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Your Source for Energy Efficiency

# How to Improve the Efficiency of Your Home

For energy bill savings, improved comfort
and a lower carbon footprint

Powered by: EVERSOURCE Liberty New Hampshire Electric Co-op Unitil

# NHSaves Button Up Overview

1. Energy use and savings tips
2. Insulation and air sealing A-B-Cs
3. What to do?
4. NHSaves® programs

NHSaves Button Up Presentation PDF available from PAREI at:
***https://plymouthenergy.org/button-up/***

# Presented by:

PAREI

Plymouth Area
Renewable Energy
Initiative

[Plymouthenergy.org](Plymouthenergy.org)

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# What is the "greenest" energy?

# The Greenest Energy

**What is the “greenest” energy?**

**Negawatts: energy that you don’t use**

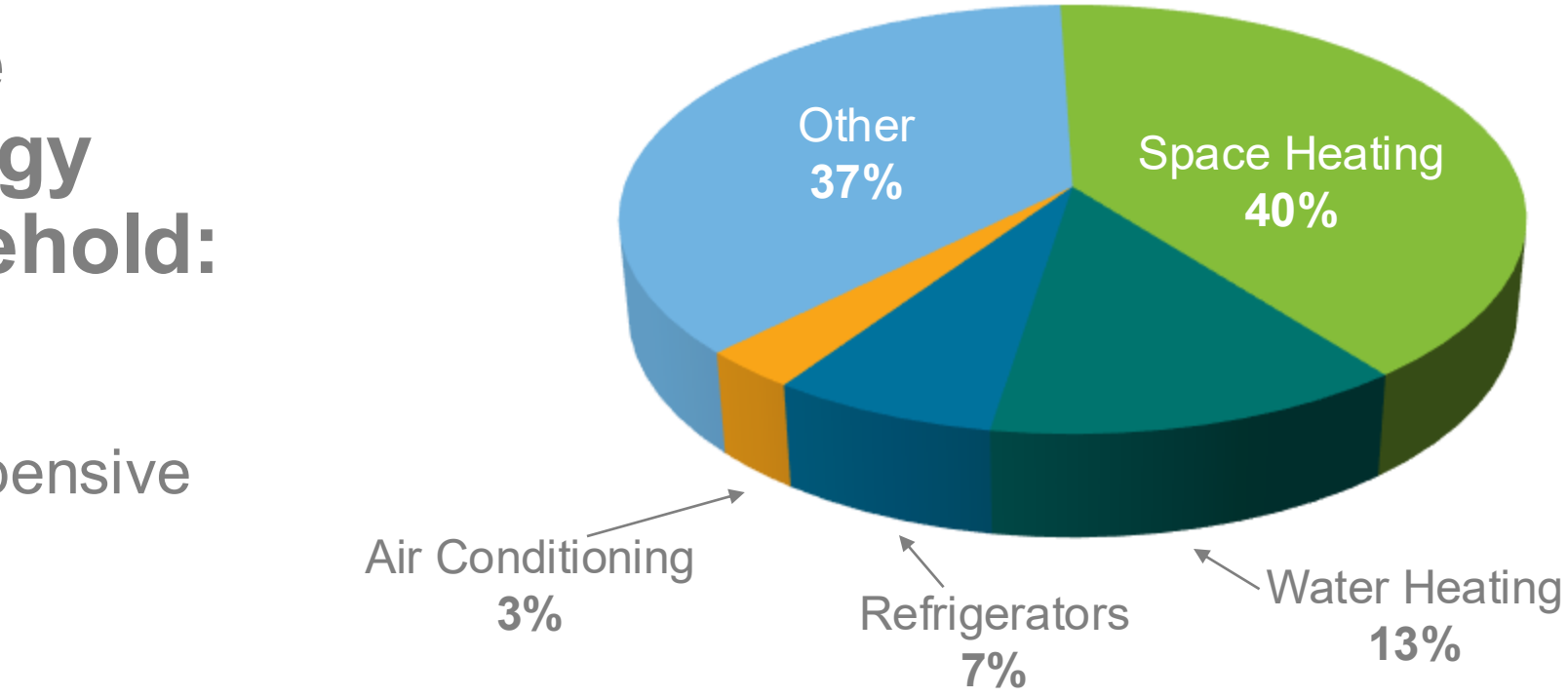
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# Rising Cost of Energy

## New Hampshire residential energy costs per household: ~$3,000 in 2020

Ninth most energy-expensive state in the U.S.

-US Energy Index, 5/26




Current New Hampshire energy fuel prices:
***www.energy.nh.gov/energy-information/nh-fuel-prices***

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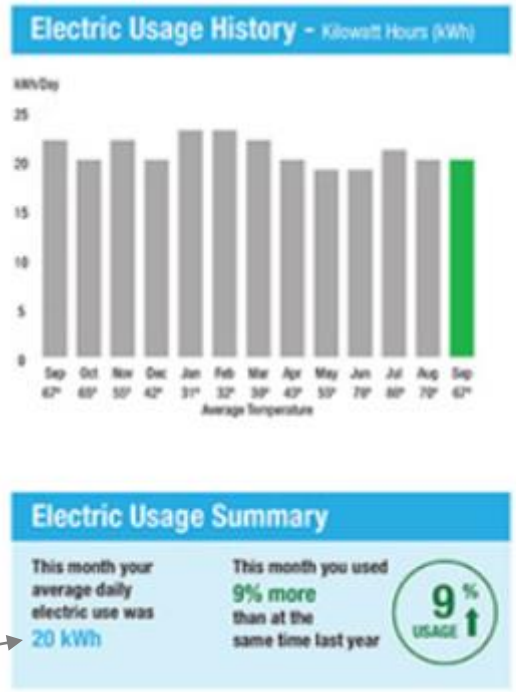
# Get to Know Your Energy Bills

