

HOME INSULATION & CAULKING

A drafty house and high utility bills are signs that your home could benefit from some insulation and caulking upgrades. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, heating and cooling account for more than half of the average home's utility costs.

Tighten up, save

Proper insulation creates a more comfortable home by not allowing air to seep in or out, and well-insulated houses stay warm during winter and cool during summer.

Here are several considerations:

1. Existing conditions. Determine the effectiveness of existing insulation and where insulation is missing. Professional home energy auditors can pinpoint spots where energy is being lost.

Locate auditors:

- 🏠 [Building Performance Institute](#)
- 🏠 [Energy Star®](#)
- 🏠 [Residential Energy Services Network](#)

2. Insulation types. Learn about insulation types, including fiberglass, cellulose, rigid foam board, and spray foam.

3. Performance measures. Understand R-value ([the insulation performance measure](#)) and what's [appropriate for your location and climate](#).



Eliminate drafts

Sealing and weatherstripping projects are perfect complements to insulation upgrades, and some projects can eliminate drafts.

Additional strategies:

- 🏠 Doors--[Minimize door drafts](#) with weatherstripping.
- 🏠 Windows--Use caulk or weatherstripping to [seal window leaks](#).
- 🏠 Drapes--Depending on the climate, close or open drapes on sunny sides of your house, either to block or welcome the sun's heat.
- 🏠 Ducts--Repair visible and accessible ducts with [duct sealant](#).

Other trouble spots:

- 🏠 Mail chutes
- 🏠 Electrical and gas service entrances
- 🏠 Cable TV and phone lines
- 🏠 Outdoor water faucets
- 🏠 Space where dryer vents pass through walls
- 🏠 Bricks, siding, stucco, and foundation
- 🏠 Air conditioners
- 🏠 Vents and fans

Calculate costs, savings

Project costs vary depending on climate, the scope of work, and whether you hire a professional. Also, look to [Federal tax credits](#) to offset project costs.

Find incentives and rebates at the [Database for State Incentives on Renewables and Efficiency](#).