

# WIR für SIE EXTRA

A special edition of the  
wbg Nuremberg magazine



## SAVING COSTS

# FOREWORD



Dear Readers,

At the moment, everyone is focused on saving energy. Companies are being called upon to find ways of reducing consumption. The German government has already passed corresponding ordinances for this purpose, and we are of course adhering to these and working on implementing the individual regulations.

Every private household can and should make its contribution as well. By doing so, we will all help to get through the winter together. Every reduction, no matter how small, helps society as well as you personally. It also saves you money.

With this **Wir für Sie – Extra** issue, we provide you with tips along with the request to examine what you may be able to implement.

As a company, we will, among other things, reduce the running time of the information monitors at our Customer Centres and temporarily switch off various power consumers in the vicinity of the entrance areas of our branch offices.

In addition to our modernisation programme, we are examining to what extent we can further optimise our own heating systems. Of course, N-ERGIE will also be doing this within the framework of the heating systems that it operates.

We will also try to change the house entrance lighting from twilight switches to motion detectors if this is technically possible. However, we will always take the necessary safety considerations into account.

Further potential savings are being examined by a working group. If you have any tips on this, please feel free to contact us at 8004-1800 or by e-mail at [info@wbg.nuernberg.de](mailto:info@wbg.nuernberg.de). Thank you.

## IN THIS ISSUE YOU WILL READ

### 2 Foreword · Contents

### 3 Energy advice

Interview with the energy consultant of N-ERGIE, Eva Rausch

### 4 Heating

Economical, but still cosy

### 6 Hot water

Clean from head to toe

### 7 Laundry

Wash and dry, please!

### 8 Washing up

Washing up – by hand or by machine?

Publishing information



Most of our existing housing is connected to N-ERGIE's district heating network. This means that you have an offtake purchase agreement with N-ERGIE, just like when you purchase electricity. To avoid high back payments, you can contact the N-ERGIE Customer Centre to have the deductions adjusted.

The same applies to all those of you who receive the heating costs statement with the operating costs statement – i.e. through us. We are already informing you of this option in the 2021 operating costs statements. You are still welcome to contact us at

**[betriebskosten@wbg.nuernberg.de](mailto:betriebskosten@wbg.nuernberg.de)**

to arrange an adjustment of the monthly advance service charge payment.

We would be very pleased if the tips in this extra issue are helpful to you and we can all make a contribution to saving energy as a result.

Wishing you all the best in these exceptional times,

Ralf Schekira and Frank Thyroff

**Energy advice:** if you examine your own habits, you'll discover potential savings

# “We can always do a little bit more”

Where can you save on electricity, and thus energy? Although N-ERGIE sells electricity, it also provides energy advice. Eva Rausch has been part of the team since 2010 and knows all about potential savings.



## Ms Rausch, have you been even more preoccupied with saving energy during the crisis?

**Rausch:** Professionally: of course. Our advice on renovating heating systems is in particularly high demand at the moment. Privately, I've never needed much electricity. But now I'm already thinking about whether I should leave the tumble dryer running or hang the washing on the line.

## And what about the people you advise?

Some people are frugal by nature, others are more careless with energy.

## Is it worth changing your habits just to save five or ten euros a year?

In my opinion, saving energy is generally worthwhile – not only because of the money, but because electricity is a valuable form of energy that is produced at great expense. Sometimes I see it being wasted...

## What do you advise then?

That's difficult. One thing is clear: the more liberally I use energy, the more I can save. But the boundaries are very individual. I've had people tell me, “but I need my swimming pool”, while others were already consuming well below average and still wanted to save more. Of course, anyone who has three teenagers at home who like to take endless showers won't have it easy. But I'm convinced that everyone can still make savings. We can always do a little bit more.

## Where do you see the greatest potential?

Hot water and heating are the biggest energy consumers in the household, followed by everything that

heats or cools, and appliances that run for a long time. This can include, for example, freezers, aquariums or computers that are used for gaming for hours on end. It's important to keep an eye on power consumption.

## Ah, so it's the end of the freezer?

Not at all. You can't lump all these things together. Hunters, fishermen and gardeners all need a freezer. Nevertheless, you should ask yourself: do I really need this or that appliance? Even small changes can help to save money: 7 to 8 degrees in the refrigerator and -18 degrees in the freezer are sufficient.