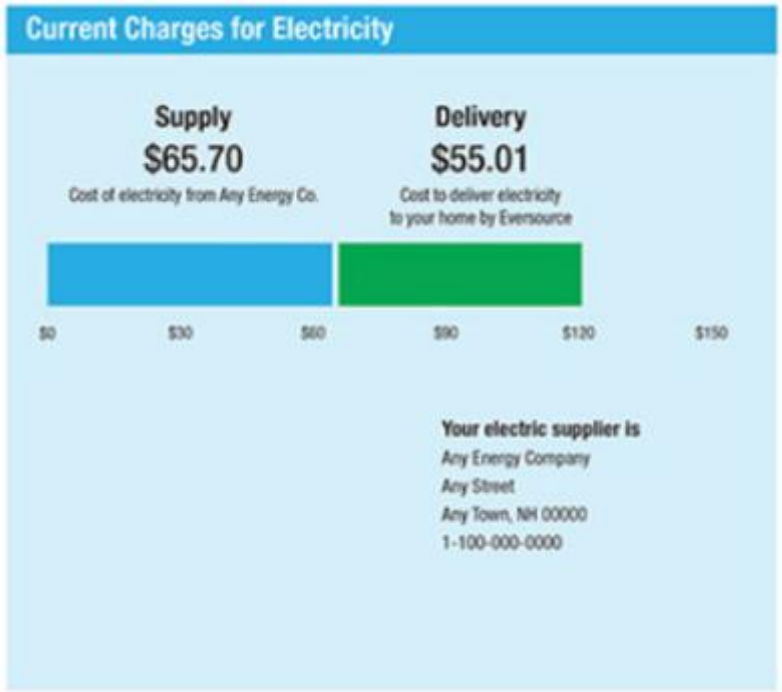
## Know how much electricity you are using:

**Monthly:** 600 kWh

**Annually:** 7,200 kWh

**Daily average**
~20 kilowatt-hours (kWh)




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# Major Household Electrical Uses

## Where are *you* using electricity?

Electricity consumption varies widely from household to household. Energy savings come from efficiency and/or conservation.

| Residential Electricity Use | Approximate Annual Kilowatt-Hours | Potential for Saving Energy |
|---|---|---|
| Electric Water Heater | 2,100 | *** |
| Refrigerators and Freezers | 1,050 | *** |
| Lighting | 1,000 | ** |
| Dehumidifiers | 900 | *** |
| Electric Clothes Dryers | 800 | ** |
| Entertainment Centers | 650 | * |
| Furnace or Boiler | 400 | ** |
| Dish and Clothes Washers | 350 | ** |
| Cooking | 300 | * |

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# Measuring Electricity Use

## How much electricity do plug-in devices use?

### Use a watt meter

- Available from many public libraries
- Measures watts, time and kilowatt-hours




Image source: Kill A Watt

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# Whole House Electricity Monitors

**Measures:**

- Watts, time and kilowatt-hours

**May also provide:**

- Usage by circuit
- Individual device use

**Brands, cost and installation:**

- Smappee, Engage, TED, Vue Smart etc.
- $100 - $300
- Electrician install




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# Energy Saving Tip: Conservation

## Shut things off when not in use

**and** eliminate phantom loads when possible.



Image source: Poweredbyefi.org

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# The LED lighting revolution

Any existing **60+ watt** light bulbs?

- Low LED prices
- Easy $$$ savings

# Lighting Efficiency

## The LED lighting revolution

Any existing **60+ watt** light bulbs?

- Low LED prices
- Easy $$$ savings

**Lots of opportunities:**

- Decorative light bulbs
- Outdoor lighting
- Holiday lights
- Can lights and linear lighting



Image source: Unsplash.com

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# Lighting Efficiency

## The LED lighting revolution

Any existing **60+ watt** light bulbs?

- Low LED prices
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**Lots of opportunities:**

- Decorative light bulbs
- Outdoor lighting
- Holiday lights
- Can lights and linear lighting

**Look for:**

- Light color (2700° K = “warm white”)
- Dimming and dimmer capability
- “Suitable for enclosed fixtures”
- “Suitable for damp locations”



Image source: Unsplash.com

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# Domestic Hot Water Energy Savings

## Actions to save on hot water heating costs

Image source: Wikimedia Commons

Install low-flow shower-heads and faucet aerators

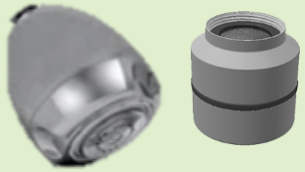


Image source: Waconia Comfort

Turn down hot water aquastat to 120° at tap



Install hot water and heating pipe insulation: R-3+

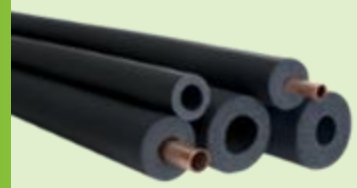


Image source: Buy Insulation Online

Wash clothes in cold water



Image source: Wikimedia Commons

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# Other Energy Conservation Tips

## Actions you can do around the house

Set humidifiers no higher than 60% relative humidity

Image source: Air Works Solutions



Line dry clothes *outside,* if possible

Image source: Pexels



Purchase ENERGY STAR® certified appliances

# NHSaves Rebates on ENERGY STAR Appliances

## Rebates include:

***ENERGYSTAR.gov***
lists appliance efficiency

***NHSaves.com/nh-rebates***
appliance rebate forms and updates

Second refrigerator: Free haul-away and $150 for an inefficient refrigerator or freezer

| | |
|---|---|
| Electric Clothes Dryers | $40 - $260 |
| Clothes Washers | $150 - $245 |
| Dehumidifiers | $50 |
| Refrigerators | $150 |
| Room Air Conditioners | $50 |

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# Staying Warm in your Home

## Fact:

We must heat our homes
to live in New Hampshire and
stay warm.

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# Staying Warm in your Home

## Fact:

We must heat our homes to live in New Hampshire and stay warm.



## Goal:

Use less energy to heat our homes and still stay warm and comfortable *(not just turn down the thermostat)*

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# Heating Energy Savings Tips

## No or low-cost options to use less heat:

Turn down heat when not in the house except when using a heat pump



Image source: Acosta Inc

Use programmable or smart thermostats



Image source: CDL Mechanical

Remove window A/Cs in winter



Image source: CDL Mechanical

Close storm windows



Image source: JA Homeworx

Latch closed windows



Image source: Sound View

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# Staying Warm in your Home

## Heat always moves from hot to cold



## Fact:

Winter warmth inside our homes seeks to "escape" through the building shell to outdoors.

## Goal:

Slow this process down.

