

Insulate Your Home

Why we care

Heating produces greenhouse gases when we burn fuel oil or natural gas, and when we use electricity from coal- and gas-fired plants. Oregon has a goal of reducing greenhouse gas levels by 75% below 1990 levels by 2050. One of the most important actions individuals can take to reduce CO₂ emissions is insulating our homes.

Simple, positive change

- Seal air leaks before adding insulation. Do it yourself, or hire a contractor. See <http://earthleaders.org/ecotips/Weatherizing%20Your%20Home.pdf>.
- If you can see the tops of the joists in your attic, or if the insulation thickness is less than 10 inches of cellulose or 14 inches of fiberglass, you could benefit by adding more.
- Basement rim joists (between framing and foundation), basement walls, under-floor, and exterior walls all need insulation. Contact the Energy Trust at 1-866-368-7878 for a free evaluation.
- Natural insulation products like recycled denim, cellulose, or wool do not release harmful chemicals.
- If you select fiberglass batts, choose those that are formaldehyde free.
- Foam insulation is efficient, but it is made of fossil fuels, can't be recycled, and in some instances incorporates harmful chemicals such as flame-retardants and HFC blowing agents. Polyisocyanurate rigid foam and open-cell, low-density polyurethane spray are environmentally preferable choices available locally.
- Energy Trust of Oregon offers cash incentives for self-install and professional installation.
- For more information: <http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/index.cfm?&a=116025&c=42115> and <http://www.energysavers.gov/tips/insulation.cfm>

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.