



# NEWSLETTER



## WHAT DOES “STACK EFFECT” MEAN

The “stack effect” is a term used in building science which means the whole structure acts like a chimney, simply because warm air rises. So, in the winter, cold air comes in from the lowest parts of the structure and exits the building at the highest point. If you open a window in the basement during the winter, you feel the cold air rushing into the building. If you go to the attic, you will find the air leaving the attic through attic vents.

Again, air gets pulled in from the lower part of the structure and pushed out at the upper part of the structure. Now, take this into consideration knowing that air intrusion in the winter causes the largest loss of energy efficiency. Air movement coming in, and then out, is the “low hanging fruit” on the energy efficiency tree. Look at it this way, you can have all the insulation in the world in the walls and ceilings of the structure, but if the windows are open, and there is air movement, the insulation doesn’t do much!

So, the moral of the story is to make sure you have good windows in the basement and seal any openings to block air movement. Take a close look for openings in the basement walls and at the top of the foundation where the concrete meets the wood part of the structure. Apply caulking or another sealant where appropriate. Taking these simple steps could save you a lot of energy dollars over time.

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