here and whatever the weather, you can always count on us to be there for you and take care of all your home comfort needs whenever you need us, 24/7, all year!

We also enjoy taking care of others in our neighborhood throughout the year, by sponsoring events and organizations in our community.

Have any questions about your home comfort needs? Please contact us at any time and we'll be happy to help you.

**From our family to yours, we wish you a safe, happy and prosperous new year!**

**Your local home comfort services team.**

## Trust us to keep your family safe and warm!

A burglary occurs every 14.5 seconds, one quarter of all home burglaries occur during the winter months and they rise by 67% over the extended holiday period in December and January.<sup>1</sup> That's why criminals look forward to the New Year more than you do — it's an opportune time for crime!<sup>2</sup> So, make it an Unhappy New Year for criminals and protect your home, property and family with these home security tips:

- Break down and use trash bags to dispose of boxes that could indicate what type of gifts you received over the holiday season or purchased in New Year sales to reduce the risk of criminals finding out what new electronic items may be inside your home.

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## Be smart and don't get heated about energy costs this winter.

Making smart decisions about the equipment you install plus how it's installed and maintained, can have a big impact on your annual energy costs. That's why you can count on us to make sure any heating equipment decisions you make are the right ones for you. It's a fact — almost half of the energy you use in your home comes from heating and cooling it.<sup>4</sup> That's why we've got helpful tips on preparing your home for colder weather and maintaining your heating equipment to really help you save.

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# Comfortable, safe *and* secure!

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- Do not put your family name on your mailbox or on your house. Burglars can call directory assistance and call your house from right outside to confirm if you're away.
- When traveling put office addresses and cell phone numbers on luggage tags or any baggage handler thief will know that you're not home.
- Remove all address information from parked cars at the airport — anyone breaking into your car could find out you're not home and may gain access to your address and garage door opener.
- Burglars don't like light. Replace outside perimeter lights with inexpensive and readily available motion-activated lamps and place timers on a few inside lights to make it appear you're home.
- Trim shrubbery near windows and doors to eliminate hiding places for burglars.
- Plan package deliveries to either arrive when someone is at home to receive it or address the packages to be delivered to your work. With the increase of online shopping, minimize any packages that could sit outside your home that could draw attention to burglars.
- Stop newspaper and mail delivery while you are away. Piles of mail or newspapers are an open invitation to burglars who can tell you are not home.
- Don't leave a purse, wallet or laptop on the counters that can be seen from a window. This will almost always trigger a forced entry.
- Security signs without corresponding security company stickers on the windows, may lead a passing burglar to believe that you don't really have an alarm system.

1 Source: FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation)

2 Source: Union County Police, New Jersey



## Bonus security tip:

Homes without security systems are three times more likely to be broken into than those with security systems.<sup>3</sup>

You don't have to become one of these statistics. By installing a Meenan Home Security System you'll enjoy total peace of mind while protecting what's important in your life, as our **FREE installation package** has everything you need.

### Our package includes:

- Free installation
- 1 control panel
- 1 keypad
- 3 door contacts
- 1 motion sensor
- 1 indoor alarm siren
- Front yard sign and window decals
- 24-hour remote monitoring

### Additional protection can include:

smoke detectors, low temperature alerts, carbon monoxide detectors, medical alert, water flood sensors, and more.

### Already have a security package?

We can expand your existing package to meet your specific needs. Please contact us today to find out more so you can enjoy a truly happy, safe and secure holiday.

3 Source: Dr. Simon Hakim, Temple University



## Be smart about energy costs this winter.

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- **Replace old equipment with updated ENERGY STAR® qualified products** — Depending on where you live, replacing old heating and cooling equipment with ENERGY STAR® qualified equipment can cut your annual energy bill by up to 30%!
- **Tune up equipment** — Take care of problems BEFORE they happen by scheduling a tune-up. This also ensures that your equipment runs at peak energy efficiency throughout the winter.
- **Smart thermostat settings** — Set your thermostat as low as comfortably possible in the winter. The smaller the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall heating bill will be. Avoid setting it at a higher setting than normal when you turn on your heater. It won't heat your home any faster, and could result in excessive heating and an unnecessary expense.
- **Seal ducts properly** — If ducts are very leaky, more than 20% of the air moving through the system is escaping into spaces you do not want heated or cooled.
- **Change filters** — Check your filter monthly, especially during heavy use winter months. If the filter looks dirty after a month, change it. At a minimum, change filters every 3 months.