## Is it possible to save too much?

Certainly. For example, if the heating is turned down so low that mould grows on the cold outside walls. Or if you don't ventilate because you're trying to save so much – and moisture accumulates in the rooms. You shouldn't put your own health at risk either. //

WIR FÜR SIE EXTRA – SAVING COSTS

# Economical,





# but still cosy

Small lifestyle changes have a big effect when it comes to **heating**

Everyone knows the rule of thumb by now: reducing the temperature by one degree saves six percent of the heating energy.

The logical continuation of this idea would be that if you just turn it down far enough, you will use little or no more energy and hardly have to pay anything at all. But things aren't that simple. After all, people want to feel comfortable. They need warmth.

And the flats themselves also require a minimum temperature so that they don't suffer any damage. Mould on cold and damp walls, in the worst case burst water pipes in winter – this is what tenants and landlords fear.

The German Federal Environment Agency therefore advises keeping even unused rooms at a room temperature of 15 degrees. Nevertheless, there are many ways to reduce energy consumption smartly and without much effort. And it pays off. After all, two-thirds of all the energy needed in the household is used for heating.

Unlike elderly or sick people, who often need more heat, a room temperature of 20 degrees in the living area is adequate for most people. A cosy jumper, a smart cardigan or a blanket over the legs will keep even those lying on the sofa or relaxing in an armchair warm. On the other hand, the German Federal Environment Agency recommends 18 degrees in the kitchen and 17 degrees in the bedroom. Other advisers even consider 16 degrees to be sufficient.

To avoid heat loss, doors to cool rooms should remain closed. Don't give draughts a chance: broom strips and draught-stop rolls have proven effective for flat doors, and windows can be sealed with flexible seals that can be glued in place if necessary.

Nevertheless, stale air has to come out. Especially since fresh air, which contains less moisture, warms up faster. You should ventilate with the windows wide open two or three times a day, even in winter – especially after cooking or showering: open your windows wide, and cross-ventilate if possible. For five to ten minutes at the most. And of course the heating must be switched off.

At night, while sleeping, no one notices a few degrees less. Depending on the heating system and the building, the room temperature can be lowered by up to five degrees at night or when you are away. When you get up, it should be at a comfortable temperature again. With newer (gas floor) heating systems, the control can be pre-set to the desired time periods. However, you can also do something with other types of heating: thermostatic valves, for example, save four to eight percent heating energy because they keep the rooms at a constant set temperature. Modern thermostatic valves can even be programmed individually so that they control times of day and days of the week differently. Tenants can install their own such valves, but they must be replaced with the original ones when they move out.

If you regularly bleed your radiators, you also save energy. Only where water circulates without air bubbles can heat be reliably released into the room. You can get tips on bleeding and a suitable key from your Customer Centre. //



## 5 TIPS

- 1 Reduce the heating, especially in unused rooms. 20 degrees is sufficient in living rooms, 16-17 degrees in bedrooms and unused rooms.
- 2 Use the nighttime temperature-lowering function: the temperature can be set three to five degrees lower at night as well as during the day when no one is in the flat.
- 3 Ventilate regularly: Ventilate with the windows wide open two to three times a day for 5 to 10 minutes (switch off the heating when doing so). This also prevents mould.
- 4 Keep radiators unobstructed: move furniture away and shorten curtains that cover them – the warm air must be able to circulate.
- 5 Close roller shutters and window blinds at night and draw curtains – this acts as insulation and reduces heat loss through the window surfaces.



# Clean from head to toe

**Hot water is the biggest energy consumer in households after heating**

**A**fter heating, hot water is the biggest consumer of energy in private households. For this reason, it's particularly worthwhile to think about potential savings in this area.

Taking a full bath requires about 200 litres of hot water. By contrast, taking a shower consumes only about 140 litres. It's even more environmentally conscious to turn off the water when soaping up – because about 20 litres of warm water per minute flow through the shower head.

This quantity can also be reduced further by mechanical means. Low-flow shower heads that produce a finer spray are available in hardware stores and specialist shops. At other taps, flow reducers can reduce the flow so that less water runs down the drain in the same amount of time.

Heating the water is a cost driver. It's particularly costly when water is heated with electricity. For this reason, instantaneous water heaters and boilers or under-sink storage tanks in the kitchen should be set to a low position and the manufacturer's operating instructions followed. Anyone using a single-lever mixer can save energy if, before opening the tap, they briefly consider whether they need cold or hot water and, depending on this, first turn the lever to the left or front or to the right.

If you turn the lever to the right, only the cold water inlet opens. Yet most people, for purely visual reasons, set the lever in the middle and then open it that way, regardless of whether they need cold or hot water. In the middle position, however, both supply pipes are opened.

