

Is Your Home Weatherization Ready?

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Sealing up air leaks and adding insulation to your home—also known as weatherizing—can make your home more energy-efficient and comfortable and lower your heating and cooling costs. However, weatherization will also change the energy dynamics in your home, affecting moisture, air movement, and temperature.

Before you begin your weatherization project, evaluate your home for its “weatherization readiness” and complete any repairs necessary to prevent indoor air quality problems that can make you sick.

How Well Does Your Home Handle Moisture, Air Movement & Temperature?

It is important to (1) determine how your pre-weatherized home handles these elements and (2) identify what strategies will be needed to make sure that your home can properly manage them after the weatherization is complete. Without these critical initial steps, problems may occur following your weatherization project, such as increased risk of mold or moisture damage to your home, increased radon levels, or inadequate ventilation to bring in fresh air for you and your family and exhaust out pollutants before you are exposed to them.

Weatherization Readiness Checklist



Conduct a Thorough Moisture Inspection

Weatherization practices can trap moisture in unwanted places, leading to mold growth, building damage and negative health impact for you and your family. Walk through your home, both inside and outside, looking for evidence of leaks, water intrusion and other moisture damage. Inspect your roof, gutters, basement and foundation to make sure rainwater flows down, off and away from your home. Inspect the interior of your attic and basement spaces for signs of possible moisture issues, especially after rain. Make sure that any dirt floors and open sumps are properly sealed. Monitor your relative humidity. If any area of your home is chronically above 60%, it will be critical to install adequate ventilation and dehumidification in the home to prevent that moisture from getting trapped indoors. Make all moisture repairs before the weatherization work begins or ask that they be included as part of your project scope.



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Test Your Home for Radon (Pre & Post Project)

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that comes up from the ground and gets trapped inside buildings. Exposure to radon causes lung cancer. Studies show that weatherization practices, particularly air sealing, can increase the amount of radon that gets trapped in your home, putting you and your family at risk. But testing is quick, easy and inexpensive. If you find your home has radon levels at or above 4.0 picocuries per liter (the recommended action level), you can bundle the radon repairs into the weatherization project, potentially saving you money on the overall radon system. Even if your home tested below 4.0 picocuries per liter before the weatherization, test your home again after the weatherization is complete to make sure your radon levels are still below the recommended action level of 4.0.



Remove Hazardous Materials

Evaluate your home for the presence of hazardous materials—remove them or label them to prevent them from being disturbed during the project. This includes labelling asbestos-containing building materials (e.g., pipe insulation, vermiculite) as well as paints, varnishes, and pesticides that may be stored indoors.



Assess Your Home's Ventilation

Weatherization will reduce naturally occurring air exchange between the inside of your home and the outside. This air exchange may be your home's only source of fresh air and ventilation. Will your home be adequately ventilated after weatherization to 1) bring in enough fresh air for you and your family and to 2) exhaust out pollutants that can make you sick? In addition to venting kitchen and bath fans outdoors, consider installing recovery ventilation as part of your weatherization project. Recovery ventilation is more energy-efficient and provides superior ventilation to your home. Bundling your ventilation system installation into the weatherization may reduce the cost of the system installation.

RESOURCES

[NIOSH Mold & Dampness Assessment Tool](#)



[Find a Ventilation Installer](#)



[Maine Radon Home Page](#)



[U.S. Department of Energy](#)