### Additional home energy savings tips for the winter:

- **Block off unused rooms** — The less space you need to heat, the lower your bill.<sup>4</sup>
- **Turn on the fan** — Use your fan's reverse mechanism to keep warm air circulating through the room.<sup>5</sup>
- **Watch that water heater** — It's not likely to be noticeable if you turn down the thermostat on your water heater by 10 or 20 degrees.<sup>6</sup>
- **Keep windows covered when it's dark outside** — This will help you reduce heat loss and keep cold air at bay, especially if you have older windows. But be sure to let in the light during the daytime, those rays of sun will help heat your home.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Source: EnergyStar ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov))

<sup>5</sup> Source: The Sun's Financial Diary (<http://www.thesunfinancialdiary.com/frugal-living/reduce-your-heating-bill-six-tips-from-smartmoney>)

<sup>6</sup> Source: MSNBC.com ([http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16176373/ns/today\\_technology\\_and\\_money-10\\_tips](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16176373/ns/today_technology_and_money-10_tips))

## You ask. We answer!

Got a burning question about us? Just ask! We'll answer it as best we can.

### Q How can I pay my invoices automatically?

**Answer:** Call Customer Service and request an authorization form. Supply either your credit card or checking account information, sign the form, and return it in the envelope provided. Automatic payments will begin 2-4 weeks after receipt of the signed authorization form. There is no charge for this service.

### Q What do I do when I am moving out of my home?

**Answer:** Call Customer Service and provide the name and contact information for the person you want us to work with through this transition period. We can help with:

- Giving you a **\$100 reward** if you refer the new home owner and they sign up with us.
- Transfer of CARE or ProGuard protection to the new owner.
- Establishing an account for your new home.
- Scheduling a tune-up of your oil burner if required.

**Have any more questions about any of our services? Please give us a call today!**





## Customer Talk

**Our customers value that we're always there for them, locally, 24/7 – like this new customer:**

“I called my current oil company to request a service call and was told they were too busy, so I'd have to wait until the morning. With small children and the temperature dropping outside, this was unacceptable. You immediately took my call, signed me up for service and had a repair man at my home in under an hour! It's refreshing to know that companies still value exceptional customer service and employ exceptional people.”

**Share your experiences with us by sending them to [customertalk@meenan.com](mailto:customertalk@meenan.com) and they could be featured here, too.**

## Did you know?

**It's easy to save energy, money and the environment at work, too!**

- 1** Replace incandescent lights with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) or light-emitting diodes (LEDs) for desk lamps and overhead lighting. Using CFLs instead of comparable incandescent bulbs can save about 50% on lighting costs. CFLs use only 1/4 of the energy and last up to 10 times longer.
- 2** Use natural lighting or daylighting. When feasible, turn off lights near windows.
- 3** Use task lighting; instead of brightly lighting an entire room, focus light where you need it, to directly illuminate work areas.
- 4** Unplug equipment that drains energy when not in use (i.e., cell phone chargers, fans, coffeemakers, desktop printers, radios, etc.).
- 5** Turn off computers and monitors at the end of the work day, if possible. If you leave your desk for an extended time, turn off your monitor.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy, [http://www.energysavers.gov/your\\_workplace/](http://www.energysavers.gov/your_workplace/)

## Stay informed about energy savings.

Want to learn more about saving energy costs and the environment? You can find lots of great information here:

**U.S. Department of Energy**  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585  
800.dial.DOE fax 202.586.4403  
[www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

**U.S. EPA, ENERGY STAR Hotline (6202J)**  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460  
888.STAR.YES (888.782.7937)  
[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

**NORA**  
**(National Oil Heat Research Alliance)**  
600 Cameron Street, Suite 206  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
703.340.1660 fax 703.340.1642  
[www.nora-oilheat.org](http://www.nora-oilheat.org)

