

Having trouble keeping the home comfortable year-round? The average mid-size U.S. home has a staggering half mile of gaps and cracks that outside air, including dust and allergens, can infiltrate and that inside, conditioned air can leak out of, according to the Air Barrier Association of America.

Just as a person wouldn't want to leave a window open in winter or summer, they don't want to let gaps and small holes around windows, doors, plumbing penetrations and electrical outlets go unaddressed.

By doing some straightforward air sealing and insulating projects around the home, homeowners can typically save up to 30 percent on home energy costs, according to the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET). Even if a person is not that handy, they're in luck. Sealing a home is as simple as knowing 1,2,3's and ABC's.

All homeowners need in order to get started are:

- One sealant: An inexpensive product can do the trick. Opt for a versatile sealant, such as Great Stuff Insulating Foam Sealant, to tackle a series of sealing projects around the home.
- Two hours: It only takes a couple of hours to seal all those gaps and cracks that cause drafts in the home. Doing so will permanently increase the comfort, performance and energy-efficiency of a house. For a complete home sealing project checklist, visit www.GreatStuff.dow.com/pdfs/checklist.pdf.
- Three locations: Three key locations will be impacted the most by air sealing projects—the attic, basement and central living space.

Where to start looking? An easy trick to remember is the ABC's of air sealing:

- A is for Attic: The attic is one of the main places in the home likely to lose heat. So in addition to adding insulation, seal around the attic door to help keep air from escaping. Keep heat inside the living space and make the family comfortable year-round by sealing the attic tightly to prevent drafts.

- B is for Basement: It's damp, dark and cold, and often one of the largest air leakage culprits in the home. It's also the most accessible, making it an excellent place to start sealing to prevent cooler air from seeping into the rest of the house.

- C is for Central Living Areas: Don't neglect the most trafficked areas of the house where family members eat, sleep, watch TV and hang out. Fill the gaps and cracks in your living spaces—including around electrical outlets and plumbing penetrations—to prevent drafts throughout the year that directly impact the comfort of the home.

By sealing plumbing penetrations with sealants, homeowners can begin to see financial returns after less than half a month, saving \$45 annually, according to a recent study conducted by Dow Building Solutions and DR Nelson & Associates.

By following easy steps to seal the home, homeowners can put a little extra spending money in their pocket and increase the overall comfort, performance and energy efficiency of a home.