

Do-it-yourself assessment

Find **smart savings** in your home



If you're ready to reduce energy waste and be more comfortable at home, these simple steps from energySMART, a Nicor Gas program, can help you find energy efficiency opportunities easily.

Let energySMART assist you with your energy efficiency improvements. Visit nicorgasrebates.com/home to learn more.

► Check outside

Walk around the outside of your home and look for potential issues.

Look at your roof:

Big icicles in the winter can result from the sun melting snow on your roof. But it's not just the sun—heat escaping from your home through the attic could also be the cause. Excessive heat loss from the attic will melt the snow in odd areas and create large icicles called ice dams. These icicles can be dangerous and damaging to your home if they break off or get too large. You can prevent heat from escaping with sealing and insulation improvements.

► Check inside

You can identify many ways you may be wasting energy inside your home.

Walls and floors:

Is there a spot or section of the wall or ceiling that always looks darker in the spring? This can be caused by dust sticking to a cool, moist section of the wall. This happens when insulation behind the spot is missing.

Cold floors and walls are a sign of air leakage and low insulation. If you need to set up a space heater or bundle up before spending time in a room, you might need to seal leaks and add insulation.

Bathroom:

Showerhead: Follow these steps to determine whether you should replace your showerhead.

1. Place a bucket marked in gallon increments under your shower head.
2. Turn on the shower at the normal water pressure you use.
3. Time how many seconds it takes to fill the bucket to the 1-gallon (3.8 liter) mark.

If it takes less than 20 seconds to reach the 1-gallon mark, you could benefit from a low-flow showerhead.

Kitchen:

Refrigerator and freezer: Check door seals or gaskets by seeing if a dollar bill stays firmly in place when the doors are closed. If it falls out, consult the manufacturer's website for guidance on installing new seals or gaskets.

For optimum energy savings, set your refrigerator temperature between 36 and 38 °F and the freezer between 0 and 5 °F.

Call us at **877.886.4239** to discuss your results and get a **free energy-saving kit** to start you on your path to energy efficiency.

Kitchen (cont.):

Faucet: Follow these steps to determine the gallons per minute (GPM).

1. Turn the fixture on and place a container under the fixture to collect water for 10 seconds.
2. Measure the quantity of water in the container and convert the measurement to gallons (tip: 1 gallon = 16 cups).
3. Multiply the measured quantity of water by six to calculate the flow rate in gallons per minute ($0.25 \text{ gal} \times 6 = 1.5 \text{ GPM}$).

If the faucet is over 2.2 GPM, consider installing a low-flow fixture or aerator.

▶ **Check your attic**

Check if you need more insulation, regardless of which kind is in your attic.

The span of your attic:

If your insulation is just level with or below your floor joists (i.e., you can easily see your joists), you should add more.

Are there spots where the insulation is damaged or dirty? This is a good indicator of air leakage or moisture issues. Proper sealing and insulation can help fix leaks and moisture issues.

▶ **Check your basement**

Your basement is a great place to air seal and insulate.

The top of the foundation wall

In most homes the only thing on the other side of that wall is a brutal Illinois winter or hot Illinois summer—and a lot of air leakage.

If you're using your basement as a living space, insulation on the interior walls will create a more comfortable basement and save you energy.

▶ **Check your heating and equipment**

What's the efficiency of your system? Look at the unit.

Furnace or boiler:

Furnaces and boilers today can reach efficiency levels of up to 98% annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE).

- Is there a 6" round metal pipe going up and out or to a masonry chimney? If so, the efficiency of your system will be 85% AFUE at most.
- Is there a 3" round plastic pipe going out the side of the basement wall? Your system's efficiency is likely to be 90% AFUE or above.

Water heater:

You may be wasting energy by keeping your water hotter than necessary.

- Set your water heater between 118 and 122 °F to save energy and reduce the chance of scalding (typically half-way between the medium and low settings).
- Insulating easy-to-access water pipes is another great way to reduce your energy consumption. Tubular foam is the best type of insulation for this purpose.

▶ **Start saving**

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1. **Free products:** Call us to discuss your results and order a free energy-saving kit to start you on your path to energy efficiency.
2. **Rebates:** Visit nicorgasrebates.com/home to find out how to get rebates on your next energy-saving project.