

Caulk those cracks to conserve energy

There is more to conserving energy than just using your auto wisely, according to the Michigan Department of Commerce.

It also means eliminating waste of electricity, fuel oil and natural gas. A good place to conserve is in the home. Two of the most simple and least expensive ways are caulking and weatherstripping.

Caulking or packing seams to make them airtight requires detective work. Air leaks not only increase the cost of heating and cooling, they let in damaging moisture, too. Make an annual check of caulking by looking in the following areas to see if new caulking is needed:

- Where pipes and wires enter ceilings.
 - Moldings, joints, nails and screws in sliding panels, splash panels, windows, top seams, doors, roof vents and wheel housings.
 - Between porches and the main body of the house.
 - Beneath an unheated attic where the chimney meets the lap siding.
 - Around exterior openings such as faucets and electrical fixtures.
- Caulking can be bought in a variety of colors to match exterior colors.

Caulking should be done in warm weather, above 35 degrees, or the compound becomes stiff and difficult to apply.

BEFORE APPLYING caulking compound, clean the area of paint build-up, dirt or deteriorated caulk with solvent and a putty knife or a large screwdriver.

Drawing a good bead of a caulk from the caulking gun will take a bit of practice. Make sure the bead overlaps both sides for a tight seal. A wide bead may adhere to both sides.

Fill extra wide cracks like those at the sills, where the house meets the foundation, with oakum, glass fiber insulation strips. In places where you cannot quite fill the gaps, finish the job with caulk.

Caulking compound also comes in rope form. Unwind it and force it into the cracks with your fingers. You can fill extra long cracks easily this way.

There are several different kinds of caulking. The least durable and lowest in cost are oil or resin based. Latex, butyl or polyvinyl are more durable and more expensive. The most durable and expensive materials are called

elastomeric-based.

Weatherstripping is an easy do-it-yourself project. There are several types of weatherstripping on the market, all intended to stop air from entering around such places as doors and windows — a major source of heat loss in most homes.

The weatherstripping should be applied around all windows and outside doors. Double-check the threshold portion of outside doors. Do not leave a

crack between the bottom of the door and the threshold. Wear sometimes causes a crack to develop.

The least expensive weatherstripping materials are made of felt or foam strips but are not very durable. Rolled vinyl, with or without various backings, is the most expensive product on the market but is very durable. All the products are easy to install.

Call the energy hot line free at 1-800-292-4704.

Back by popular demand: consultant for gifted

One of the most sought after consultants in the nation for designing programs to meet the needs of gifted and talented students, Roger Taylor, will be in Farmington to address an open forum at North Farmington High on Jan. 22.

The Southwest Oakland Education Forum brought Taylor to Walled Lake in October 1979. Several Farmington parents were so impressed with his lecture on "Finding Success for Gifted

Students" that they wanted to hear him again.

The meeting is called "A workshop for parents with Roger Taylor" and will be aimed at discussing the needs of the gifted child and how to parent a gifted child.

Taylor has served for four years as director of the Chicago area service center for educators of gifted children and as professor of urban teacher education.

Tax hike not expected

Michigan taxes will not be increased in the coming year despite a substantial budget deficit, said State Rep. Wilbur (Sandy) Brotherton, R-Farmington.

The state budget for fiscal 1981 will emphasize that the cost of government programs cannot exceed the amount of revenues collected, Brotherton said.

"This is sound management and prudent policy," Brotherton said. "The people gave us a clear mandate at the polls and have told us repeatedly in person that we can't increase programs beyond our ability to pay for them."

"Departmental hiring, travel and purchasing was limited more than a year ago, and last summer the governor requested that all departments reduce their expenditures by specific amounts. We in the legislature adopted a plan to maintain a balanced budget in the current fiscal year."

The governor has asked department directors to identify programs that can be eliminated entirely or reduced in scope and to also submit recommendations for changes in laws that could further reduce state spending, he said. That budget in-

cludes cuts in some programs, elimination of seven boards and commissions, merger of four others, and the transfer of 16 others.

"I think we are almost certain to see additional property tax relief this year, too," Brotherton said.

"We have already acted to relieve taxpayers of excessive property tax burdens, but we can go further. Property tax relief has always been a top priority with House Republicans."


"We have introduced a constitutional amendment to provide additional relief, and we have challenged the Democrats to put their best proposal on the ballot alongside ours to let the people make their choice."

"There is no doubt that the decade of the '70s brought us a cleaner environment, a fairer tax system, safer highways, more liveable urban areas, more jobs and a higher standard of living," Brotherton said.

"The challenge of the '80s is to live within our financial limits, but not limit our compassion, imagination, and dedication to improving the life of all our citizens through effective and efficient state government."

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