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Hudson River Housing Offers Home and Family Energy-Saving Tips for Dutchess County Consumers This Winter

Poughkeepsie, New York – As the days grow colder and consumers gear up for another winter, many are looking for ways to beat the season’s high monthly energy costs. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the average U.S. household spends about \$1,900 per year on home utility bills. With so much of a consumer’s monthly income spent on energy, Hudson River Housing urges Dutchess County consumers to reduce their utility costs by weatherizing their homes this winter.

“There are several measures that homeowners and renters can take to control, or lower, their monthly utility bills. Adding insulation, purchasing new appliances, and even making small changes in your family’s energy consumption can add up to big monthly savings this winter, and every season,” said Gail V. Webster, Executive Director of Hudson River Housing, a member of the NeighborWorks network.

As part of Hudson River Housing’s commitment to go [green](#), Hudson River Housing offers Dutchess County families the following tips to reduce their energy costs and increase their home’s energy efficiency.

Energy Saving Tips for Your Home:

- **Replace the filters once a month** to maintain an adequate and clean air flow and in turn reduce energy costs.
- **Keep registers and vents free of dust, dirt and other blockages.** If you have rooms that are not used often, keep their registers and doors closed; doing so will save your system from heating or cooling unused rooms.
- **Add or replace insulation.** Appropriate insulation can save you up to 30 percent on your heating bill, according to the Alliance to Save Energy. Insulation of your attic, floors, exterior walls, crawl spaces, and around outlets on exterior walls can help prevent energy loss. Be sure to choose high-quality, non-toxic materials, and replace matted or torn insulation to maximize its effectiveness.
- **Replace or add caulking or weather stripping around windows and doors.** Your home may have small openings around doors and windows that allow for heated air loss. Caulking and weather stripping can reduce energy waste and protect your home from moisture damage.

- **Install ceiling fans.** A ceiling fan will help more evenly distribute warm and cool air generated by your heat pump, furnace, or A/C unit throughout the year.
- **Attic fans or vents** can keep hot or cold air from being trapped in your attic.
- **If you need to buy new appliances,** buy the most energy efficient models you can afford. Look for household appliances that have earned the Energy Star[®] -- these products have met the guidelines set by the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy. According to the Alliance to Save Energy, households that replace existing equipment Energy Star[®] qualified products can cut annual energy bills by as much as 30 percent, or more than \$450 per year.
- **Install low-flow water fixtures such as those with the EPA's Watersense label or by installing faucet aerators.** These fixtures are designed to use less water without compromising performance, and can help save on the energy costs involved in water heating.
- **Install storm windows and storm doors with screens.** Storm doors and windows can reduce wasted energy by serving as an added barrier to your outdoor environment.
- **Try not to keep the thermostat too high in winter.** Keep the thermostat between 68-72 degrees in the cooler winter months. For each degree you lower your thermostat, you can save up to five percent on the heating portion of your energy bill.

Energy Saving Tips for Your Family:

- **Turn out lights not in use** to save energy and money.
- **Let Mother Nature light your home.** Sunlight is often brighter than bulbs, and it's free. Open window treatments during the day to allow light in; close them at night to keep heat in your home.
- **Dress appropriately no matter the season,** so you can keep your thermostat at the lowest comfortable setting in the winter.
- **Shut off the water** while you brush your teeth, wash dishes by hand, or do other household chores. Turning off the water while you brush your teeth alone can save as much as four gallons a minute, according to Water - Use It Wisely.
- **Run your washer or dishwasher** only when they are full. According to Water - Use It Wisely, doing so could save as much as 1,000 gallons of water a month per household.
- **Plan your family meals each week** so that you make one trip to the grocery store per week. This will save gas money in the long run.
- **Try cooking with the lids on your pots** to save time and conserve energy used when cooking. This is especially effective when trying to boil water.
- **Use a microwave or toaster oven** to heat smaller portions, rather than a conventional oven.
- **Close the refrigerator door completely to conserve energy.** The refrigerator is one of the most used appliances in a household because it runs 24 hours a day.
- **Do not leave doors and windows open** when the heat or air conditioning are running.
- **Lower the temperature on your water heater** to 120 degrees.

NeighborWorks America and the NeighborWorks network of local nonprofit organizations are committed to helping communities across the nation go "[green](#)" and become healthy, sustainable places for people to live and work.

Hudson River Housing (HRH) develops and manages affordable housing in the community. HRH was created in 1982 to address the emerging homeless problem in Dutchess County, and is now a large, multi-service provider of

housing and other services to a wide range of underserved populations. The expertise of Hudson River Housing is increasingly relied upon to inform local planning related to housing, community development and homelessness. Since its formation, Hudson River Housing has developed 40 affordable homeownership opportunities, over 600 emergency, transitional and permanent housing units, and 9 commercial spaces. For more information, please call (845) 454-5176 or visit www.hudsonriverhousing.org.

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