

# ENERGY STAR Home Sealing

## Problem - Houses are Leaky!

If you add up all the hidden air leaks in your home, they can equal a hole the size of an open window. These drafts can make you feel **uncomfortable** and they cause **high energy bills!**



## Solution – ENERGY STAR Home Sealing

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy recommend that homeowners improve the "envelope" of their home (outer walls, ceiling, floors, windows, and doors) to make their homes more energy efficient and to keep their interior spaces comfortable. The ENERGY STAR Home Sealing process consists of the following three steps:

1. Sealing air leaks to stop drafts
2. Adding insulation
3. Choosing ENERGY STAR qualified windows when replacing old windows.

## What are the Benefits of ENERGY STAR Home Sealing?

- **Improves Comfort:** Homes are more comfortable and energy efficient during extreme weather conditions, such as summer heat waves and winter cold snaps.
- **Saves Money:** Cut energy bills by up to 10% - or about \$150 a year for an average home.
- **Blocks Outdoor Pollutants:** Reduce the number of holes where dust, pollen, pollution, and pests can enter the home.
- **Reduces Outside Noise:** A tighter, well-insulated home will help make the home quieter.
- **Helps the Environment:** Because these products help reduce the amount of energy used to heat and cool a home, the amount of air pollution is also reduced.

## Important Tips to Seal the Deal:

- Always find and plug air leaks BEFORE adding insulation.
- Plug the big holes first, which are usually hidden in the attic and basement.
- Add insulation where you can. If you can see the floor joists in your attic, you should add more. (It is okay to add new insulation on top of existing material.) This is an important step to consider if finishing a basement or doing an addition/remodel.
- If you are replacing your windows, choose ones that are ENERGY STAR qualified in your climate (look for the climate zone map on the product or catalog). Also make sure they are installed properly so air does not leak in around them.
- For more detailed instructions (and pictures) download the ENERGY STAR Home Sealing Do-It-Yourself Guide at [www.energystar.gov/homesealing](http://www.energystar.gov/homesealing).

## What Products are Used?

Product	How to Use
<b>Caulk</b>	Seal air leaks around windows, doors, and baseboards to stop drafts. Good for gaps up to ½". Use a caulk gun to make this easier.
<b>High-Temp Caulk</b>	High temperature silicone caulk is good for sealing around chimneys, furnace flues, and dryer vents.
<b>Expanding Spray Foam</b>	Seal larger gaps along basement sill joists, holes for plumbing pipes and wires, and ½" to 3" holes in attic floor. Select low expanding foam for smaller gaps and high-expanding foam for larger holes.
<b>Weather stripping</b>	Install around windows and doors to stop drafts.
<b>Door Sweeps</b>	Install on bottom of door to reduce drafts and prevent water and insects from entering.
<b>Insulation</b>	Install insulation in attics and crawl spaces or on unfinished basement walls.
<b>ENERGY STAR Qualified Windows</b>	Choose energy-efficient replacement windows, doors, and skylights. Just look for the ENERGY STAR logo on windows appropriate for your climate.