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# Building Science and Heat Transfer

## Heat moves via three methods

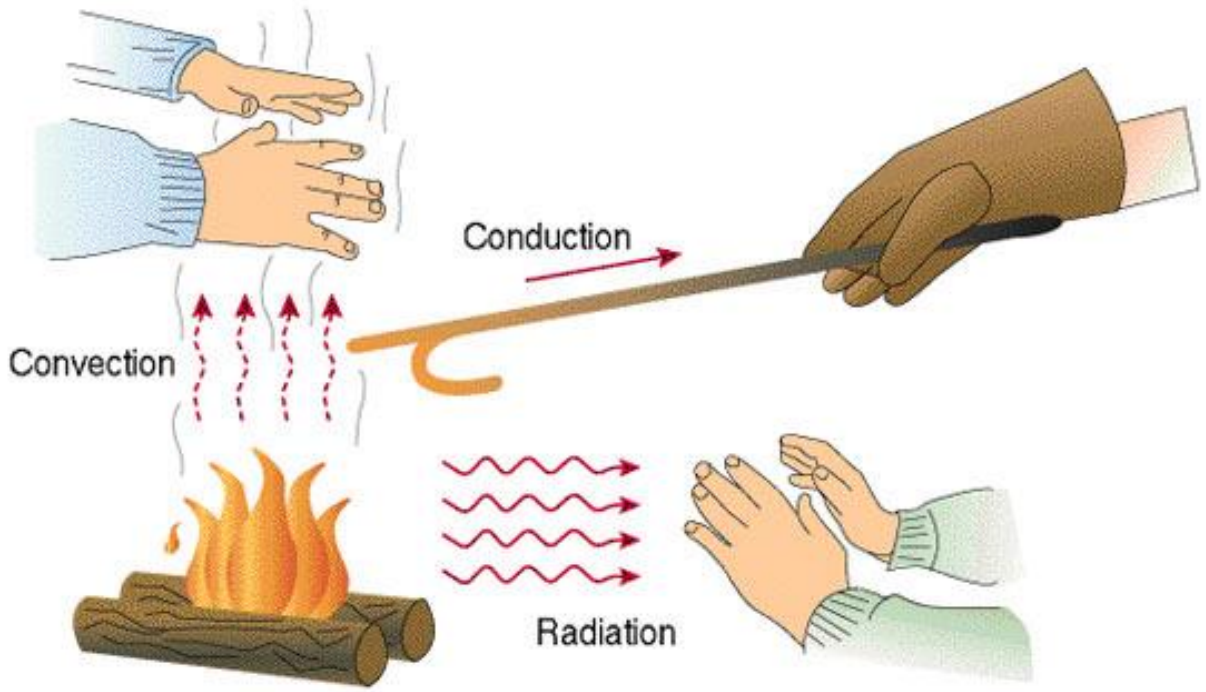



Image source: Wikimedia Commons

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# Building Science – Conduction and Insulation

## Thermal conduction:

The movement of heat through materials.

Insulation is a poor thermal conductor: GOOD.

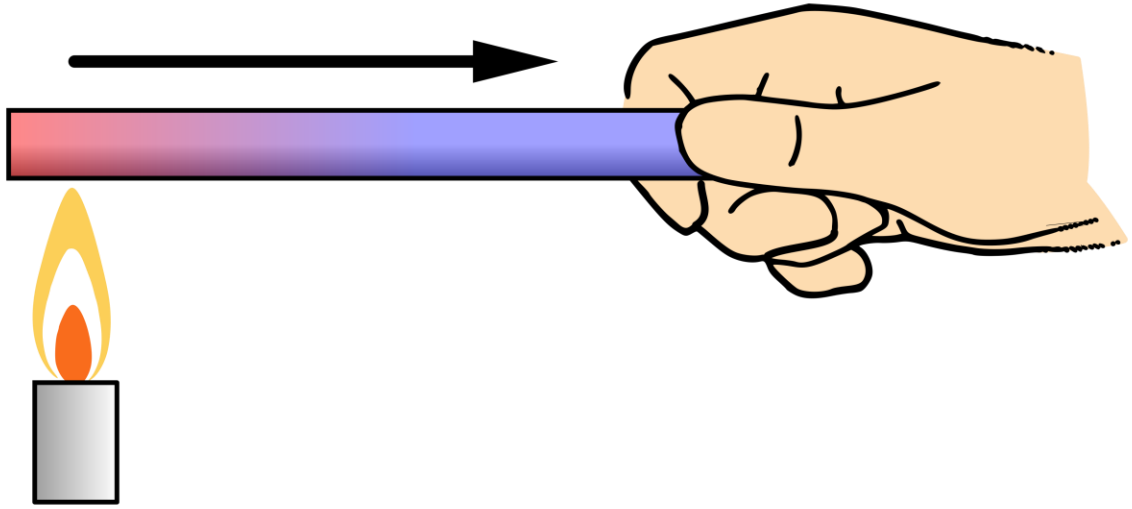


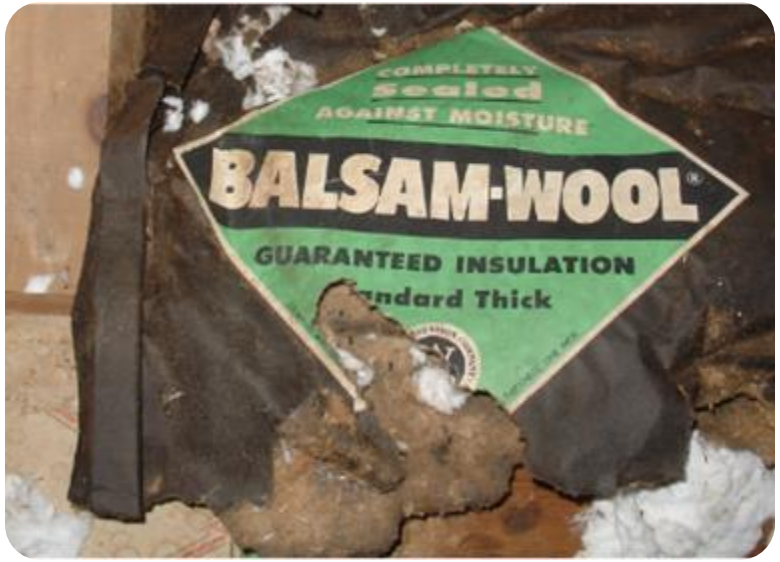
Image source: Wikimedia Commons

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# Building Science – Conduction and Insulation

## Lots of materials can be insulation








# Insulation and Building Materials R-Values

## R-values: The higher the R-value the better the insulation

Functional R-values may be affected more by install quality than the material used.

