

Caulking - an important component in draftproofing

Semi-liquid and Foam Caulking Materials

| Material | Bondability* | Lifespan | Performance | Paintable | Comments |
|---|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Acoustical | Bonds to most surfaces | Very durable | Excellent Up to 10% shrinkage | No | Non-hardening; use should be limited to unexposed applications; excellent for sealing the joints in air-vapour barriers |
| Solvent-based acrylic | Bonds to most surfaces | Very durable | Good 0-5% shrinkage | No | An excellent outdoor caulking. Difficult to spread and touch up. Gives off offensive odour for several weeks; not recommended for indoor use. Handling precautions required. |
| Water-based vinyl-acrylic | Bonds to wood, glass, metal | Reasonably durable | Satisfactory 5-10% shrinkage | Yes | A general indoor or outdoor sealant; it is especially easy to use and is safe for use indoors. |
| Water-based acrylic (acrylic latex) | Excellent for non-porous surfaces such as aluminum, glass and ceramic tile | Reasonably durable | Satisfactory 5-10% shrinkage | Yes | A high performance sealant for indoor or outdoor use in joints where little shifting takes place. |
| Butyl rubber | Bonds to most surfaces; particularly suited to metal and masonry | Reasonably durable | Satisfactory 10-35% shrinkage | Yes (after one week's curing) | Suitable for sealing indoors. Not recommended for areas subject to high moisture. |
| Hypalon | Bonds to concrete, steel, most other metals, wood, glass, stone, brick | Durable | Satisfactory 10-35% shrinkage | No | For outdoor use only. Handling precautions required. |
| Water-based vinyl-acetate (vinyl-acetate latex) | Bonds to wood, glass, metal | Not durable | Poor 5-10% shrinkage | Yes | Easy to use. Safe for indoor use. Suitable for small joints and joints where little shifting takes place. Not recommended for use outdoors. |
| Oil- or resin-based | Bonds to most surfaces | Not durable | Poor 5-10% shrinkage | Yes | A low performance sealant. |
| Polysulfide | Ideally suited for use on stone, masonry and concrete when used with a special primer | Very durable | Good No shrinkage | No | A good material for large joints where shifting takes place. Handling precautions required. |
| Silicone | Bonds to stone, masonry, concrete, ceramics, wood, steel, aluminum, many plastics. Special primer may be required for wood, steel, anodized aluminum | Very durable | Excellent 0-3% shrinkage | No, with some exceptions | Available in a variety of types, some suitable for use both indoors and outdoors; some mildew- and moisture-resistant; some construction types suitable for use outdoors only. Handling precautions required. |
| Polyurethane (semi-liquid) | Bonds to glass, anodized aluminum, concrete, wood, masonry. Special primer may be required | Very durable | Good No shrinkage | Yes (after 14-30 days' curing) | Suitable for use indoors or outdoors. Handling precautions required. |
| Polyurethane (foam) | Bonds to most surfaces except polyethylene, teflon, or silicone plastics | Durable | Good No shrinkage | No | Will break down when exposed to direct sunlight. Handling precautions required. |

* For more detailed information regarding surfaces to which caulking material will adhere refer to manufacturer's literature.

