

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

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www.energy.ca.gov



July 6, 2010

LETTER TO HOMEOWNERS:

SAVE ENERGY AND MONEY – HAVE YOUR DUCTS SEALED

The largest single energy user in California homes is the central air conditioning and heating system. If this system is not installed properly, it not only wastes energy, but money as well. To prevent this, do two simple things when installing or replacing your central air conditioning or heating system.

SEAL YOUR SYSTEM DUCTING

Most homes have a duct system that delivers cooled or heated air from the air conditioning or heating unit to the home's living spaces. **The average duct system leaks about 30 percent of the conditioned air into the attic or crawl space. Leaky ducts waste energy and make energy bills higher than they should be.** Properly sealed ducts will make your home more comfortable and save you money.

The *2008 Building Energy Efficiency Standards* require testing of ducts after a central air conditioning or heating system is installed or replaced in most existing homes.* Duct systems that leak 15 percent or more must be sealed by the installing contractor. The work of contractors is checked by third-party field verifiers (more commonly referred to as Home Energy Rating System [HERS] raters) to ensure that ducts have been properly sealed. Before your contractor begins work, you will be given the option to require that your duct sealing is verified by a HERS rater. If you do not choose this option, your home's ducts will be included in a random sample for verification. If your duct system is checked and the HERS rater finds that it leaks 15 percent or more, your contractor will need to return and properly seal your ducts.

Note that duct sealing is not required for systems having less than 40 feet of ductwork in unconditioned spaces like attics, garages, crawlspaces, basements, or outside the building, or if the ducts were constructed, insulated, or sealed with asbestos.

MAKE SURE YOUR CONTRACTOR GETS A PERMIT

Please keep in mind that any contractor failing to obtain a required permit is violating the law and exposing you to additional cost and liability. Real estate law requires disclosing to potential buyers and appraisers whether required permits for work done on a home were obtained. If work was done without a required permit, you may be required to bring your home into compliance with current code requirements before selling it, in addition to possibly paying penalty permit fees and fines. Additionally, your homeowner's insurance policy may be voided if it is found that work was done without a required permit.

For more information, please call the Energy Standards Hotline at (800) 772-3300.

Handwritten signature of Anthony Egger in black ink.

Anthony Egger, Commissioner
Presiding Member
Efficiency Committee

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey D. Byron in black ink.

Jeffrey D. Byron, Commissioner
Associate Member
Efficiency Committee

* Under the *2008 Building Energy Efficiency Standards*, duct testing is required when you have a central air conditioner or furnace installed or replaced in climate zones 2 and 9-16. Please visit www.energy.ca.gov/maps/building_climate_zones.html or call the Energy Standards Hotline to find out which climate zone your home is in.