Approximate R-values: per inch, installed properly:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Fiberglass** | R-3.7 |
| **Cellulose** | R-3.6 |
| **Rigid foam board** | R-4 to R-7 |
| **Spray foam** | R-6 to R-7 |
| **New double pane window** | R-3.5<br>Whole Window |
| **Softwood** | R-1.3 |
| **Concrete, stone or brick** | R-0.14 |

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# Installed Insulation R-Values

**New** house built to the New Hampshire energy code:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Attic** | R-38 to R-49 |
| **Walls** | R-20 |
| **Basement walls** | R-15 to R-19 |
| **Doors and windows** | R-3.1 (U≤.32) |

***Puc.nh.gov***

**Average** New Hampshire house functional R-Values:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Attic** | R-10 to R-30 |
| **Walls** | R-3 to R-16 |
| **Basement walls** | R-1 to R-5 |

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# Installed Insulation R-Values

## Quiz:

What is the average R-value of an attic with R-38 insulation covering 95% of the area?

**Hint:** It's less than R-30…



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# Installed Insulation R-Values

## Insulating thermal barriers may be:

### Insufficient
(not enough R Value)



### Incomplete
(low R value in spots)



### Missing
(Where?)



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# Heat Rises?

## Quiz:

Heat rises:
True or false?

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# Heat Rises?

## Quiz:

**Heat rises:**
**True or false?**

## Answer:

***False:*** Heat conduction can move in any direction from hot to cold!

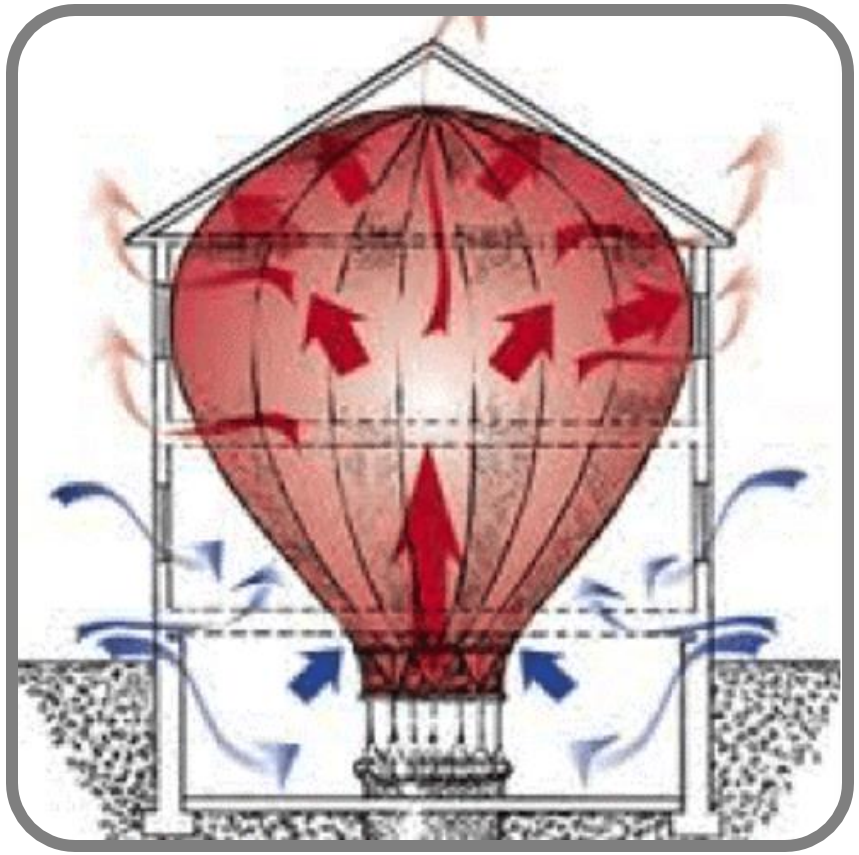


Image source: Shutterstock.com

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# Heat Rises?

## Quiz:

**Heat rises:**
**True or false?**

***But… warm air rises*** *(making it look like heat is rising)*



Image source: Top Rank Inc.

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# Convection Causes Winter Air Leakage

**Warm air** is more buoyant – rises and leaks out the top of a building



Image source: Top Rank Inc.

**Cold** outside air leaks in down low

Convective air currents **= "stack effect"**

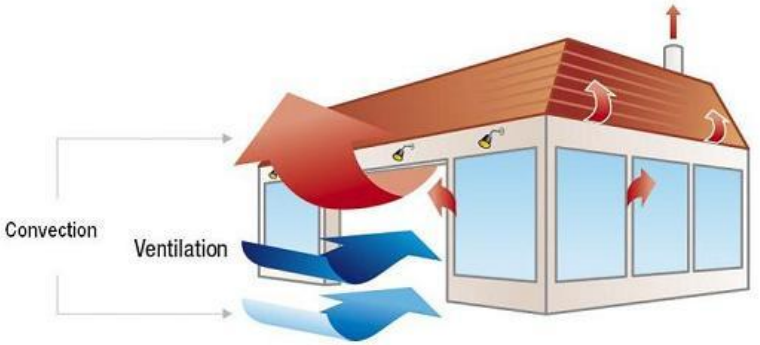



Image source: Wikimedia Commons

**Stronger** with big temperature differences, as well as in the overall height of the building envelope.

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# Ranking of Air Leakage Areas: A-B-C

**1st priority:** A - Attic

**2nd priority:** B - Basement

**3rd priority:** C - Center



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# A – Lots of Air Leaks in the Attic (and insulation opportunities)

## Common air leaks at the top of a building:

Ceiling lights and bath fans



Pipe and electrical penetrations



Chimney chases



Tops of interior walls



Ducts and registers



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# Is this good?

**This pegboard attic hatch with 16” fiberglass insulation?**



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# A – Moisture in Attics and Air Leakage

## Attic air leaks can lead to condensation, mold and moisture-related damage.

Warm, moist air leaks into the attic where it hits cold surfaces and condenses.

