

I've tried to follow the advice I've seen about energy saving, but my fuel bills are still going up. What else can I do?

You've probably seen the advice to reduce your thermostat (not below 18°C while you are at home). But switch your heating off completely when leaving the house for a few hours. It's cheaper to reheat your home than keep your heating on low when you're out.

And you'll have been told to insulate your home. But how? Fitting draught-proofing strips to your windows and doors is a quick DIY job and can save around £45 a year. A hot water cylinder jacket is easy to fit, typically costs under £30 and can save roughly £50 a year on energy bills. And if you have an unused chimney, installing a chimney draught excluder could save you around £65 a year.

Another free tip is to keep furniture and covers away from radiators and heaters. Blocking the source of heat keeps you cold, overworks your system, and wastes money.

In addition to turning off lights and appliances you're not using, you can also make savings by using your washing machine on a 30-degree cycle instead of higher temperatures. Ditch the dryer to save even more money - dry your clothes on racks inside or outside in warmer weather to save up to £60 a year.

And have you heard of ECO? (Energy Company Obligation) This scheme obliges energy companies to support households to install energy efficiency measures such as insulation and new, more efficient heating systems. Contact your supplier.

If you're still struggling to afford your energy bills, the first step is to get in touch with your supplier. But if you are already in debt, contact South Lakes Citizens Advice without delay.

Free, confidential advice and help is available from South Lakes Citizens Advice on any aspect of debt, consumer problems, benefits, housing, employment or any other problems. South Lakes Citizens Advice, your local charity, is here for you. How to access:

- ***Call 015394 46464 - this is being staffed from 9:30 – 2pm***
- ***Adviceline: 0808 2787 984***
- ***email advice via our submission page on our website www.southlakescab.org.uk***
- ***Help to Claim (Universal Support): 0800 144 8 444***