



Insulating and air sealing your home

What's the difference between air sealing and insulation?

Insulation in your attic is like a fuzzy wool sweater you wear on a winter day. If there's no wind, it works great. If the wind picks up, you need a wind-proof layer to stay warm. Air sealing your home keeps the heat inside your home in the winter and the cooled air inside your home in the summer. You pay to condition the air—let's keep it in the house!

Do you need to air seal and insulate your home?

Homes built before 1950 use about 60% more energy per foot, on average, than those built after 1999. Consider these questions also:

- **Are you uncomfortably cold in the winter or hot in the summer?**
Adding insulation creates a more uniform temperature and increases comfort.
- **Do you pay high energy bills?**
Sufficient insulation can reduce your heating and cooling costs.
- **Are you bothered by noise from outside your home?**
Insulation helps muffle undesirable sounds.

Benefits of air sealing your home include:

- **Improved comfort** – Sealing your home tightly typically results in fewer drafts, increased comfort in summer and winter.
- **Lower energy bills** – Air leakage can waste 20 percent or more of the energy used to heat or cool a home.
- **Improved indoor air quality** – A well-sealed home has reduced humidity, dust and pollen.
- **Increased durability** – Condensation from warm air meeting cooler surfaces (and vice versa) can damage insulation, contribute to mold growth and compromise the home's infrastructure. Reducing air leakage helps minimize moisture problems and increase the home's durability.
- **Increased efficiency in appliances** – Your appliances will run more efficiently in a well-sealed house. Home systems don't need to work as hard to keep your home cool or warm, and will use less energy.



Did you know that potentially 20% of all the energy used to heat and cool your home may be wasted through air leakage and insufficient insulation?

That's about the same amount of energy wasted as leaving a window wide open all year long.

Sources of Air Leaks in Your Home

According to ENERGY STAR®, heating and cooling represent nearly half the energy costs of home maintenance. You can cut those costs by air sealing and insulating your home and upgrading to a high-efficiency furnace.



Tips for Hiring a Contractor:

Get a few bids. Bids should be based on the same building specifications, materials, labor and estimated time to complete the project. It's extremely important to compare costs and solicit bids from at least two or three prospective contractors because the bids may vary substantially by contractor.

Ask for references. Ask your contractor for local references and ask these customers if they were satisfied with the contractor's work. If possible, visit and inspect their completed projects.

Check out the Better Business Bureau (BBB). Contact your local BBB to learn how long a contractor has been in business, and if the firm has been responsive to any complaints filed with the BBB.

Check for certifications, licenses and insurance. Ask the contractor if the company is insured against claims covering worker's compensation, property damage, and personal liability in case of accidents. Check with your state, county or city housing authority to determine what level and types of licensing and bonding are required for contractors who work in your area.

Hire a contractor who can help you get rebates.

Check to see if they have met Xcel Energy's participation criteria. Here's how:

- ☒ Visit xcelenergy.com/COinsulation.
- ☒ Click on Insulation Rebates.
- ☒ Click on the section How to get started.
- ☒ Find a registered BPI Contractor.
- ☒ Review the "Eligibility" requirements of the program to ensure your home will earn a rebate.