

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Sealing In Savings With Silicone

(NAPSA)—You might cut annual energy bills as much as 10 percent just by sealing leaks in your home with caulk and insulation, according to Energy Star. Try these tips for keeping drafts out and warm air in:

Select The Right Caulk

It's a good idea to seal with silicone instead of acrylic caulk or even siliconized acrylic. Here's why:

Silicone...

- Is permanently waterproof, airtight and flexible, unlike acrylic

- Provides a long-lasting seal

- Won't shrink, crack or crumble over time, like acrylic

- Won't freeze in the cold or bake in the heat, like acrylic.

Acrylic...

- Is water based, so it dries out as the water escapes—some can shrink up to 25 percent

- Shrinkage can leave gaps and cracks for air and water to seep through

- Can crumble over time

- Can crack when exposed to extreme cold or heat.

A silicone caulk, such as GE Silicone II* Window & Door or GE Silicone II XST Paintable Formula, can be a good choice. On average, the gaps and cracks in a typical home can be sealed with about four tubes of caulk and insulation.

Find Drafts

Next, use an incense stick to check your home for drafts. Just light the stick and hold it near windows, doorways, outlets and other areas where a home's seal tends to be compromised. If the smoke looks like it's being blown,



Sealing with silicone could save energy dollars.

there's probably a draft coming in.

Prep Time

Use a razor blade to remove any old caulk that might be on an area you plan to seal. Then clean the surface with a household cleaner, rubbing alcohol or a wire brush, and wipe with a clean cloth. Make sure the surface is clean, dry and free of soap, grease, dirt and dust before caulking.

Get Caulking

Hold your caulk gun at a 45-degree angle and gently squeeze the trigger, applying even pressure to avoid globs. Then run your finger along the bead to ensure that it's neat, even and, most importantly, fills the gap to form a tight seal. Caulk cures—or dries—from the outside in, and drying times vary. GE Silicone II is dry to the touch after about 30 minutes. Use mineral spirits for proper cleanup of silicone caulk.

For more information, visit www.gesealants.com.