## The Conservation Zone: The Benefits of Insulation

## Why Not Insulate Yourself From Reality?

## BY THE CONSERVATIVE BUREAU

We've come a long way from stuffing mud and strew into the cracks of our log cabins like our ancestors did. Furnaces have come a long way, too. They are much more efficient and most of them don't need to be fired up with wood anymore. However, if your house is not properly insulated, each winter the same battle will be waged between that insulation and your furnace, which has an agenda to keen you warm, no matter what the temperature:

Cranking up the thermostat may address the problem in the short-term, but it does not solve the underlying cause. Take some time this weekend to take a look at your aftic and see if that's where your energy dollars are making a hasty.

exit. It will be worth it - an attic that is not insulated can account for 40 per cent of heat loss in your home.

An important first step in fully insulating your home is air-sealing. Before you insulate, you should seal all potential air leakage areas around your home, such as around windows and doors. There are plenty of materials you can use, depending on the area you are sealing, including weather stripping, caulking, gaskets and tapes.

Adding insulation will be a smaller or larger job, depending on the age and type of your house, but it's well worth the effort, especially if you live in a cold climate. Most insulating products are relatively inexpensive, so your initial investment in them can be recovered through energy savings in a fairly short period of time.

Did you know that in a cold climate, reducing energy use by only 15 per cent can save the equivalent of 500 pounds of coal each year? A. well-insulated house also eliminates drafts and "cold spots" that can reduce your comfort level.

Insulation is labeled in "R-values." This value refers to ability to withstand heat transfer. The higher the value, the more resistance the insulation has to the movement of heat. In our colder climate, the recommended insulation value for flat ceilings is R40, and R36 for cathedral or sloped ceilings in electrically-heated houses. Insulation values of R31 to R38 are recommended if the home is heated with other fuels.

Fibre-batt, cellulose and rigid form. are the three most common types of comes in rolls and batts that you staff the benefits of invaluting your home.

between the framing of the house (as our ancestors did with mud and sticks!). Celluloxe is blown in place and is most smitable when you have a lot of narrow spaces. Rigid foam boards are also a popular insulation product.

If you're not sure you can tackle a project like this, there are many very good home improvement books available at the library to help you get going. Or, get quotes from contractors in your area to do the work. Better yet, start with an Ener Quide home audit, so you can pinpoint and tackle the work that needs to be done. Good luck!

The Conservation Bureau develous and delivers programs to help Ontario residents connerve energy and save money. For more information, please insulation for your home. You may be . visit our website at www.conservationmost familiar with fibre-batt, which bureau.on.ca and learn more about