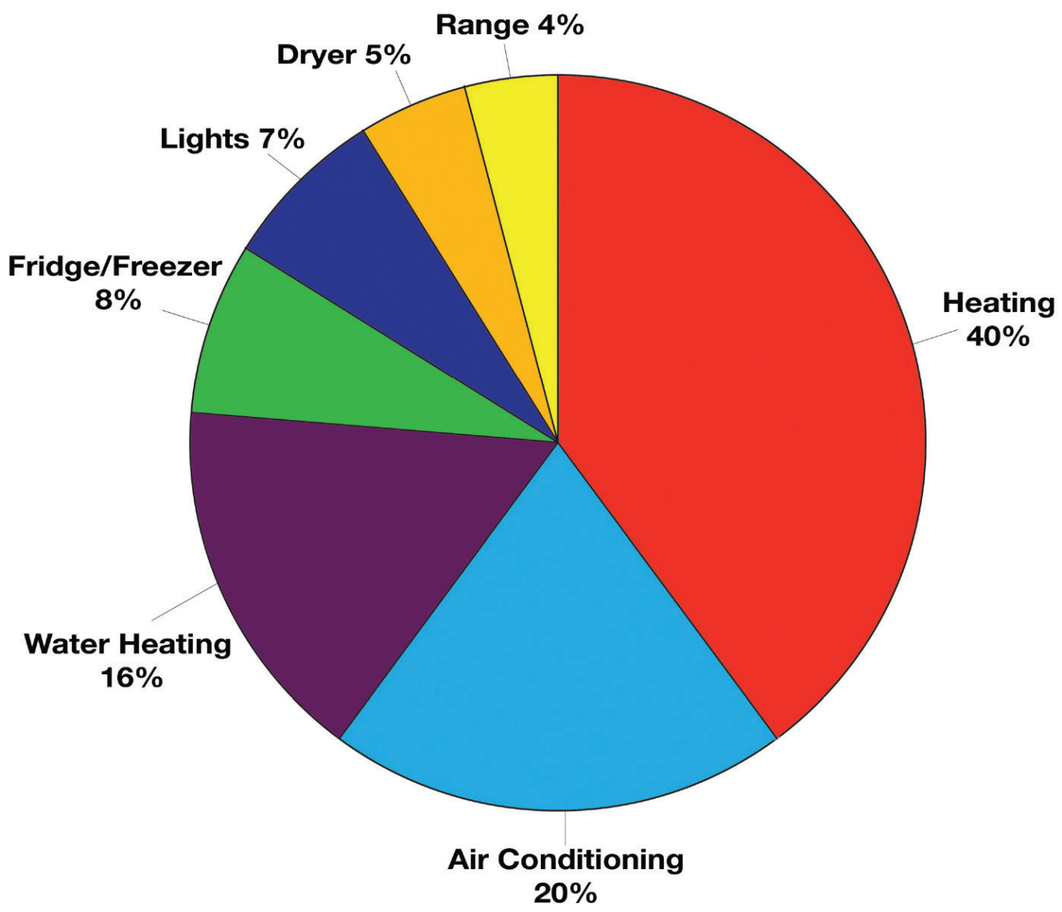
Home Energy Use



MLGW

Caulking brochure2025/8-25/MR

Caulking Your Home Saves Energy and Money

Eliminates air drafts • Reduces heat loss • Prevents water seepage • Requires no special

When air sealing your home caulking is the commonly used method. Caulking should be applied wherever there are cracks in the exterior of the house to prevent water seepage, heat loss and air drafts. No special skills are needed and minimal tools are required.

Where a house needs to be caulked:

1. Between window drip caps (tops of windows) and siding.
2. Between door drip caps and siding.
3. At joints between window frames and siding.
4. At joints between door frames and siding.
5. Between window sills and siding.
6. At corners formed by siding.
7. At sills where wood structure meets the foundation.
8. Outside water faucets or other special breaks in the exterior house surface.
9. Where pipes and wires penetrate the ceiling below an unheated attic.
10. Between porches and main body of the house.
11. Where chimney or masonry meets siding.
12. Where storm windows meet the window frame, except for drain holes at window sill.
13. In heated attics, where the wall meets the eaves at the gable ends.

Tools you'll need:

- Ladder
- Caulking gun
- Caulking cartidges
- Oakum, insulation or wood strips
- Putty knife or large screwdriver
- Low-E Foam (Where needed)

How much to buy:

Estimating the number of cartridges of caulking compound required is difficult since the number needed will vary greatly with the size of the cracks to be filled. Rough estimates are:

- ½ cartridge per window or door
- 4 cartridges for the foundation sill
- 2 cartridges for a two-story chimney

If possible, it's best to start the job with a half-dozen cartridges and then purchase more as needed.

Safety Tips:

Use a ladder to reach some of the difficult areas that must be caulked. Practice the following ladder safety precautions:

- Level and block the ladder in place. Have a helper hold the ladder, if possible.
- Never stand on the top rung.
- Don't stretch to reach that last little spot–climb down and move the ladder.
- Carry the caulking gun with a sling so both hands are free to grasp the ladder rails.

Installation Tips

1. Before applying caulk compound, clean area to be caulked by removing paint build-up, dirt or deteriorated caulk with a putty knife or large screwdriver.

2. Drawing a good bead of caulk takes a little practice, so your first attempts may be a bit messy. Make sure the bead overlaps both sides for a tight seal.

3. A wide bead may be necessary to make sure caulk adheres to both sides.

4. Fill extra-wide cracks like those at the sill (where the house meets the foundation) with oakum, insulation or wood strips.

5. In places where you can't fill the gaps, finish the job with caulk.

Uses and Properties

Material	Recommended Uses	Clean-up Solvent	Shrinkage	Adhesion	Remarks
Silicone, Household Grade	• Seals joints between bath and kitchen fixtures and tile • Used as adhesive for tiles and metal fixtures	• Dry cloth will remove if area is cleaned immediately • Use mineral spirits or naphtha	Little or none	Good to excellent	• Remains flexible for life after curing. • Permits joints to stretch or compress • Silicone will stick to painted surfaces, but paint will not adhere to cured silicone • Cost: High
Silicone,	• Seals most dissimilar building materials (wood and stone, metal flashing and brick)	Dry cloth will remove if area is cleaned immediately	Little or none	Good to excellent	• Remains flexible for life after curing • Permits joints to stretch or compress • Silicones will stick to painted surfaces, but paint will not adhere to cured silicone • Cost: High
Acrylic Latex with	• Seals exterior seams and joints on building materials • Can be painted	Use water	Up to 5 percent	Good to excellent	• Easy to use • Seams can be trimmed or smoothed with moist finger or tool • Good water resistance when dry • Can be painted • Less elastic than silicone, but more than oil or latex • Cost: Moderate
Latex	• Seals joints around tub and shower • Fills cracks in tile, plaster, glass and plastic • Fills nail holes	Use water	From 5 to 10 percent	Good to excellent	• Easy to use • Seams can be trimmed or smoothed with moist finger or tool • Good water resistance when dry • Can be sanded and painted • Less elastic than acrylic latex with silicone • Easy to clean up • Cost: Moderate
Oil-Based Caulks	Seals exterior seams and joints of building materials	Use mineral spirits or naphtha	From 10 to 25 percent	Fair	• Readily available in rope and tube forms • Oils dry out and cause material to harden and fall out • Cost: Low