

WHO LEFT THE HEATER ON? PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR HOT WEATHER



Get ready. A long hot summer is coming to almost every region of the U.S. this year.

That's the prediction from scientists at the [National Weather Service](#). For June, July and August, daily temperatures are forecasted to be 50-70 percent higher than average. Other industry weather-watchers add that scorching 90- and 100-degree weather will be the norm across the country in July and August.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take now to help protect your home from the ravages of extreme heat, ensure that you and your family stay comfortable during sweltering temperatures, and even help you save money in the long run.



TIPS TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR EXTREME HEAT

ON THE INSIDE:



Schedule a tune-up for your air conditioner. Making sure filters and coils are all clean and functioning properly at the beginning of the season will ensure performance throughout the summer, when you need it. Putting off repairs will not only decrease energy efficiency, but also degrade service over time.



Insulate your house. Particularly your attic, where it can get very hot. Adequate insulation will prevent cool air from readily escaping and lower your energy costs. In fact, experts at the [Energy Star program](#) estimate that adding insulation can save homeowners 11-15 percent on their energy bills.



Check for gaps in seals around all windows and doors. Use silicone caulk or weatherstripping to fill any leaks that you find to keep the cool air inside your home and the air conditioner running efficiently.



Install a programmable thermostat. This will allow you to set a constant and energy-efficient temperature during the summer months that will keep your entire household comfortable.



Consider installing ceiling fans or an attic fan. They can circulate the air and create a cool breeze that not only keeps your home comfortable, but also helps reduce the stress on your air conditioner.



Arrange for an energy audit on your entire home. An HVAC professional or representative from your power company can point out where you may be losing energy efficiency and what upgrades or minor repairs you can make to improve it – and keep you cool.



Install insulated, sun-reflecting coverings or curtains on your windows. And make sure they are closed during the hottest part of the day, i.e., late morning to early evening.



ON THE OUTSIDE:



Plant sun-loving, shade-giving shrubs around your house. These can block the sun around your windows, reduce the surrounding air temperature next to your home, and help beautify your landscape. If you have a large yard, look for a suitable place to plant a tree. Experts say, just one, planted in the right spot, can keep about 70 percent of solar heat away from your house.



Consider installing exterior awnings, shutters, or storm windows. Awnings, in particular, can be effective at repelling about 70 percent of the sun's rays off south-facing windows. And they can be tailored to shade an entire side of your house if it gets a lot of sun.



Call for service on your generator, if you have one. Or consider purchasing a portable one. Because extreme heat can boost energy consumption and overtax electricity grids, power outages can occur during summer storms. And the chances of experiencing one are growing. A study by the Environmental Science and Technology recently reported that incidences of power failures have increased 60 percent since 2015 as the result of heatwaves and climate change. With a generator on standby, you can be confident you will be able to keep the lights on... even if the power goes out.



TIP: PREPARE AN EXTREME HEAT SURVIVAL KIT

Store it in your house or garage and stock it with items, such as: water, flashlight, batteries, ready-to eat, non-perishable food, towels, cooler and plastic bags for ice, charcoal (if you have an outdoor grill), and hand-held fans. Then, if your air conditioner quits, power goes out, generator fails or supplies become scarce at local stores during the heatwave, you'll have the essentials.

Contact our Private Client team to help you review your policies to ensure you're covered should extreme temperatures wreak havoc on your home.

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