

# TIPS FOR WEATHERIZING YOUR HOME

## HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

Heating and air conditioning use the largest chunk of your home energy dollar. Keep both running “lean and mean.”

- HVAC systems should be checked to verify they are moving the correct amount of air. An HVAC technician can tell you if it is.
- Heat pump and air conditioning systems should be checked annually to verify they are properly charged, strictly in accordance with manufacturers’ guidelines.
- Inside and outside coils should be kept clean and free of debris.
- Gas furnaces should be tuned for maximum combustion efficiency.
- Return filters should be changed monthly.
- Have a HVAC technician check carefully for duct leaks. Leaks that are found should be sealed with fiberglass mesh and mastic sealant.

## WINDOWS

A considerable amount of heat transfers through windows. If you have single-pane windows, consider doing the following:

- Tighten and weather-strip your old windows and then add storm windows.
- Compare the above cost with replacing your old single-glazed windows with new double-glazed windows.
- In colder climates “low-e” coatings on glass can help reduce heat loss through windows.
- In hot climates, consider adding solar screening to west-facing windows that catch a lot of heat late in the day. Solar screening is sold at many home improvement stores.

## AIR INFILTRATION

Air that transfers in and out of homes through cracks, crevices and holes can increase energy consumption. Here are some helpful tips to avoid air infiltration:

- Seal around pipe penetration coming through walls.
- During hot and cold weather, ensure windows are closed tightly and locked.
- Ensure weather-stripping around doors and windows is tight.
- When your fireplace is not operating, its flue should be closed tightly, with a sign hanging from the flue handle warning it is closed.
- Check the ceiling behind the cornice of built-in bookshelves for holes cut during construction.
- Drop-down, disappearing stairways should fit tightly into the ceiling and be carefully weather-stripped.
- Whole-house attic fans should be sealed tightly during the winter.
- Make sure your outside dryer vent door closes when the dryer is not in use. This requires cleaning away lint accumulation periodically.

## INSULATION

Use home remodeling projects as a convenient means to add more insulation to existing cavities. Different insulation requires different installation techniques—follow what is recommended by the manufacturer.

- If you have R-19 or less insulation in your attic, consider bringing it up to R-38 in moderate climates, R-49 in cold climates.
- In cold climates, if you have R-11 or less floor insulation, consider bringing it up to R-25.
- Blown-in wet cellulose or high-density foam insulation can stop infiltration better than fiberglass.
- Proper installation of insulation should prevent moisture in your walls.
- Perimeter insulation around crawl-spaces, basements, and ceiling insulation are the most important places to have adequate insulation.
- During construction, seal all openings, plates and walls with foam or caulk.
- Insulate and seal ducts in attics, crawl spaces, garages, and other unheated areas.

### **SELECTING A CONTRACTOR**

When selecting a contractor, keep in mind that the cheapest price is not always the best value. Here are some questions to ask when deciding who to use:

- How long have you been in business?
- Can you provide proof that you are state-licensed and carry workers' compensation insurance?
- Can you provide the names of neighbors who have used your services?
- Are you a member of the Better Business Bureau?

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*Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives' Home Energy Savings Guide*