## Not a leaky roof. An (air) leaky ceiling!



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# B – Basement Air Leakage and Air Sealing Opportunities

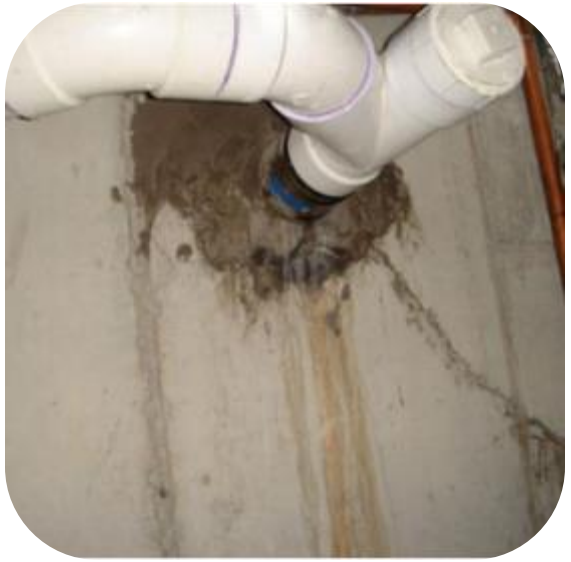
Exterior doors



Around old basement windows



Electrical, plumbing and other penetrations



Box sill (rim joist) area



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# C – Center of the House Air Leakage

## More visible, but fewer air sealing opportunities

Cracks around exterior doors



Most windows don't leak much air.
Exception: old pulley-hung windows.



Fireplace and woodstove flues



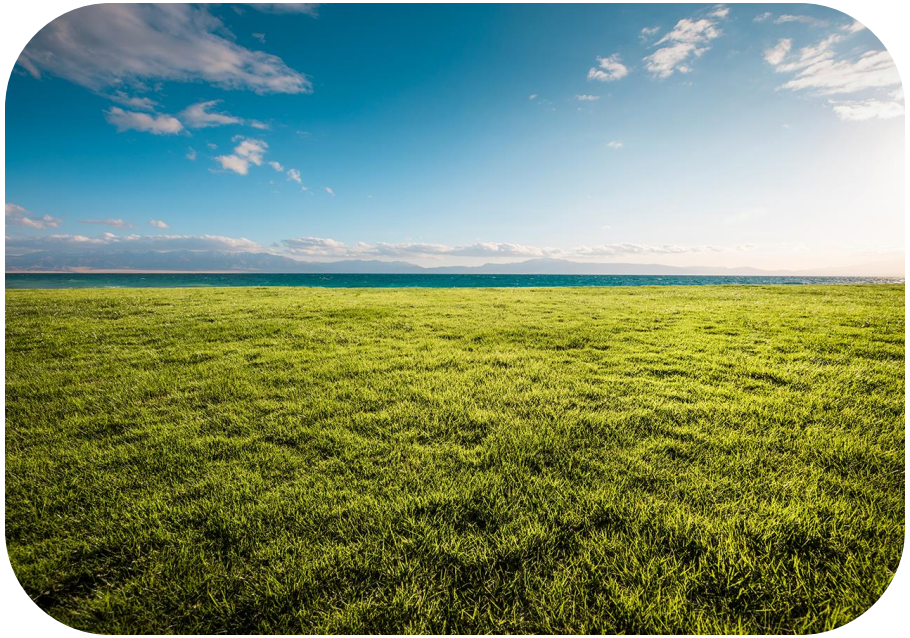
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# Air Sealing and Fresh Air

## Fresh air is needed for a healthy home.

- For a typical home, about one third of the home's air should be exchanged every hour
- Many New Hampshire homes are two to four times too leaky

Leaky homes are **"nosebleed dry"** in winter



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# Mechanical Ventilation

## Seal tight and ventilate right.

### Control air leakage, and… Provide measured fresh air and stale air exhaust

- As simple as a high-quality bathroom fan
- Or a heat recovery ventilator (HRV)

**With controllability**

- High and low air flow settings
- Timers, occupancy sensors, CO2 sensors, etc.

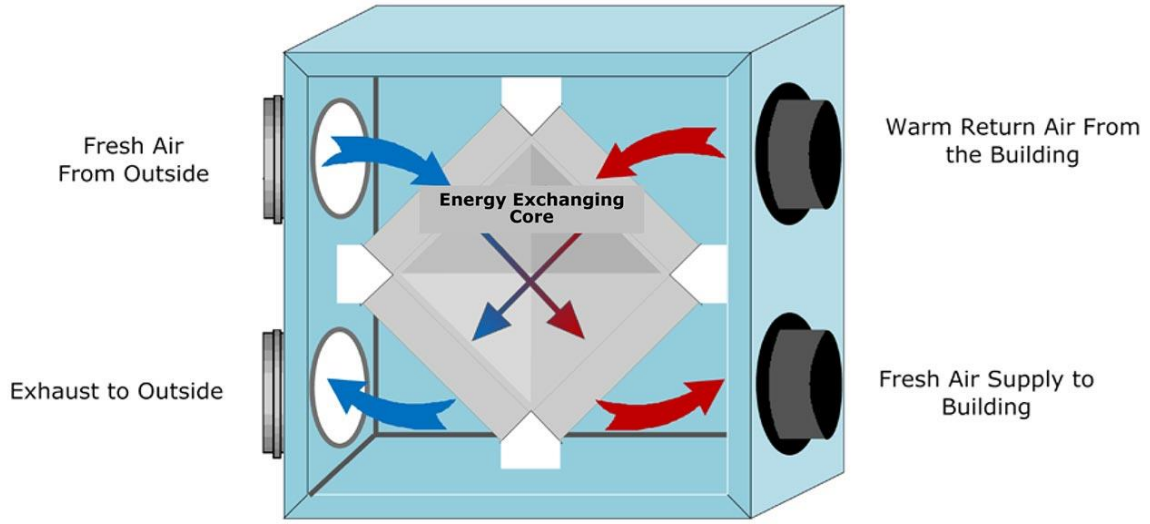



Image source: Cold Climate Housing Resource Center

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# Bath Fan Venting

ADVANCED

## Vent fans to the outside with insulated rigid vent pipe.
## Not into attic!







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# Health and Safety – Indoor Moisture

## Eliminate, isolate, or control sources of indoor moisture:

- Wet or dirt floor basements/crawlspaces
- Bath fans venting into attics
- Bathrooms without bath fans
- Disconnected clothes dryer vents

**Other indoor moisture sources:** Plants, humans, pets, open sump pits, cooking, leaky pipes, new construction materials and open basement windows in summer.



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# Ice Dams

**Quiz:**
**What is the biggest factor causing ice dams on this house?**




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# Ice Dams

## The *solution?*




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# Remember “ABC” – Attic, Basement, Center

Attic **before** and **after** air sealing and insulation.





