

HOW DO I... WEATHERIZE MY HOUSE?

Home weatherization is the process of protecting a building from the elements. Weatherizing your home can help you cut down on energy usage and save you money on your monthly utilities. This guide describes how to know if you need to weatherize your house and provides resources for doing so. Weatherizing your home through the use of a contractor can be simple but more costly. Some of the DIY projects can be difficult if you have no experience.

WHAT YOU NEED

This can vary considerably depending on the type of weatherization you choose and if you go with a contractor or DIY. See Resources for details, and make a list based on your chosen project(s).

BENEFITS



GETTING STARTED

1 ASSESS YOUR HOME. Many older homes often have poor insulation, original and unsealed windows that cause drafts, or other issues that affect the performance of your home. If not maintained or updated, these systems can cost you hundreds of dollars each year. If your home is older and has had no renovations in recent years, it may be worth weatherizing your home.

2 PICK YOUR FIXES. There are many DIY fixes that you can do on your own. For a list of do-it-yourself fixes, check out the “How to Weatherize Your Home” article (see Resources).

3 SCHEDULE A HOME ENERGY ANALYSIS.

An energy audit with a qualified professional will give you a diagnosis of the issues in your home. A qualified professional will use advanced tools to measure inefficiencies in your home and give you an assessment report.

4 RETROFIT YOUR HOME. Based on the outcome of your assessment report, a contractor will be able to address the needs of your house and take a whole-system approach to ensure your house is operating at maximum performance. This can take 2-4 days to complete.

TIPS & FAQs

Insulation.

Different types of insulation are needed in different parts of homes.

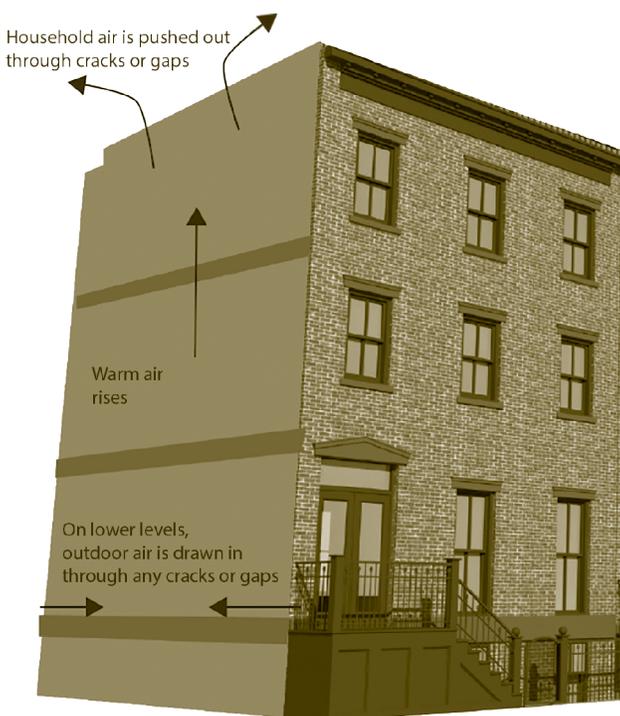
- ✓ For attics, loose-fill or batt insulation is typically installed. These types provide high insulation values and protect your home from losing heat in the winter or gaining heat in the summer through the roof.
- ✓ For exterior walls, blow-in insulation is usually installed. A small hole is cut into the exterior wall and the insulation is forced into the wall cavity using a machine. This method also leaves little disturbance to your walls.

Air sealing.

Different methods of air sealing can reduce heating and cooling costs and improve health by controlling moisture that leads to mold growth.

- ✓ Replacing windows. Energy-efficient windows are often only worth the investment if you plan to replace old or broken windows anyway. Look for windows with a low U-Factor or that are low-E (low-emittance), as these have better insulation properties.
- ✓ Caulking can be used to seal parts of a window or door frame that are not moveable.
- ✓ Door bottoms/sweeps. Door bottoms (also known as door sweeps) can be attached to the bottom of your door and are used to stop air loss from space between the door and floor.
- ✓ Shrink window insulation. Shrink window insulation is a thin film of plastic that is stretched and taped to the interior of a window. This DIY method prevents air leaks in drafty windows, but also prevents you from opening the window while the shrink window insulation is installed.

How air moves through a house



Energy Conservation Measure	Annual Electric Bill Savings
Replace all lights with Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs)	\$130
Blow-in Wall Insulation	\$90
Seal Ductwork	\$85
Repair Ceiling Leaks	\$80
Install low flow showerhead	\$30

RESOURCES

General info on home weatherization (US Dept of Energy)

www.energy.gov/public-services/homes/home-weatherization

How to weatherize your home—DIY solutions (wikiHow)

www.wikihow.com/Weatherize-Your-Home

“Where to insulate in a home” (US Dept of Energy)

www.energy.gov/energysaver/where-insulate-home

“Sealing your home” (US Dept of Energy)

www.energy.gov/public-services/homes/home-weatherization/sealing-your-home

Maryland energy conservation rebates (MD state government)

energy.maryland.gov/pages/facts/empower.aspx

Hardware stores for DIY weatherization projects

www.acehardware.com/mystore/storeLocator.jsp

www.homedepot.com/StoreFinder/index.jsp

www.lowes.com/StoreLocatorDisplayView

Retrofit Baltimore

www.retrofitbaltimore.org

Email: info@retrofitbaltimore.org

Phone: 410.929.6139

Retrofit Baltimore provides information about the potential for energy retrofits and works with vetted contractors who are BPI certified to ensure quality.