

HOME

Carpets Help Insulate Homes

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(NU) - In today's economic climate, Americans are trying to stretch their pennies by making their homes more energy-efficient. Green homes save money and help the environment, but if you have already invested in energy-efficient appliances, what else can be done?

Many homeowners don't realize that their flooring choice can be a contributor to a home's energy-efficiency. Unlike other forms of flooring, carpet provides insulation. Installing wall-to-wall carpet keeps your home warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer, while also lowering your energy costs.

Recently, tests carried out at the Johns Manville Technical Center Thermal Labs confirmed that carpet and pad increase R-value, or the measure of thermal resistance, compared to other flooring materials. The higher the R-value, the better a material resists heat transfer. Carpets, with their higher R-value, are better able to keep heat within the home.

Researchers tested the carpets, both with and without cushions, against three common types of flooring – laminate, ceramic tile and engineered hardwood. The result? Carpets insulate up to 17 times better than hard surface products.

"Carpeted floors provide insulative properties in the home," says Rick Ramirez, vice president of sustainability for Shaw Floors. "In addition to its energy-saving aspect, the warmth and softness of carpet create a more comfortable living environment. Plus, carpet offers sound dampening



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In the winter, carpet can help your house stay warm.

benefits, which contribute to a quieter home."

Homeowners can make their homes even more efficient by following these simple, yet highly effective, steps from the California Energy Commission:

- Adjust the temperature accordingly. For every degree you lower your heat in the 60-degree to 70-degree range, you'll save up to 5 percent on heating costs.
- Reduce hot water temperature. Set your water heater to the "normal" setting or 120 degrees F, unless the owner's manual for your dishwasher requires a higher setting.
- Get with the program. Installing a programmable thermostat can save up to 15 percent on energy costs.

To learn more about the insulation benefits of carpet, visit www.shawfloors.com/saveenergy.