

**Answer:** It depends on the house. Unfortunately, there is no “one size fits all” answer here. You will need to depend on sound, knowledgeable auditing skills along with guidance from the Michigan field guide. Consider the following:

Assuming the pressure boundary will be continuous and in contact with the thermal boundary, here are some variables to consider with suggested solutions provided by the Michigan Field guide.

**Foundation wall air sealing and insulation when:**

- Unconditioned basement or crawlspace containing ductwork, furnace, and water lines (unintentionally conditioned)
- Reasonable drainage with no moisture issues
- Unconditioned basement or crawlspace floor air sealing and insulating would be difficult to perform
- Concrete floor, concrete or concrete block walls
- Foundation walls test tighter than the floor
- If the unoccupied basement may be occupied someday or if the laundry is currently being done in the area
- If the unoccupied basement has an interior stairwell from the house
- If the crawlspace vents can be closed off

**Floor air sealing and insulation when:**

- No furnace or ducts present (completely unconditioned)
- Dry crawl space with ground moisture barrier installed during weatherization
- Damp basement with no solution during weatherization
- Accessible air-sealing and insulation
- Floor tests tighter than foundation walls
- Rubble masonry, cracked foundation or stone walls
- Exterior entrance with stairway
- Building codes forbid closing crawlspace vents
- Unoccupied basement with dirt floor or deteriorating concrete

Even though we have seen plenty of these scenarios and conditions listed here, we all realize that in the “real world” there will be a myriad of others to contend with. That is why it is important to understand the concepts of keeping the thermal and pressure boundaries in alignment while considering what areas of the foundation are conditioned, unconditioned, or unintentionally conditioned. Use your “eyes” along with diagnostic testing results, and sound building science to give you guidance to make the logical, proper decision.