

Cold Weather = High Utility Bills

December and January have been two of the coldest months that we have experienced in many years!

It has been extremely cold outside! The ice and snow in December and January made for some really cold days and nights, and unfortunately that means your heating system was working overtime to try to heat your home. The average electric bills have more than doubled since November.

Please remember even though your heating system temperature may be set on the same degree setting, the system is having to work much harder to heat your home when temperatures outside are colder. When it is very cold like it has been in December and January, your heat may be running constantly to generate heat and circulate warm air through the home.

If you use a heat pump, it has to use auxiliary heat to maintain comfort when the outside temperatures approach freezing. The auxiliary system, whether it runs on fossil fuel or electric resistance heat, can add significantly to your home heating costs.

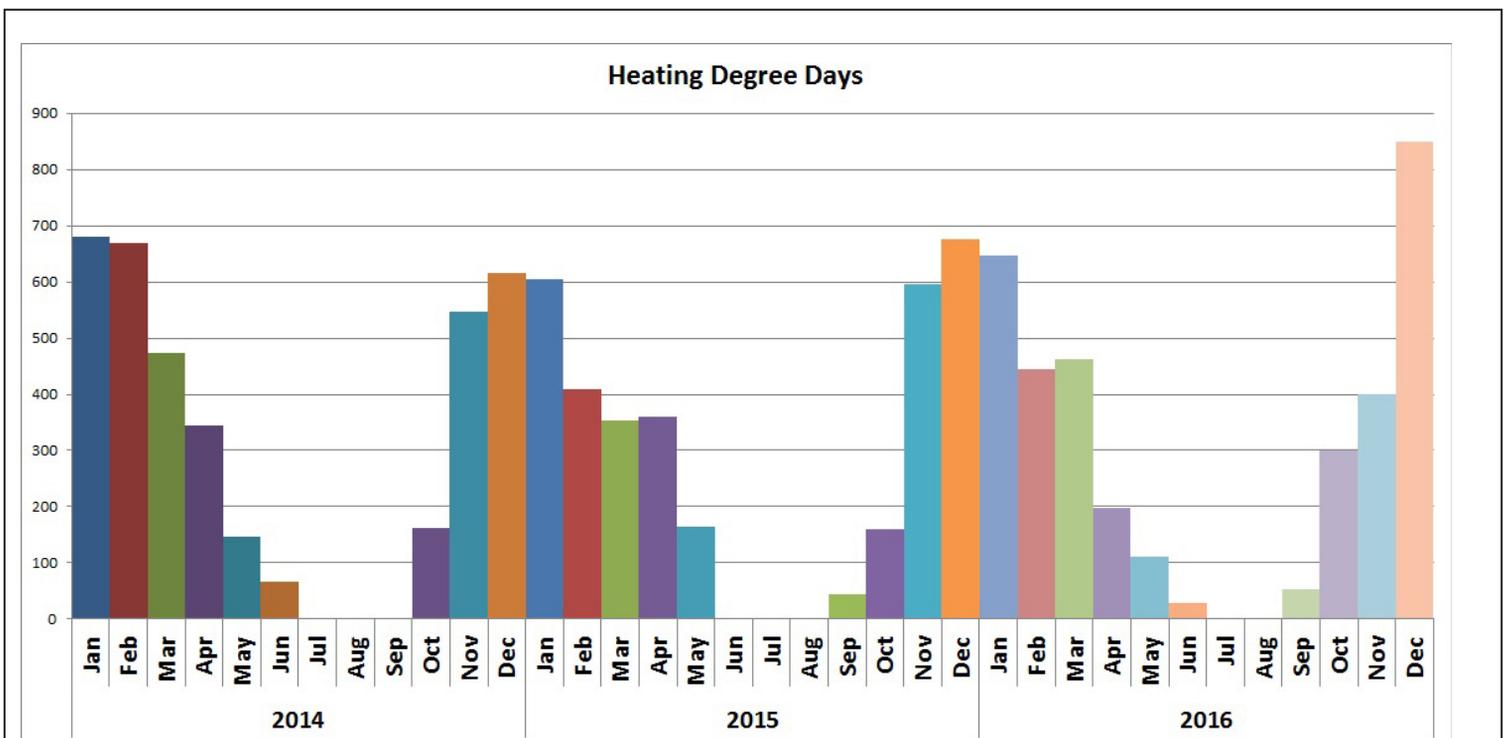
Some of the other reasons bills are higher this time of year: cooking more hot meals at home, using more hot water for showers and

laundry, additional lighting with the shortest daylight days occurring in December, Christmas lights, additional people over for the holidays with extra cooking, and having the kids home all day during all those snow days. All of these have added up to some really big electric bills.

Another reason some bills were higher - the recent Cycle 2 bills have 7 more days than the month before due to the weather and holidays delaying us being able to safely get the meter reads on the regular schedule..

Please see the back side of this flyer for some energy saving tips. Visit our website at clatskaniepud.com for more information, or call our energy efficiency professionals at 503-728-2163.

Below is a chart of average heating days for the last three years. This shows the dramatic difference between November and December of 2016.





Energy Saving Tips

- ❖ Cold weather causes your heating system to work harder to keep your home at the temperature the thermostat is set at. Even without turning up the thermostat, your heating system will use more energy as temperatures drop!
- ❖ Turn down the thermostat. When you feel cold, instead of turning up the heat, put on a sweater and warm socks. Blankets for the couch, and area rugs to insulate the floor are a great way stay warm efficiently.
- ❖ Turn down the thermostat at night. Adjusting the thermostat at night, when nobody is awake, will save energy. Add another blanket to sleep comfortably.
- ❖ Did you know many thermostats do not have an 'Off' setting? Unless it clearly says 'Off', it is probably just set to low. Whether it has an 'Off' setting or not, it's a good idea to set it at a minimum of 55 degrees F to prevent pipes from freezing and moisture from condensing inside the home.
- ❖ Maintenance – Keep the filter clean in your furnace. The proper interval depends on many things, including how often the home is occupied, and how many people and pets live there.
- ❖ Heating your home with a heat pump gets more expensive the colder it gets. By the time temperatures drop below freezing, the heat pump will rely on electric resistance heating much more, which costs more. However **DO NOT** set your heat pump to 'emergency heat'; this setting is for when your heat pump is not working at all. This setting forces the heat pump to use the most expensive heating type at all times. Leave the thermostat on 'heat' mode to save as much as possible.
- ❖ Use the sun – Passive solar heating can heat your home for free. Open the blinds and drapes on southern-facing windows to allow the sun to enter.
- ❖ Insulation – Insulating your home is the cheapest way to make it more efficient. A well-insulated home will hold in the heat you paid for longer. Clatskanie PUD provides rebates for insulation.
- ❖ Seal air leaks – Air leaks around plumbing penetrations, chimneys, and gaps in the building structure allow heated air to exit the home. Find and seal these leaks. It's also important to close fireplace damper when not in use. Clatskanie PUD offers no-cost blower-door testing and rebates for reducing the air leakage in your home.