

# Energy Saving Tips

from the MSU Extension Housing and  
Environmental Health Program



## Don't let your home go without a winter coat

### Insulate for warmth and dollar savings

For the same reason you put on a coat in the winter, it is important to make sure your home is appropriately insulated. One key area to check for insulation is the attic, and the only way to tell is to look. Grab a flashlight, put on a dust mask, find a ruler or tape measure and measure the thickness of your insulation.

*Caution! If you find vermiculite insulation in your attic do not proceed. Since vermiculite may contain asbestos, always have it tested before proceeding.*

Attics generally need 12 to 16 inches of insulation. Insulation is measured in R-value, which represents resistance to heat flow. Fiberglass batts or blankets have an R-value around 3.2 per inch, and cellulose has about 3.7 per inch.

For attic insulation in existing Montana homes, a minimum R-value of 38 is recommended and up to R-49 is often cost effective. Check to see if your utility company offers rebates for adding insulation and don't forget that Montana has tax credits available for energy conservation measures (see Montana Form ENRG-C)

Before insulating, check to make sure there are no exposed electrical boxes and never insulate over knob and tube wiring. Don't insulate over recessed light fixtures and keep insulation at least 3 inches away from any chimneys or vents that produce heat.

Depending on your skill level, you may decide to insulate your attic yourself, or contact a professional insulator. Either way, you stand to keep your home warmer and save money on your heating bill this winter.

**For free information and energy saving tips, contact the MSU Extension Housing and Environmental Health Program at (406) 994-3451. To download free energy brochures, go to [www.weatherization.org/energytopics.htm](http://www.weatherization.org/energytopics.htm)**