Building Shell

What are Building Shell Upgrades?

If your apartment building recently received or soon will receive a building shell upgrade, this fact sheet is for you! In collaboration with housing providers around the country, Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) developed this resource to help you and other residents understand the various benefits that can result from building shell upgrades.

The shell of a building is the spaces or physical features that separate the interior from the outside environment, such as your walls, ceiling, flooring, and roof. Upgrades to your building shell can include any of the following:

- Caulking and sealing of cracks and openings
- Insulation to reduce heat loss or gain
- Cool roof (painting the roof white to reflect heat)
- Improvements to windows and doors

These upgrades can provide a more sustainable and healthier home for you to live in.

The Benefits of Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency is good for your home, community, and the environment. SAHF’s research has uncovered 48 distinct benefits of energy efficiency improvements. There are seven different categories of building upgrades: building shell, HVAC, hot water, water, lighting, appliances, and renewables. Each of which can have benefits in five broad categories: financial, health and safety, comfort, education and learning, and social and resiliency benefits.

This fact sheet lists some key benefits associated with the building shell upgrades that you recently received or soon will receive for your home.

Did you know?

Financial Benefits

Poor insulation and drafty windows can cost you a lot of money over the long term, especially if you cool or heat your home often. Building shell upgrades can lead to utility bill savings and reduced exposure to weather-related bill spikes and other rate increases.

Health & Safety Benefits

Based on SAHF’s study, building shell upgrades can be beneficial to your wallet and improve your health. Old insulation can introduce unwanted indoor pollution, openings, and moisture, which provide the ideal conditions for pests and mold. Adding new insulation, improving windows, and sealing gaps inside and outside your home helps improve your indoor air quality. This can reduce asthma triggers, respiratory problems, and allergens, and even save you a trip to emergency room.

Comfort Benefits

When everything is properly sealed and well-insulated, you can expect your home to maintain a stable and comfortable temperature due to less draft or heat loss. Improvements to your building shell can lead to less outside noise entering your home.

Social & Building Resiliency Benefits

Building shell upgrades also mean your AC and heater will not need to work as hard, which means less wasted energy. A win-win situation for you and the environment. If your power goes off, your home will stay cooled or heated longer due to the better insulation and energy-efficient windows.

Need more information or tips on how to make your home more sustainable?

Contact your property manager or visit ENERGY STAR’s website at https://bit.ly/3w4cKcx