



January 2025 Newsletter

Empowering Sustainable Communities

Energy Tips for 2025 and Beyond



By Michele Long, Development Director of SEEDS

Happy New Year! As you make your new resolutions and embrace the spirit of the new year with such positive resolutions, maybe saving a few dollars is on your list? Saving money is always a smart goal, and SEEDS has some fantastic tips to help you achieve that.

Here are a few of the tips that I have done around my home for inspiration:

- **Turn the thermostat down:** Lowering it by one degree can save about 2% on your heating bill, and five degrees can save around 10%.
- **Maintain your appliances:** Keeping them clean and properly maintained ensures they run more efficiently.
- **Efficient oven use:** Bake several items at once or consecutively to minimize energy use.
- **Plant native plants:** Trees can absorb a ton of CO₂ during their lifetime and help regulate temperatures around your home.



Photo by [Freepik](#)



Photo by [Vecteezy](#)

These are excellent ways to start saving money and also contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle. If you're looking for more ideas, you can visit the SEEDS website for [additional tips and inspiration](#).

Here's to a year of smart savings and positive changes!

Michele Long

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Winter Safety



By Adam Freedgood

Stay Warm and Safe This Winter: Cold Weather Emergency Preparedness with SEEDS

Winter is here, and with it, the potential for prolonged power outages and frigid temperatures. Don't get caught unprepared! Here at SEEDS we believe in building resilient communities. This means being ready for whatever nature throws our way.

This newsletter focuses on cold weather emergency preparedness, with a special emphasis on the power of sustainable solutions like solar and battery storage.

Safety First: Generator Tips

If you plan to use a generator during a power outage, safety is paramount. Here are some key reminders:

- **Never run a generator indoors.** Carbon monoxide poisoning is a serious risk. Only operate generators outdoors, well away from windows and doors.
- **Refuel your generator safely.** Let it cool completely before adding fuel. Use a funnel and avoid spills.
- **Beware of electrical hazards.** Always use a properly sized transfer switch to connect your generator to your home's electrical system.

Empowering Your Home: Solar + Battery Storage

Consider the benefits of a solar energy system with battery storage. This sustainable solution provides power even during outages, keeping your lights on, refrigerators running, and heating systems functional without being reliant on generators and fuel.

SEEDS can help you explore solar options and find the perfect system to meet your needs. While a fully off-grid setup might not be for everyone, even a partial solar solution with battery storage can significantly enhance your winter preparedness.



Photo by [Freepik](#)

[REQUEST A SOLAR ASSESSMENT](#)

Plan Ahead for the Unexpected: Food, Water, and Heat

No matter your chosen energy source, it's wise to plan ahead for potential power outages that last longer than anticipated. Here's what you need to consider:

- **Food:** Stock up on non-perishable foods that require no cooking (canned goods, granola bars, etc.). Don't forget a manual can opener!
- **Water:** Fill a bathtub or large containers with clean water for drinking, cooking, and sanitation. Old wine bottles and food-grade buckets work great!
- **Warmth:** Invest in warm blankets, sleeping bags, and hand warmers. Consider alternative heating sources like a well-maintained wood stove (with expert installation). Did you know that efficient wood stoves are considered renewable energy appliances and qualify for [tax credits](#)?

Stay Informed and Connected

- **Monitor weather forecasts** closely and stay informed about potential winter storms.
- **Charge your cell phone** before an outage and consider a battery-powered radio to stay updated on important announcements.
- **Check on neighbors**, especially those who may be elderly or have disabilities.

By following these tips and exploring sustainable energy options, you can face winter with confidence, knowing your home is prepared for anything.

Stay tuned for future newsletters where we'll delve deeper into specific topics related to renewable energy and community resilience.

Together, let's build a stronger, more sustainable future for us all!

Visit SEEDSGroup.net for more resources and information.

A Discussion on Climate Change



Column by Ovidiu Cocieru

Those interested in sustainability and renewable energy might want to discuss climate change with those around them. Oftentimes, though, people are concerned about opening such a conversation. The Yale Program on Climate Change mentions in their [2024 report](#) that although 64% of Americans are at least “somewhat worried” about climate change, 66% of Americans say they “rarely” or “never” discuss global warming with family and friends. The fact that Americans are concerned about opening such a conversation is understandable, given decades of effort by the fossil fuel industry [to deny or spread doubt about climate science](#) or [delay meaningful action](#) that would address this problem.



Photo by [Vecteezy](#)

So, how do we talk about climate change? In her book “[Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World](#)”, climate scientist and evangelical Christian Dr. Katharine Hayhoe argues that facts are not enough when talking about climate change. Instead, she recommends discussing our shared values and how climate change impacts what we value most, including our livelihoods or lifestyle. If

we're parents, we can talk about how children are affected by extreme weather events. If we talk to farmers, we can discuss the increased difficulty of growing food. If we talk to fellow skiers, we mention how a warming planet leads to shorter ski seasons and increased reliance on artificial snow. The assumption in this case is that the person we talk to accepts that climate change exists. Otherwise, I find two other approaches more useful.

If the person I'm talking to doubts climate change is real, one approach is to lean into the credibility of institutions. For example, [67% of Americans have a favorable view of NASA](#). When I open the discussion this way, I sometimes play the [video of NASA landing a rover on Mars](#). I then ask the person I'm talking to if they believe NASA knows a few things about science, and particularly atmospheres, to be able to land a rover on Mars. More likely than not, they would agree that NASA understands atmospheres to achieve such a milestone. I then share NASA's website on climate change and go over what the website says: <https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/>. Other organizations that we could lean into are the [military](#) or [faith institutions](#).

If I know the person I'm talking to completely dismisses the existence of climate change, I find it useless to use the abovementioned approaches. Instead, I avoid discussing climate change and strictly go into renewable energy's financial advantages. Driving an electric vehicle [can save over \\$1,200 a year](#). Solar panels will save the average U.S. homeowner [about \\$50,000 over the lifetime of the solar system](#). A heat pump can save between [\\$300, and \\$1,000 a year](#).

In his book, "Sapiens- A Brief History of Humankind", Dr. Yuval Noah Harari writes: *"Money is the only trust system created by humans that can bridge almost any cultural gap, and that does not discriminate on the basis of religion, gender, race, age, or sexual orientation. Thanks to money, even people who don't know each other and don't trust each other can nevertheless cooperate effectively."* (p. 186)

We all like money. We all want more of it. Sustainable solutions can deliver that.



Photo by [Freepik](#)

Message Board Info:

Subscribe to SEEDS new online message board to ask questions, share expertise, and get alerts on upcoming learning opportunities!

Have a specific question about solar, energy efficiency, or clean tech?

Want to promote an upcoming event or resource?

SEEDS is building an online forum to serve as a center of knowledge on all things clean energy!

Visit <https://groups.io/g/NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency> or send an email to NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency+subscribe@groups.io to subscribe!

#SEEDSGoodNews

Do you have any #SEEDSGoodNews stories to share with the SEEDS community? Send them to us at newsletter@seedsgroup.net or tag us on social media! They can be local stories from your community, or stories from around the world--anything to celebrate and spread the word about the progress of energy efficiency, renewable energy or sustainable living wherever you hear about it!

Calling for Contributors!!

We know our members have many different interests. If there is a topic on sustainability that you would like to write an article about (food, energy or education), please send it to **Newsletter@seedsgroup.net**

The SEEDS review board will consider your submission for publication in a future newsletter depending on the topic and date submitted.

We'd love to hear from our members!

If you are not a member of SEEDS, please consider [joining us](#) today!

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<https://seedsgroup.net/become-a-member/>



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