

Average household reduction of CO2 emissions: 1,148 pounds a year

How

If your basement is not part of your living space, insulate the basement ceiling to keep the floor above it warm. If your basement is part of your living area, insulate the walls – not the ceiling. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, basement walls with insulation on the exterior perform better than basement walls with insulation on the interior. This step requires the help of a professional, as improperly insulated basement walls can damage a home's foundation. Before insulating, be sure to check for moisture problems and any cracks in the foundation wall and be sure to repair or seal them. The [Kansas City Home Performance Network](#) program of the [Metropolitan Energy Center](#) is available to help homeowners make energy efficient changes like this one. Call 816-835-7593 or e-mail energy@kcenergy.org for more information.

Why

Hot air from the furnace rises up through the house and into the attic through leaks while cold outside air is pulled in through basement leaks, creating a chimney effect. This makes a home feel drafty and contributes to higher energy bills. After insulating the attic against air leaks, sealing the basement is the next best step to making your home more energy efficient, saving you money every month.