

MN Hierarchy of Housing Needs

Service Providers prioritize work orders for weatherization projects uniquely based on a Hierarchy of Housing Needs (see illustration below) set forth by the auditor on the project.

There are advantages to prioritizing work and designing mechanical systems for existing homes. First, the home provides an observable history from which to work. Stained ceilings, peeling paint, and mold and moisture all tell the story of how a building operates. The customer may identify problems not immediately apparent, such as periodic back drafting of combustion appliances. In addition, the existing home has already aged, allowing lumber to dry and modern materials to out-gas, reducing the pollutant load on the ventilation system.

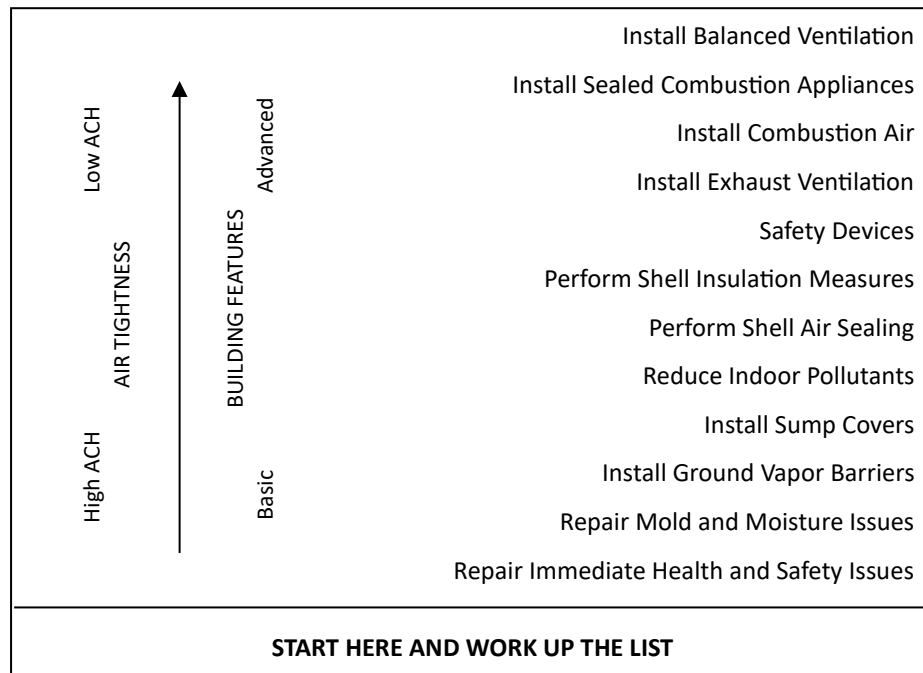
Procedure:

1. Identify and remedy any immediate health and safety issues.
2. Identify any major sources of moisture and other pollutants and remove them or seal them away from the house. No ventilation system can effectively handle excess amounts of any pollutants.
3. Complete shell measures to ensure reliable pressure and thermal boundaries. The mechanical systems depend on these measures to operate effectively.
4. The choice of ventilation equipment will depend upon the building's structure, airtightness, client needs, and mechanical systems. Many homes may require only exhaust fans.
5. A blower door test and an assessment of the home's existing ventilation will provide the information to determine the home's ventilation needs. There are situations where balanced ventilation may be more appropriate.

There may be times where mechanical work will need to be done first and other times, based on the home's safety and needs, where mechanical work will need to be done somewhere during the project or even at the end of the weatherization project.

The following list is an example of starting at the beginning and working your way up. As air tightness improves, building features also advanced.

This is a general list and is not an exact prescriptive list for every home. All testing requirements remain the same and client education is prioritized and emphasis throughout the project to be successful.



(Credit – Wisconsin’s State Weatherization Field Guide)