

## ***Is your property ready for winter?***

*by Pam Marshall*

As much as we hate to admit it, the cold weather is just around the corner. Whether you're a homeowner, landlord or tenant, now's the time to make sure your property is ready for winter. This month, we're giving you some tips for keeping your home warm and dry during the chilly months.



### **Check your heating**

This is an area where safety is key. Make sure you book in annual maintenance checks:

- *Wood burners – Have your chimney swept and inspected to clean the flue and vents. An annual check is even a requirement under some home insurance policies.*
- *Heat pump – Get the air filters and vents cleaned. Both your indoor and outdoor units should be checked.*
- *Heater – Check all leads and cables are in good condition. If you're not confident about its safety, get a qualified electrician to take a look.*

### **Consider a heating upgrade**

If you can afford it, upgrading your heating solution could be a wise investment. This [Energywise resource](#) gives a great summary of all the heating options available – and the pros and cons of each.

1. *Landlords – Upgrading your heating solution may be a very canny decision. Winter can be a tricky time of year to find new tenants, so make sure you give them every reason to stay.*
2. *Homeowners – after the initial outlay, having a highly efficient heating solution can help cut those monthly power bills.*

Looking to buy a secondhand appliance? Make sure it's been tested by a licensed electrician or gas fitter and certified as safe.

### **Keep the heat in**

Insulation is one of the best investments you can make. A warm home is a happier and healthier home, so get the best solution you can afford. Good insulation will also keep your home cooler in the summer months.

- *Make ceiling insulation your priority*
- *Got that already? Then head under the house to add underfloor insulation*
- *If you can access the wall spaces, the next priority is wall insulation*

### **Already insulated? Check it's doing the job**

If you have traditional wool or 'batts' insulation, check for any sagging. Your insulation needs to be snug against the house to be effective, so it's worth replacing sections that aren't up to scratch.

### **Insulating a rental property?**

If you're a landlord, you should already be aware of the changes to insulation standards for rental properties.

- *Effective 1 July 2016, insulation statements are compulsory on all tenancy agreements*
- *By 1 July 2019, ceiling and underfloor insulation will be compulsory where it is reasonably practicable to install. [Learn more here.](#)*
- *Some properties may qualify for insulation funding. [Energywise has all the details.](#)*

Make sure you get your rental up to scratch now. Remember, a cosy home means happier tenants!

### **Check your curtains and blinds**

It's all very well having a great heating solution, but don't let that warmth flow out the windows. Consider investing in quality, thermally-lined window coverings.

### **Other easy ways to get ready for winter**

In next month's blog, we'll be sharing some other easy ways to keep your property in top-notch condition over winter. That includes tips for minimising the winter damp, along with some vital safety checks like smoke alarms.

If you're a landlord, it may seem like a big list to work through. If your time could be better spent elsewhere, you may want to consider using a property management service. They should not only get you great tenants, but manage all the details such as performing regular maintenance checks.

**Want to find out how property management services can help you? [Talk to our team](#) today.**