



## Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

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### Air Barrier

Much of what is needed to improve the energy efficiency of a home does not take years of training or any special skills to accomplish. It usually requires going to the places in your home that you try to forget. Namely crawl spaces and attics and then doing things that are not fun.

There are 2 barriers created during the construction of every home that are responsible for the majority of comfort and cost to condition the space. The first is the air barrier. It is one or more physical connections between building materials that prevent unwanted ventilation. Yes, houses need to breathe but they don't need to hyperventilate. I have proven several times that no matter how hard you try, you cannot make a house too tight by airsealing after the house is built. There are enough places that are inaccessible to allow unwanted ventilation that exceeds the minimum standard by at least 100%. So save that excuse when you try to justify NOT going to the attic and making improvements to your home.

The attic access point is usually the biggest and worst leak. There are several covers now made for pull down stairs and hatches. Or you can buy foam board and make your own. It needs to seal tight and should be at least 4" thick.

The second biggest air leak is actually hundreds of them. Twenty years ago the foam gun that uses pressurized cans of foam was not invented and we were forced to use caulking guns to seal cracks. It was a pain, especially in dirty attics. The cracks that need sealing are under the insulation in the attic. You just have to lift the insulation, look for places where drywall meets wood or where holes are drilled for wires and pipes and seal them. Big box stores now sell foam guns and the foam and it makes the job child's play. (Disclaimer: That doesn't mean you should send your child into the attic with a foam gun.) If you look for dirty fiberglass insulation you will pinpoint the worst air leaks fast. You can save 5% or more on your heating bill if you seal every crack and gap like your wallet depends on it. After the gaps are sealed, put the fiberglass batts back down where they were.

Old recessed lights should be replaced with airtight LED lights today. If you can see the light from the attic, you are losing lots of air.

The other barrier is the thermal barrier and I will talk about that next week. Happy sealing.

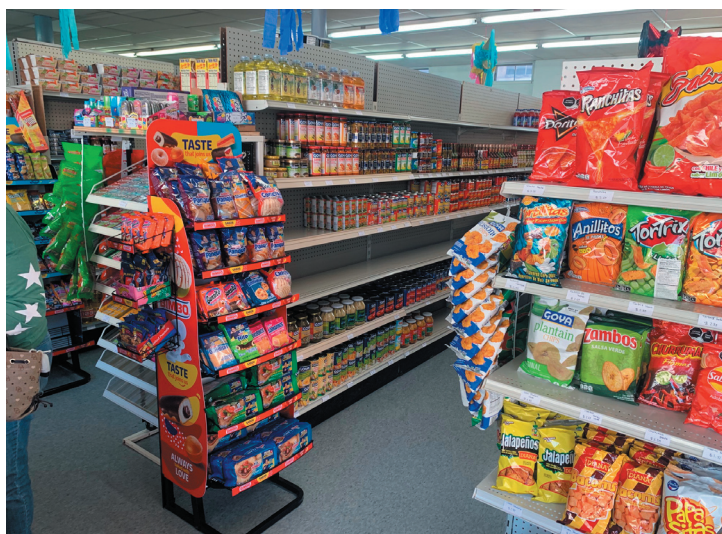
Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email [Ken@FieldsService.com](mailto:Ken@FieldsService.com)

## New Market

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Located at the corner of Messinger St. and South Main St. They have a good assortment of dry goods, fruits and veggies, milk and dairy products.

They are still remodeling the back of the store where the deli will be located "we're just waiting for the meat cases to be delivered" said Landa. They expect the deli to be fully operational by next month. So stop in and say hello to the new Market owners and pick up some items for tonight's dinner.



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