**Air sealing and insulation – cover attic with 12” - 16” of blown insulation.**

***After** air sealing!*

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# A – Attic Air Sealing — Prior to Insulation

**Air sealed** chimney chase with fire-rated materials.



**Air sealed** ceiling can light covers



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# A – Attic Insulation, Floors, and Hatches









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# A – Cape / Kneewalls Air Sealing and Insulation

Spray foam prior to installation of a thermal barrier



Metal-faced “Thermax” brand foam board is fire-rated for kneewalls



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# B – Basement Air Sealing and Insulation

**Before**

**After:** Insulated and air sealed custom door



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# B – Basement Wall Insulation

## Thermax




Fix basement water issues first.

## Spray Foam





Uncovered foam needs a fire barrier.
Professional installation advised.

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# C – Air Sealing in Center of House

Chimney Flue Blocker



Image source: Cleverly Solved

Exterior door **"Q-lon"** style weatherstripping



Image source: Grainger

Fire-rated air sealing around an exposed chimney chase



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# C – Densepack Insulation in Framed Walls

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## Densepack insulation air seals and insulates empty cavities

During installation, tube is inserted into each cavity.

Best after attic and basement are improved



Image courtesy of Vermont Dept. of Children and Families

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# Seal Leaky Attic and Basement Ducts

## Mastic

- Goop on to seal ducts
- Reinforce with drywall joint tape
- NOT duct tape
- Then insulate ducts completely




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# Window Options

## What about windows?

- There are many reasons to replace windows… **Cost-effective energy savings is rarely one of them**
- New windows ~R-3.5 – R-4
- Old, leaky windows can be replaced, or…
- Other options include: adding storm windows, indoor inserts, cellular shades, window quilts or window repair



Photo: ***WindowDressers.org***

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# Home Energy Auditors and Contractors

## Comprehensive, whole-house energy assessment

- Building envelope inspection and test **(including a blower door air leakage test)**
- Combustion efficiency and safety tests
- Written report with prioritized list of cost-effective improvements







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# Home Performance Pros (Energy Auditors and Contractors)

## Finding qualified energy professionals

**Look for**

- Certifications: BPI Building Analyst, BPI HEP Energy Auditor or RESNET Energy Rater
- Tools of the trade: blower door, infrared camera, combustion analyzer etc.
- Experience, references, written energy assessment / proposal

**Look for**

- REPA - NH Residential Energy Performance Association members
- NHSaves utility partner authorized residential contractors

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# Tools of the Trade

## Blower door

- Measures amount of air leakage: CFM50
- Identifies sources of air leakage
- Determines air ventilation rates
- Prioritizes air sealing opportunities
- Confirms amount of air sealing accomplished

**Blower door tests now Energy Code-required for new construction.**

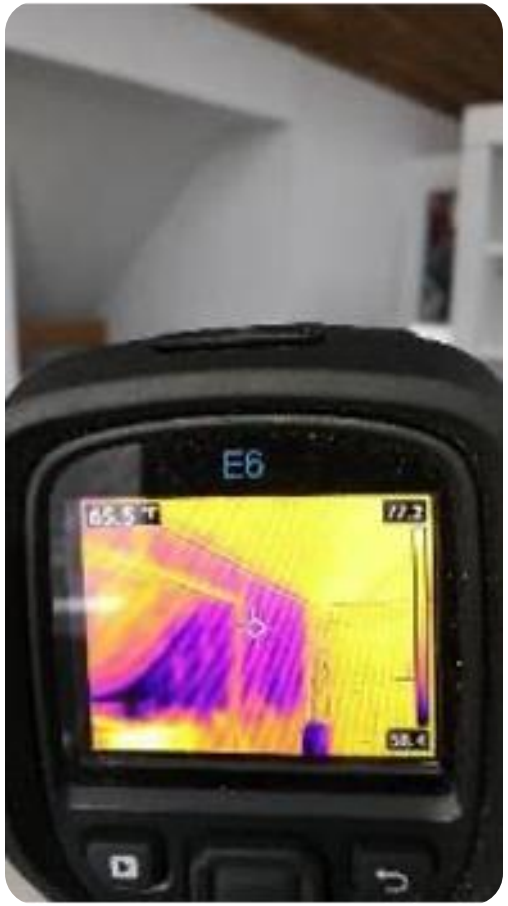


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# Tools of the Trade

## Infrared thermal camera

- Visual images of hot and cold areas
- Helps sleuth insulation issues
- Used with a blower door to show air leakage pathways







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# Combustion Safety and Carbon Monoxide

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## Back-drafting flue gases into a home can poison occupants

Seek combustion safety assistance from a home performance professional.

Make sure CO detectors are properly installed and functional.

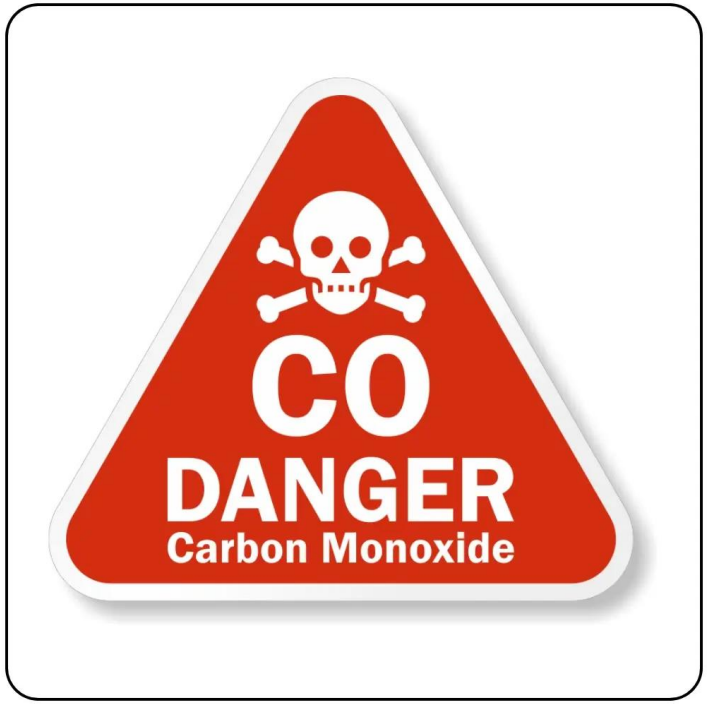



Image source: hseblog.com

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# Heating System Recommendations