The middle position is particularly uneconomical if you don't need hot water at all – for washing your hands



after going to the toilet, for example, or for rinsing out a coffee cup at the sink. The water is drawn off for such a short time that there is often no hot water at all. In the middle position, however, the hot water inlet also opens and the hot water meter turns on for no reason. In reality, we don't use any hot water at all at such times, but we pay for the hot water to flow in the supply pipe only to cool down again. There's no reason not to wash our hands with cold water!

It's also recommended that we reconsider our personal washing habits and perhaps not shower or bathe every day, but only as needed. Dermatologists even consider excessive cleanliness to be harmful to the skin. //



- 1 It's better to take a shower than a bath, and turn off the water when soaping up.
- 2 Set the instantaneous water heater and boiler to a low/the lowest setting.
- 3 Install a low-flow shower head or flow reducer.
- 4 Wash your hands with cold water.
- 5 Don't set single-lever mixers in the middle, but to cold/to the right.

# Wash and dry, please!

Laundry gets clean and dry on the line even at lower temperatures



**W**hat happens during washing? The dirty clothes are moved around in the water. How clean they become depends on three factors: the detergent, the temperature and time. The eco-wash programmes of modern machines take advantage of this. They don't heat the water quite as much, but the laundry stays in the suds longer and is moved around more often. This saves energy.

The temperatures themselves can also be lowered when washing. These days, clothes are more often sweaty than really dirty. Coloureds get clean at 30 degrees, whites usually at 40 degrees – this saves 35 to 40 per cent electricity compared to a 60-degree wash. (However, you should do a 60-degree wash once a month to prevent germs from taking hold.)

To wash your clothes as efficiently as possible, the machine should always be fully loaded – except for delicates and woollens.

Experts advise against washing individual items and small quantities “quickly” using the short programme: they also require a lot of energy to heat the water. It's more economical overall to wash out stains by hand.

By the way, not every piece of clothing needs to be washed immediately. Some can survive two, three or more days of use – depending on how much the wearer sweats and the environment he or she is in. Natural materials like cotton or linen usually pass the smell test longer than mixed materials or synthetic fabrics. Wool

is actually best aired out and washed as infrequently as possible; it regenerates itself.

Drying with a tumble dryer is particularly energy-intensive. That's why you save the most if you don't use the appliance at all: in the summer months, laundry is best dried on the line or on a rack on the balcony. Many housing complexes have drying rooms in the basement or attic that are specially reserved for laundry and have lines.

Laundry should not be dried in your flat – there's too great a risk that the escaping moisture will condense on the walls and lead to mould. So, if you do use the dryer in winter, you should set the spin speed to at least 1400 revolutions: this way, the laundry contains only a small amount of water, dries faster and requires less energy. //



- 1 Always load the washing machine fully and wash individual items by hand.
- 2 Lower the temperature when washing: laundry that is worn normally and not very dirty will also get clean at 30 and 40 degrees.
- 3 Use eco-wash cycles instead of short programmes.
- 4 Spin at a high speed – 1200 or 1400 revolutions.
- 5 Air-dry laundry on the line.



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## WIR FÜR SIE EXTRA – SAVING COSTS

# Washing up - by hand or by machine?

"You're soaking in it," ...

...said Tilly in a commercial for dishwashing detergent, gently patting her customer's fingers. In the 1980s, washing dishes by hand was still common. Today it's a rarity: in 2021, 73 per cent of German households owned a dishwasher.

And that's a good thing. After all, dishwashers consume less energy and resources than washing dishes by hand – provided they are fully loaded. According to the guidebook of the German Federal Environment Agency, 46 litres are needed to wash twelve standard place settings by hand. A modern dishwasher manages with just 15 litres.

A comparative study conducted by the University of Bonn with 200 households in Germany, Italy, Sweden and Great Britain found that "washing dishes with a machine requires on average 50 per cent less water and 28 per cent less energy than washing dishes by hand". So, if you don't want to or can't give up washing up by hand, there are a few rules you should follow: don't rinse under an open tap, but fill the sink or a bowl with warm water. Remove detergent residue by dipping it into a bowl of cold water. //



- 1 Only switch on the dishwasher when it is full and properly loaded.
- 2 Use eco-programmes with low temperatures.
- 3 Do not pre-wash dishes.
- 4 Use the correct amount of detergent and avoid softeners if possible.
- 5 When washing dishes by hand, fill the sink or a bowl with warm water and use it for all the dishes. Rinse with cold water.