



Insulation: The key to ending drafts and cutting utility bills

Whether it's the biting chill of winter or the heat of summer, our natural instincts are to adjust the indoor temperature so it is comfortable through every season. But if your home has any drafts or air leaks, expect indoor temperatures to fluctuate dramatically.

Leaks and drafts can hinder the performance of your heating-ventilation-air conditioning (HVAC) equipment and cause your heating and cooling bills to increase. Why? Conditioned air continually escapes the home due to the gaps within the building envelope, and HVAC equipment will work overtime to reach the thermostat's set temperature. What's more, air leakage can contribute to potential moisture problems that can affect occupant health and the home's durability.

While traditional stop-gap solutions, such as placing runners by doors, may provide some relief, Canadian homeowners take a comprehensive approach. First, detect where the air leaks are within your home. A certified home energy auditor will be able to help you identify such areas as well as help assess your ventilation needs for indoor air quality.

Once all sources of air leaks have been identified, air sealing techniques and materials can be applied. Caulking and weather-stripping are two of the most popular and common techniques that can help address air leaks. However building experts will suggest considering solutions that go further in terms of air-sealing. A recent study by the Building Science Corporation showed that heat transfer was much lower in a home equipped with spray foam insulation than with other, more traditional materials such as fiberglass or cellulose. The reduction, about 15 percent, indicates minimal thermal transmission and better block of heat transference, which can have a significant impact on how homeowners heat and cool their home.

Installed by professionals, spray foam insulation, like that available from Icynene, works well in all climates to completely seal the building, filling every gap to stop air leakage and help reduce the strain on HVAC equipment. Spray foam insulation both insulates and air seals the entire building envelope letting homeowners reduce their monthly heating and cooling bills.

As a long-term solution, spray foam insulation helps maintain a comfortable temperature year-round while helping to control monthly heating and cooling expenses. Thanks to spray foam insulation's air-sealing qualities, homeowners can potentially reduce the size of their heating and cooling equipment since less effort is required to heat or cool the home.

While air leakage can cause heating and cooling bills to rise, a well-insulated home and economical winterizing can help you get through the cold winter months. Learn the five easy steps to choosing the right insulation by visiting www.icynene.com.