## Heating system recommendations

- Test and clean regularly
- Seal and insulate ducts
- Replace furnace filters regularly
- Consider a more efficient replacement

Test and Clean



Replace Filters



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# Efficiency Priorities

## Focus on the **building envelope first**, then heating and cooling systems

- An efficient heating or cooling system in a leaky envelope still wastes a lot of energy.
- Also seal and insulate ducts and heating/ hot water pipes



Image source: Adobe Stock

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# Energy Audit Example

## Massive air leak to the attic — hiding behind a mirror



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# NHSaves Programs and Incentives

## NHSaves rebates and services

- Appliance rebates
- Heating, cooling and water heating incentives
- ENERGY STAR certified new construction
- Home Energy Assistance
- Financing
- Energy Audits and Weatherization:
  **Home Energy Performance program**
- **NHSaves.com**

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EVERSOURCE

Liberty

New Hampshire Electric Co-op

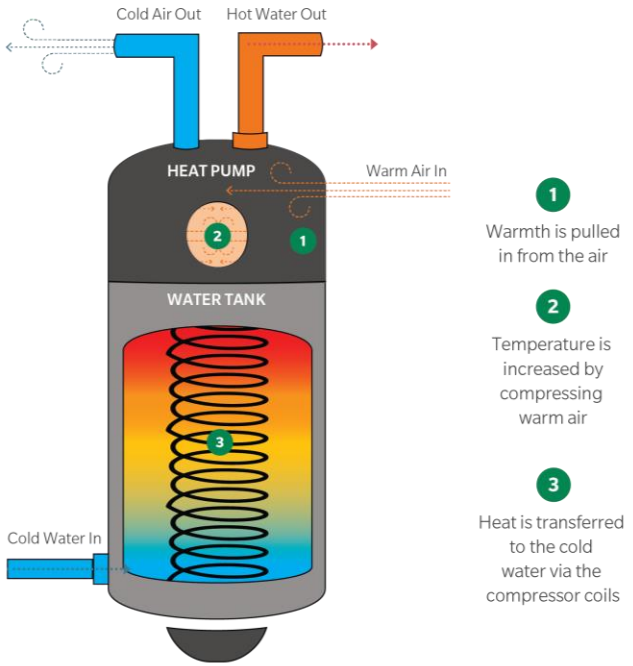
Unitil

# Efficient Heating, Cooling and Hot Water

## Plenty of high efficiency options and incentives

- Efficient natural gas boilers and furnaces
- Cold climate heat pumps
- Heat pump water heaters
- EPA certified wood and pellet stoves
- Smart thermostats (Liberty and Unitil natural gas customers only)

Visit **NHSaves.com** for specifics




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# High-Efficiency Heat Pumps

## Cold-climate heat pumps for A/C and heat

- Ductless mini splits heat and cool air
- Also ducted heat pumps
- Air-to-water heat pumps
- Cold climate models can extract heat from -15° air

Image source: The Meridian Company





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# High Efficiency Heat Pumps for Water and Air

## Heat pumps move heat from one place to another…

…using the refrigeration cycle

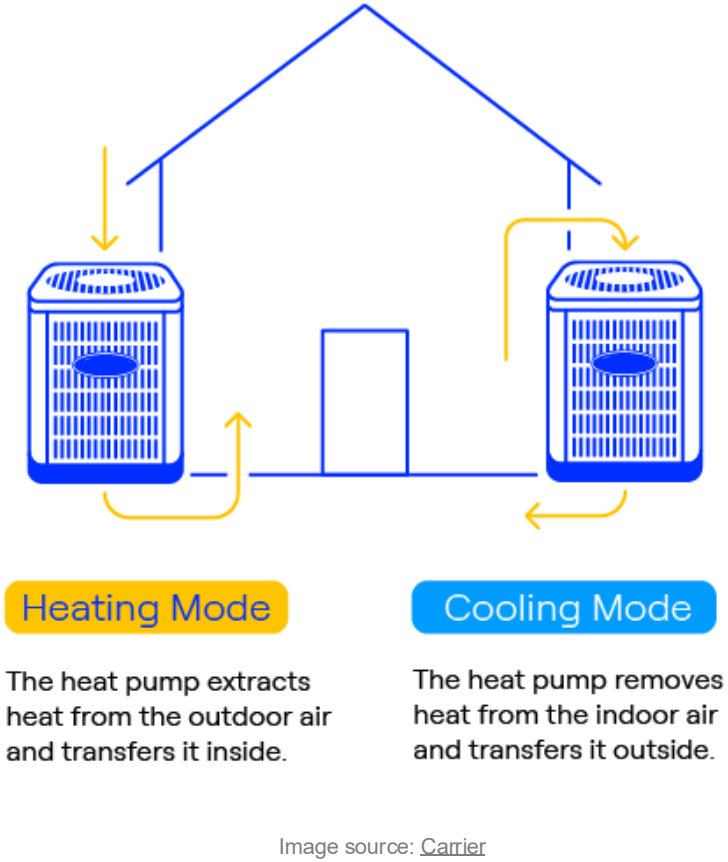



Image source: Carrier

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# NHSaves Heating, Cooling and Hot Water Incentives

## A sampling of NHSaves rebates for **efficient systems:**

Go to ***NHSaves.com*** and contact your utility for specific incentives

- Utility partner
- Low-interest financing options
- Funding availability

| | |
|---|---|
| **Mini-split cold climate heat pumps** | Up to $2,000*/ton |
| **Natural gas boilers and furnaces** | Up to $1,500 |
| **Heat pump hot water heaters** | $900 |
| **Wi-Fi smart thermostats** | $85** |

1 ton = 12,000 BTUs  All utilities: $2,000/ton if installed in a home that heats with electric; $250/ton for other homes

With heat pumps or natural gas heat; may be no cost with some programs

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# Energy-Efficient New Construction

## ENERGY STAR® Homes

- Incentives for builders
- Verified by a HERS Rater
- Energy savings, comfort and higher resale value

## Drive to Net Zero Competition

- Net zero homes = no net usage of energy
- “Reduce then produce” - with solar PV
- Cash prizes for builders



ASK ABOUT ENERGY STAR CERTIFIED HOMES

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# NHSaves for Existing Homes

## Home Energy Performance program for existing homes

- Qualify with online “Home Heating Index” calculator
- Comprehensive no-cost home energy audit
- Pays for 75% of eligible energy improvements up to $6,000*
- Low or no interest financing may be available up to $15,000

Contact your utility partner for authorization following the audit.

