

# Duct Testing

Ducts are used to transport air throughout your home to and from your furnace, air conditioner or heat pump. They are in most new homes and half of all existing homes. Most ducts are made of sheet metal or flex duct and are located in the attic, crawlspace, garage or basement.

Your home's ducts may be responsible for increasing your heating and cooling bills by as much as 25 percent. Industry experts estimate that two-thirds of the duct systems in the United States are leaky enough to justify sealing or repair.

Signs of leaky ducts include:

- High heating (or cooling) bills
- Drafts at registers when the heat is off
- Musty odors and condensation on windows
- Rooms that do not heat or cool evenly with the rest of the house
- Frequent dusting

A homeowner should hire a professional technician to test the ducts and find leaks. A performance test involves pressurizing the duct system with a calibrated fan and simultaneously measuring the air flow through the fan and its effect on the pressure within the duct system. Once leaks are discovered, they can be repaired or replaced as required. Duct repairs are made with mastic, a special product designed specifically for this work. Duct tape, despite its name, is not adequate for repair work.

Because of the potential energy savings, the Oregon Department of Energy offers a tax credit to encourage Oregon homeowners to seal existing ductwork or install a well-designed and sealed duct system. The tax credit is 25 percent of the cost of the work, up to \$250.

An Oregon Department of energy tax-credit certified contractor must perform the work for you to qualify for a tax credit. Tax-credit certified contractors have successfully completed training in prescribed test protocols and worksheets. A list of companies with tax-credit certified duct contractors is available on the Department of Energy Web site at [www.oregon.gov/energy](http://www.oregon.gov/energy) or by calling 1-800-221-8035 or (503) 378-4040 (Salem).



*Call a tax-credit certified contractor to test and repair the ducts in your home. You may qualify for an Oregon Energy Tax Credit.*

