

## Weatherizing to save money and energy

Homeowners know that maintaining a comfortable home can be a lot of work. As one project is completed or addressed, another may pop up. In spite of the hard work that can go into maintaining a home, many homeowners would agree that such efforts are well worth it to feel safe and comfortable inside one's own home.

Weatherization is one of the ways to make a home more comfortable while also saving money and energy. Some weatherization projects may be best left to the professionals, while others can be tackled by homeowners themselves. The following are some projects homeowners can expect to encounter as they weatherize their homes or work with professional weatherization services.

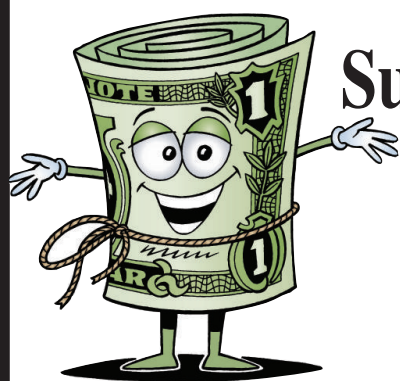
· Home energy audit: The U.S. Department of Energy notes that the purpose of a home energy audit is to give homeowners a complete picture of how they consume energy. Audits can shed light on how much energy is being consumed and if there is anywhere in the home where energy might be going to waste. Audits should be conducted before beginning any weatherization projects. Professional auditors may give advice on which areas of the home should be addressed first, while DIYers who conduct their own audits can make a list of issues before determining where to start.

· Leakage: Homeowners may think leakage only poses a problem in winter, when cold air can creep in through cracks around doors and windows and make residents cold, forcing them to raise the temperature on the thermostat. But leaks can affect comfort levels and energy bills during the summer, too, forcing homeowners to adjust their air conditioners to ensure a home is cool on hot days. Choose a cool, windy day to inspect for drafts around doors and windows. The DOE notes that air leakage can adversely affect indoor air quality and contribute to moisture problems that can affect occupants' health.

· Insulation: A poorly insulated home will cost more to heat in winter and more to keep cool in summer. The DOE notes that heat flows from warmer to cooler until there is no longer a temperature difference. So during winter, heat will flow from heated living spaces to unheated areas of the home, including attics and garages. In summer, heat will flow from the outdoors into the home. Properly insulating a home will decrease this flow of heat, ensuring homeowners aren't paying to heat rooms they don't use in winter or paying more to keep rooms cool in summer because heat is flowing in from the exterior of the home.

Weatherizing a home is a great way for homeowners to reduce their carbon footprints and save some money.

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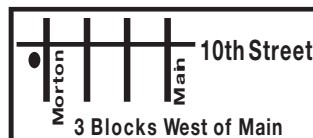
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