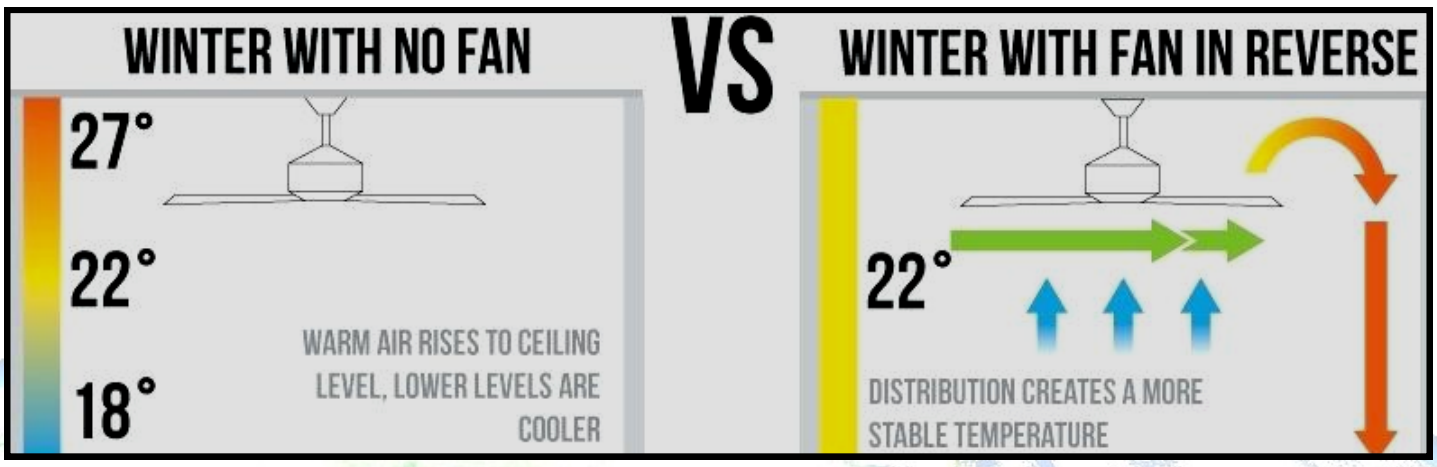
Forsyth County Energy Management Program

December • January • February

An Online Newsletter For Forsyth County Employees 2018/2019

Winter Energy Savings!

Fan of Winter



For the winter time it might be wise to set your ceiling fans to run in a clockwise direction. People often associate ceiling fan use with keeping cool in the summer, but fans can also help keep rooms warm in the winter.

As the warm air in your home naturally rises and the cool air sinks, an unequal temperature distribution develops. In most rooms, the temperature near the ceiling can be several degrees warmer than the temperature near the floor, and often the cool air towards the floor is what we notice the most. Running your ceiling fan in a clockwise direction better circulates that warm air throughout the room by pulling the cool air up, and pushing the warmer air down.

If your fan is running counterclockwise, take a close look at the base of the fan – there's usually a switch that will reverse the blade direction. This little change might even let you run your home's heating a few degrees cooler than before, trimming your heating costs, while keeping you just as comfortable.

Icicles as Indicators

A build up of icicles on the edge of a rooftop may indicate that the house is losing heat. Excess warm air from living spaces can find its way into attics or through cathedral ceilings, typically as a result of insufficient insulation and/or a lack of proper weatherization and sealing. This warm air heats up the underside of the roof and melts the snow on the roof above. The melted water then moves down the slope of the roof towards the roof overhang where the water cools down and refreezes, often forming icicles. If the ice along the roof edge is thick enough, it can force the water behind it up and under the roofing- even into attics, walls and living spaces. Obviously this not only causes damage, but also makes your home more vulnerable to the elements.

The bottom line is, if you see evidence of ice build up or large icicles, you likely don't have a roofing problem you likely have an air sealing, insulation or venting problem that's letting excessive heat escape your home. So if you notice your home has a bunch of icicles, especially in comparison to other homes, assessing your home's weatherization needs might be the next step.

