

# problems in the attic

## **Snowmelt**



If snow melts off your roof unevenly like in this photo—or God forbid, your roof never has any snow on it at all—you have problems in your attic.

The snowmelt means your roof is kept warm from the heat loss from your home. The result is you are generously donating more money than necessary to the fossil fuel companies.

## **Ice dams**

Ice dams are another sign of problems in your attic. Ice dams tend to occur because the snow melts off your warm roof

and then refreezes once it hits your chilly gutters, creating long icicles.

If the melting water ends up trickling down into your walls, repairing the damage can cost thousands of dollars. Not to mention the danger of having sharp ice daggers hanging from the edge of your home.



## Don't endure it. Fix it.

Get your attic air-sealed and insulated.

Because hot air rises toward your attic, air-sealing and insulating an attic properly are two of the most effective actions you can take to keep your home more comfortable in the winter, lowering your heating bills and your impact on the planet. As a side benefit, this work will also keep you cooler in the summer.

Since work in the attic is generally unpleasant, potentially dangerous and demands a greater skill level than most do-it-yourselfers have, our directions from here on are geared toward helping you find a professional to fix the problems.



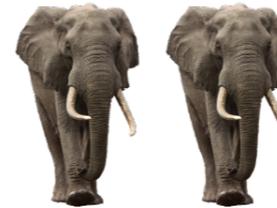
## Energy Savings

We wouldn't be very accurate if we tried to estimate the energy savings for each of the separate tasks we list in the rest of the book, but we can say on average, air-sealing and

insulating your attic (if it has not been previously air-sealed and insulated) will save 21% of your heating bill.

Average energy savings per decade: **\$2,500 and 19,883 lbs. CO2**

If you heat with oil and need more heat than the average home, your savings will be much larger than this.



## The rest of the book will explain:

- How to figure out what problems your home has
- What steps the professionals should take to fix each problem
- How the pros should check their work to ensure they've done a good job
- How to find a great contractor
- Where to find the available rebates, tax incentives and free services

At the end we include a calculator to estimate your probable costs, rebates and savings.

## Four Important facts

If the topics of attics, air-sealing and insulation bore you to tears, simply take away these four important facts.

- **Fact #1:** Air-sealing and insulating your attic, if it hasn't been done, is one of the biggest energy-saving acts possible to perform in your home, and the work will last a lot longer than efficient light bulbs or showerheads.
- **Fact #2:** If you don't know if your attic has been air-sealed and insulated, there's a very good chance it hasn't.
- **Fact #3:** In many New England states, there are rebates and free services available to access the efficiency help your home needs and then to get the work done.
- **Fact #4:** You don't have to know dinky about any of the technical terms we use from here on. Just follow these steps.

Use our "Rebates, Services and Tax Incentives" chapter to get the services you need for the least amount of money possible.

Use our information in our "How to Find a Great Contractor" chapter.

While the contractors are there, make sure they check their work the way we suggest to be sure they've done their job well.

If you follow these rules, then you will have increased your home's efficiency while wasting the least amount of your own money or time.

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**Note:** If you are a semi-pro in terms of home repair, you can use our directions to do the work yourself. However we should warn you, the directions are a lot

more cryptic than the ones in the earlier parts of this book, and most buildings have unique variations that will require some tweaking of our basic instructions when in practice. You should research each task to figure out any safety and building issues and any potential problems. You are responsible for using common sense around what you can handle and what will benefit your home.

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