**NHSaves.com/HEP**



*Improvements that meet minimum benefit/cost ratio. Subject to changes / availability.

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# Home Heating Index

*NHSaves.com*
**“Test Your Home”**
**– Home Heating Index**




## Test Your Home

Here’s what you will need to get started:

- Your heating usage for the past twelve months
- The conditioned square footage of your home
- Your heating fuel source and your utility provider
- Your zip code

TEST YOUR HOME

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# NHSaves - Home Heating Index Calculator

## STEP 1 | Basic Information

**Electric Utility**

Eversource

**Zip Code**

03246

**Conditioned Square Footage**

2000

How do I calculate Conditioned Square Footage?

## STEP 2 | Annual Heating Fuel Usage

**Only the amount of fuel used to heat your home for the last 12 months**

**Natural Gas (Therms)**

Enter Usage Value

**Select Natural Gas Provider**

Select Utility

**Do you use electric heat or heatpumps?**

○ Yes ◉ No

**Heating Oil (Gallons)**

800

**Propane (Gallons)**

Enter Usage Value

**Wood (Full Cords)**

2

**Wood Pellets (Tons)**

Enter Usage Value

*If your home has electric heat, also enter monthly kilowatt-hours electricity usage.

NHsaves® Your Source for Energy Efficiency

# NHSaves - Home Heating Index Calculator

## YOUR RESULTS

### Basic Information

| | |
|---|---|
| Electric Utility Partner | Eversource |
| ZIP | 03246 |
| Conditioned Square Footage | 2000 |

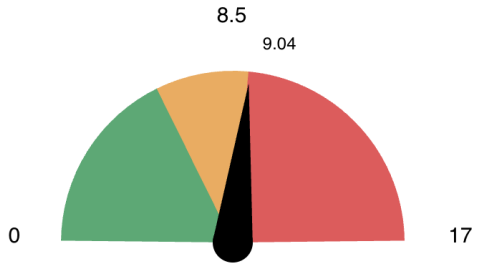
### Annual Heating Fuel Usage 75,400.00 BTUs/SF

| | |
|---|---|
| Fuel Types | Fuel Oil (No. 2),Wood (hardwood) |
| Fuel Oil (No. 2) | 800 Gallons |
| Wood | 2 Full Cords |

### Heating Index

Your home appears to be a great candidate for energy efficiency services, such as weatherization.

| | |
|---|---|
| 0 - 6 | Low Energy Use |
| 7 - 9 | Needs Improvement |
| 10+ | High Energy Use |




### Enroll For Home Energy Audit

Complete and submit your enrollment form.

Proceed to enrollment form

*__Minimum HHI__ values for full *Home Energy Performance* eligibility:

| | |
|---|---|
| Eversource | 6 |
| Liberty Electric | 8 |
| Liberty Natural Gas | 8 |
| New Hampshire Electric Cooperative | 6 |
| Unitil Electric | 8 |
| Unitil NaturalGas | 9 |

(As of September 2026. Qualification criteria may change)

NHSaves® Your Source for Energy Efficiency

# NHSaves Home Energy Performance Report

| Proposed Improvement | Total Cost | Utility Rebate | Customer Co-Pay | Pay Back Period (years) | Customer Cost Savings ($/year) | Customer Accepts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ancillary Savings - Boiler (1.0) | $0.00 | $0.00 | $0.00 | 0.0 | $1.72 | |
| Improve 660 sq ft of attic floor insulation from 3 inches to 18 inches. | $2,844.01 | $2,133.01 | $711.00 | 4.9 | $144.32 | |
| Non-energy saving measure (1.0) | $425.74 | $0.00 | $425.74 | | $0.00 | |
| Reduce the house air leakage from 2287 CFM50 to 1500 CFM50. | $580.80 | $580.80 | $0.00 | 0.0 | $343.62 | |
| Improve 480 sq ft of floors from 0 inches insulation to 9 inches insulation | $3,000.00 | $2,250.00 | $750.00 | 2.5 | $300.22 | |
| Ancillary Savings - Central A/C (1.0) | $0.00 | $0.00 | $0.00 | 0.0 | $9.93 | |
| Improve 90 sq ft of rim joist from No insulation to High insulation | $656.10 | $172.56 | $483.54 | 29.9 | $16.19 | |
| Program Delivery/Audit Fee | $863.64 | $863.64 | $0.00 | | | |
| Customer Co-Pay Pre-Payment | | | -$100.00 | | | |
| Totals | $8,370.29 | $6,000.00 | $2,270.29 | 2.8 | $816.00 | |

**Total Eversource Rebate:** **$6,000.00**

**Customer Co-Pay Balance:** **$2,270.29**

**Sample report with 75% utility cost-share up to $6k; 100% for air sealing**

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# Weatherization Assistance Program and Home Energy Assistance

Financial assistance that pays for energy reduction measures in a home

**Contact:**

County-based Community Action Agencies (CAAs)

Your utility, or dial 211

**New Hampshire Electric and Fuel Assistance programs**

- Financial assistance with electricity and fuel bills
- Same CAA, utility and 211 contacts

# Moderate Income Weatherization Programs

## Eversource Moderate Income Home Energy Performance

### Program Highlights:

- **Weatherization services:** 100% off insulation and air sealing
- **Appliance upgrades**: Replace inefficient appliances such as refrigerators
- **Additional enhancements:** Smart thermostats, faucet aerators, pipe wrap, and in some cases, new windows and doors



### Get Started

- Visit NHSaves.com/Income-Verification to see if your household qualifies for a no-cost home energy audit and enhanced incentives.
- To learn more, visit eversource.com/home-performance.

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# Summary




- Know about your energy use and savings opportunities
- Air seal first:  A-B-C
- Add insulation where you can
- For expert work, work with a home performance professional
- Utilize NHSaves energy efficiency programs

Powered by: EVERSOURCE Liberty New Hampshire Electric Co-op Unitil

# Thank you.

NHSaves Button Up workshops are coordinated by PAREI - the **Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative** with support from the NHSaves utility partners.

PAREI
Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative

For a copy of the presentation please visit:

**plymouthenergy.org/button-up**

Support future workshops …let your utility partner know.

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