Energy Management Program (EMP) Info

EMP Coordinato - TBD - General Services; Newsletter\Tech Support - Tom Hillis - Environmental Assistance and Protection;
Send your questions and ideas to hillistp@forsyth.cc

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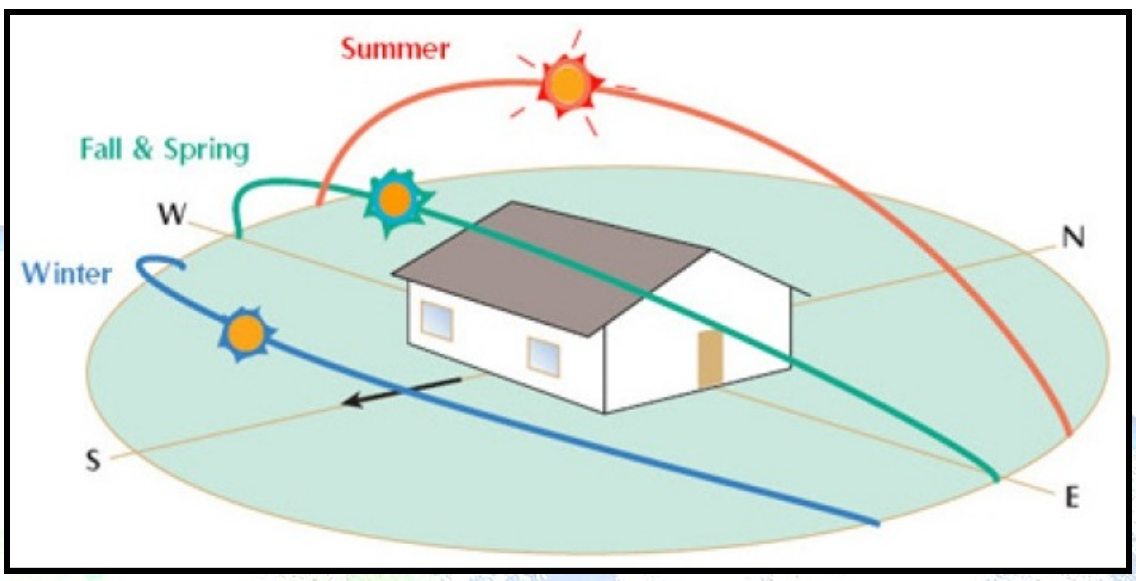
Southern Star!

During the cold days of winter, whether you're at home or headed off for work, it's a good idea to let as much light in through your windows as possible–it's free additional heating after all! Most of this warming energy will make its way through your southern facing windows. During the Winter, due to the tilt of Earth's axis, our position around the sun, and our own position on Earth, most light and warmth exposure comes from the south. So use it to your advantage!



And when it gets dark and temperatures fall even further, make sure to shut your curtains as well. Shutting your curtains adds an additional layer of insulation over windows, which tend to be one of the most vulnerable locations in the home in terms of weatherization. Simple steps, easy savings!

Tire Pressure and MPG

A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study from 2012 demonstrated that "with every 1% decrease in tire pressure there was a correlated 0.3% reduction in fuel economy". That calculus could translate to the following example: "Let's take a typical small sedan rated for 25 miles per gallon, whose tires should be set at 32 PSI. If the driver ignores tire pressure for a month — tires naturally lose 1 PSI to 2 PSI per month — the resulting pressure drop could reduce fuel economy to 23.1 MPG, on average."

And as we've transitioned to winter, "a seasonal drop of around 50°F from the summer months, in conjunction with natural PSI loss, could translate to around 5 PSI under inflation. This loss could reduce fuel economy to just 20.3 MPG."

What's the lesson here? It's probably a good idea to check on your tire pressure this time of year, as it can drop fairly significantly, and result in valuable fuel economy loss. And as a note of caution- of course, *overinflating* your tires won't continue to get you more miles per gallon- but could in fact could lead to traction and safety issues, so keep your tires properly inflated and always follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Thank You!

Past Energy Management Program newsletters can be found here: http://fcnet/EMP_newsletters.aspx

Would you like to be a guest author for an article in the EMP newsletter? Contact us below!

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