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Turn down the heat

CONCERN over rising energy costs is leaving some South Australians in the cold.

According to a recent survey by independent energy comparison website Switchwise, seven out of 10 households will cut their use of heating this winter to save money.

One in 10 Australians polled said they would take harsh measures to cut costs such as spending more time away from home during winter, going to friends and family or public places like libraries or shopping centres to keep warm.

Almost a quarter of respondents said they would not turn on the heat at all during winter to avoid blowing the family budget on heating bills.

A third said they would only heat one or two rooms to keep costs

under control. Switchwise founder Shaun Johnson said consumers' forced cutbacks on heating would affect quality of life and the health of many Australians.

"Whilst many of us certainly could be more energy efficient in our homes, there is clearly a significant portion of the the Australian population who cannot afford the luxury of that choice, they can't be more efficient, they just have to go cold," he said.

Mr Johnson said the problem would get worse as consumers faces price rises of 10 to 20 per cent over the next few years.

Mr Johnson said consumers wanting to lower their energy bills should look for simple ways to reduce energy around the home and take time to compare supplier rates.