

Insulate Your Wallet

Home Insulation Evaluation

Why Should I Do This?

One of the most important ways to save money and make your home energy efficient is to make sure that it is properly insulated. Doing this will help maintain a consistent temperature throughout your home and don't forget saving money on energy also means saving the environment -- a real win-win for you and the environment.

How do I get started?

Before you can determine what you need for a properly insulated home, you must determine how well it is already insulated. If available, your contractor or builder can provide that information; if not, you can schedule a home energy assessment with a qualified energy auditor.

If you are unable to schedule a home energy audit, you can still collect some of your insulation information yourself by following these easy instructions:

What you'll need:

- Ruler.
- Screwdriver.
- Flashlight.

STEP 1

In areas where the insulation is exposed, measure the depth of the insulation with a ruler. Note the type of insulation used.

STEP 2

The area of the home that can lead to the greatest cost savings is the attic. Evaluate the attic to ensure that your insulation reaches at least to the top of the attic ceiling joists.

STEP 3

Once you know what type of insulation and how much was originally used, visit the U.S. Department of Energy's online insulation fact sheet for how to determine the R-values of insulation previously installed in your home. (ornl.gov/sci/roofs+walls/insulation/ins_06.html)

STEP 4

After you find out the R-values of your insulation either from an energy assessment, the home builder or your own inspection, you can then use the U.S. Department of Energy's ZIP code insulation calculator to determine how much insulation you should add and where to achieve the recommended insulation levels for maximum energy efficiency. (ornl.gov/~roofs/zip/ziphome.html)

As a rule of thumb, if your attic insulation R-value is 19 or less it is cost-effective to increase it to R-38.

STEP 5

Once you know how much additional insulation you need, you can visit a local hardware store or home improvement retailer to find the appropriate insulation material needed, or hire a licensed and insured professional.

ENERGY SAVING TIP



- Adding attic insulation to match recommended guidelines can save significant amounts of money and energy all year long.
- It is cost effective to increase insulation with an R-value of 19 or less to R-38.

SAFETY TIPS



- An attic can be a very dangerous part of your home, if you are not comfortable working in attics, you should seek the services of a licensed and insured professional.
- Be sure to use caution if you work in an attic in the summer as temperatures in attics in the south can be extremely dangerous.
- It's important to wear safety glasses, gloves, a long sleeve shirt and a dust mask while working in an attic to protect you from airborne insulation particles.
- Always be sure to wear proper footwear and chose your steps carefully when working in an attic, slipping off a board or joist could lead to injury and or damage to your ceiling.



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