

DIY HOME ENERGY AUDIT

AIR LEAKS



A home energy audit can identify hidden leaks, reduce energy waste, and uncover safety hazards.

As the audit is completed, take notes on what's found. These observations will help prioritize the most important improvements to save money and increase comfort. Whether completing repairs yourself, or deciding to hire help, you will be aware of potential issues.

Air leaks cause heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer, increasing energy use and cost. Drafts let heat escape, making your heating or cooling systems work harder. Rooms that feel warmer or cooler than others at the same thermostat setting may have poor insulation that would benefit from an upgrade.

How to check for leaks

Move your hand around the edges of exterior doors, windows, bathroom and kitchen vents, and fans. If you feel air moving or a temperature difference, there's likely a leak.

Tools like an infrared thermometer or thermal camera can locate smaller or hidden leaks, or try the incense test outlined here:

1. on a cold, windy day, turn off your furnace and close all windows and exterior doors
2. turn on bathroom and kitchen fans to create negative pressure
3. light incense and slowly move it around doors, windows, vents, and suspected leak points
4. if the smoke moves or is sucked in, you have found a draft

Air leak detection checklist

- doors and windows: inspect frames, seals, weatherstripping
- baseboards: inspect where walls meet ceilings or floors
- light fixtures and ceiling fans
- electrical outlets and switches including exterior walls
- bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans
- fireplace dampers: check for a tight seal
- outside entry points for cables, pipes, and vents:
Watch for cracks caused by freezing and thawing

How to seal leaks

Once identified, seal leaks using caulking, weatherstripping, or plastic film, which can be found at local hardware stores. Proper sealing enhances comfort, reduces energy loss, and protects your home.



utilities consumer advocate

310-4UCA (4822) | 1-800-644-6608
UCAhelps@gov.ab.ca | UCAhelps.alberta.ca