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# Three Starting Points for Insulating a Connecticut Home by Alex Stuart

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## Start Insulating Your Home At These Three Critical Points

While it's true that any properly executed home improvement is, well, and improvement, there are some that pay back much more than others. This is especially true when it comes to the wide variety of energy upgrades that are available in today's marketplace.

So with all the options available, which applications of insulation will have the biggest impact on your home's energy efficiency?

At Dr. Energy Saver, we suggest that you begin with these three critical points:

### 1. Attic Insulation

Most homes in Connecticut are not installed with the amount of attic insulation recommended by the US Department of Energy (USDE). This is because the building-code-mandated levels for minimal attic insulation are outdated - and do not take into account the rising cost of energy in modern times.

By the USDE map, most of Connecticut is considered to be in Zone 1 - which is reserved for the coldest areas in the USA. This means that there's a recommended insulation level of R-49. With an R-value of 2.5 per inch of loose-fill fiberglass (for example), this translates to about 19.6" of insulation! That's more than a foot and a half of insulation!

Poor attic insulation means more than just energy loss! The escaping heat will also melt snow collected on the roof, which can lead to roof-damaging ice damming for your home. We recommend air sealing your attic in conjunction with the insulation for a maximum return on your investment.

### 2. Basement/Crawl Space Insulation

Basement and crawl space insulation is a hot topic these days - and for good reason. After the attic, the basement and/or crawl space is usually the next most important area where energy can be saved through insulation.

Like attics, these below-grade spaces are best upgraded with a combination of air sealing and insulation. In the case of a crawl space, it's also a good idea to seal off all vents, install a vapor barrier (rigid foam insulation and closed-cell spray foam can do double duty as both insulation and air sealing), and dehumidify the space.

The USDE reports that insulation your basement in Connecticut will result in annual savings of over $300 annually. You'll also enjoy a more comfortable, less drafty home - with a warmer floor underfoot.

### 3. Garage Insulation

The garage is an often-overlooked area when it comes to home insulation. However, if there's living space located above the garage, there should certainly be insulation on the ceiling of the garage to protect from potentially severe drafts and energy leaks.

Additionally, it's important to seal and insulate the wall between the garage and living space to

prevent heat from flowing from your home at this critical point. If the wall is finished and you're not sure if insulation is present, consult with an energy efficiency technician. They can use infrared technology to check for cold spots. If there's no insulation in the wall cavity, it may be possible to direct blown insulation into the void through small holes bored into the drywall.

As a finishing touch, it's also wise to choose an insulated garage door - one that won't let in air around the edges or "radiate" cold into your home.

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