

Save on heating bills...

# Insulation gives your home a "winter coat"

As "Old Man Winter" prepares his return, homeowners can take steps now to beat the deep freeze - and the high heating costs that accompany it - by insulating the attic.

"Insulating your attic is like giving your home a winter coat," says Thomas Seymour of Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation, a major manufacturer of energy-efficient building materials.

"It helps prevent heat loss in fall and winter, making the house more comfortable. Best of all, the added energy efficiency can help lower fuel bills year round."

For most do-it-yourselfers, insulating an unfinished attic is a simple and inexpensive project, Mr. Seymour adds. Insulating a typical 1,000-sq-ft attic with 8-in. R-25 Attic Blanket<sup>®</sup>, for example, only costs around \$300-\$350.

To help homeowners get the most for their insulation dollar, Mr. Seymour offers the following guidelines on selecting and installing attic insulation.

### Prior to dealer visit

"Before visiting your building materials dealer to buy insulation," Mr. Seymour advises, "measure the length and width of the area to be insulated and multiply those two dimensions. The answer is the square footage of material required."

Next, determine how wide the insulation should be. The typical project requires material either 23 to 24 in., or 15 to 16 in. in width.

Insulation usually is installed between attic joists or wall studs, and the space between those members almost always is 22½ in. or 14½ in., depending on local building codes and the age of the house.

"The third step before visiting the dealer," Mr. Seymour adds, "is to determine if you need a vapor barrier." If the attic has some insulation, you should use unfaced insulation without a vapor barrier. If there is no insulation, install a material faced with either a kraft paper or aluminum foil.

"And remember," Mr. Seymour adds, "the facing always should be installed towards the warm-in-winter side of the construction."

As for the proper R-value (or insulating effectiveness), the Department of Energy has recently upgraded its R-value insulation recommendations for your area. Contact your local utility for more information.

R-value designates the insulation's ability to resist the passage of heat - heat gain in the summer and heat loss in the colder fall and winter.

"Savings may vary, but higher R-values mean greater insulating power," Mr. Seymour notes.

### Step-by-step

You're now ready to start. The only tools needed are a sharp knife, a straight-edge, a ruler, a pair of work gloves, a mask and safety glasses.

Begin by laying a piece of temporary flooring - a plank or section of ½-in. plywood should do - to avoid the risk of stepping through the ceiling.

Leave the insulation in the rolls until you're ready to use it, since insulation is compressed for packaging and will expand once the package is opened.

Start laying the fiber glass insulation at the outer edges of the attic and work toward the center, laying the long runs first and placing the leftover pieces aside for filling up small spaces later. You might find a long handled "push" broom helpful in extending the insulation to the edges of the attic.

Where you encounter wiring, push insulation under. Be sure to butt each section of insulation tightly up against the adjacent one for a complete barrier to heat transfer.

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