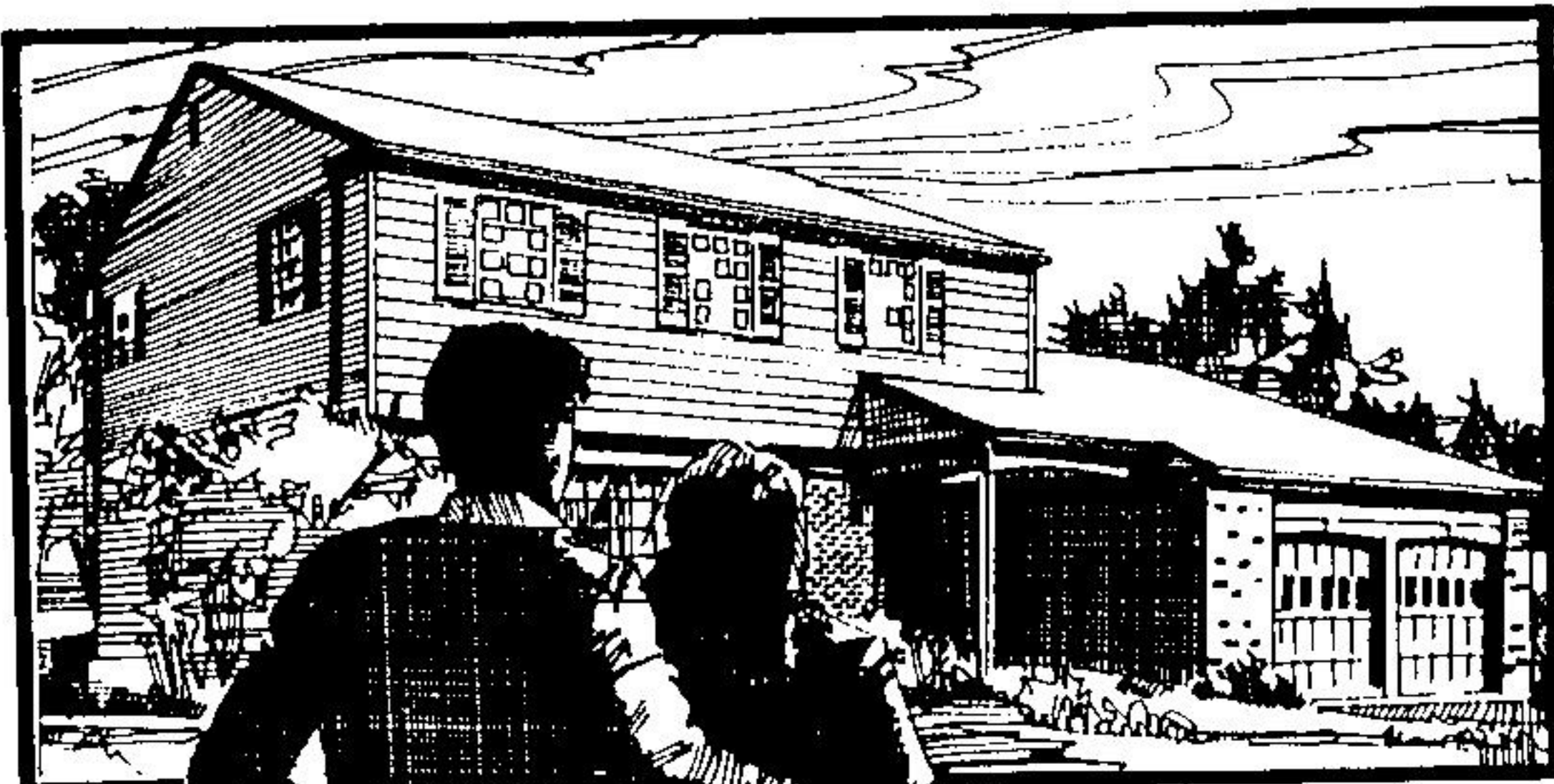
Sealing air leaks with caulking materials will help you achieve three important home energy management goals: reduce your heating bill, make your home more comfortable, and avoid hidden condensation problems.

Caulking is applied on fixed joints, such as the area where baseboards or window trim meet the wall. It must be applied from inside the house to prevent water vapour in warm, moist household air from getting into exterior walls, attics and other insulated spaces and cavities where it can cause condensation problems and reduce the value of the insulation.

Durability is one of the most important considerations when purchasing caulking. Less expensive brands may need to be replaced more often than those in the medium to high price range. You should also consider whether the product you select can be painted and is designed for use indoors. Good sealant performance is also indicated by its ability to tolerate crack movement and maintain an effective seal.

To obtain maximum benefits, caulking should be done in conjunction with weatherstripping and the installation of air-vapour barriers.

The accompanying chart provides information on the different types of caulking available on the market today. For information on specific brand names, consult the manufacturer's literature or your building supply dealer.



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