

# Energy Saving and Construction

If yours is one of the 715,000 homes being built this summer, take this ideal time to consider ways you and your contractor can make the house energy efficient.

The Alliance to Save Energy and the National Association of Home Builders suggest there are several energy saving options which will pay for themselves over time in lower utility bills.

**DESIGN:** First, consider the design of the house. A square or rectangular floor plan is usually more energy efficient than "H", "T" and "L" shaped homes. This is due to a lower ratio of outside wall area to floor area. Also keep in mind that reducing the ceiling height from eight feet to seven feet six inches also saves heating and cooling energy. There is six per cent less volume to heat and cool.

If the building lot permits, recommend to the contractor that the house be situated with the roof ridge running east to west, rather than north to south.

Where feasible have the attached garages or carports where they can help shield the house—on the north, northeast or northwest in cold climates; on the east or west side in hot climates.

Deciduous trees, the kind that lose their leaves, provide summer shading to the south side of the house but do not cut down sunlight in the winter.

**WINDOWS:** Consider the heat from the sun when planning window locations. South-facing windows provide solar heating in the winter. The proper roof overhang on south-facing glass will reduce heat gain in the summer without affecting winter heat gain. The glass areas on the other walls of the house, especially the north side, should

be minimized. Have double pane glass installed throughout the house and hang insulated drapes. Ask the contractor for windows that can be opened in order to use natural or fan-forced ventilation in moderate weather.

**INSULATION:** Ask the contractor to insulate the walls and roof to the highest specifications recommended. Voluntary energy guidelines have been adopted by members of the Home Builders Association which make it easier for the homeowner and builder to determine the proper amount of insulation, an industry spokesman told the Alliance to Save Energy.

Have the floors insulated too, especially those over crawl spaces, basements and garages. It is also a good idea to insulate the water heater and hot water pipes.

**APPLIANCES:** The water heater is usually the second largest energy user in the home. It should be located as near as possible to the areas of major use to minimize heat loss through the pipes. Make sure that the temperature is set as low as practical—110-140 degrees depending on if there is a dishwasher. The refrigerator should be located in the coolest part of the kitchen, away from the range and oven.

Have high energy efficient appliances installed. The federal appliance labelling program makes it possible to determine which models or refrigerators, ranges, ovens, dishwashers, and water heaters use the least amount of energy.

Consider installation of a heat pump if electric heat is preferred. The initial cost is somewhat higher than conventional means of heating and cooling, but the heat pump can offer an average of 20 per

cent savings on utility bills. Heat pumps are most economical when used year round for both heating and cooling and in areas where the temperature in the winter is usually above 25 degrees.

Ask the contractor about installing a clock thermostat. This device can result in substantial energy savings but is usually not recommended if a heat pump is installed.

Fluorescent lighting can be four times as efficient as standard incandescent bulbs, so ask the contractor to in-

stall them wherever appropriate. Have water faucets and shower heads fitted with water flow restrictors.

There are several other steps which can be taken by the contractor which will contribute to the energy efficiency of your home. Air infiltration, which means heat leaks out during the winter and in during the summer, can be minimized by proper sealing, weatherstripping, caulking and wall sheathing. These and other measures should be discussed in detail with the builder.

## Improve soil with compost

The cheapest and best way to make rich productive soil is with your own compost, according to horticultural experts.

Compost, the experts point out, is a form of humus, and humus should be worked into all flower and vegetable beds every fall. Not only does this decayed organic matter add food to the soil, it helps the soil retain water and air and helps to break up heavy clay soils.

To make compost a container is required which can be either one available commercially or a do-it-yourself project. Size will depend on the amount of vegetable refuse you have, but generally a container four feet by four feet and four feet deep is sufficient. It can be made from cinder blocks or scrap wood.

Put in any vegetable refuse you have such as tree leaves, tea leaves, hedge clippings, grass cuttings, potato peel, etc. Tramp it down until you have a compacted layer six inches deep. Soak it thoroughly with the garden hose and cover with a one inch layer of garden soil which has been mixed with two cups of CIL Grow All. Sprinkle four cups of Dolomitic Limestone over the soil.

Continue building with six inch layers of vegetable refuse as it becomes available, covering each layer with soil and limestone.

Keep the compost pile covered with a sheet of heavy, black plastic.

Each month, fork the contents top-to-bottom, and water well. Within four to five months your compost pile will turn into rich, brown, crumbly earth.

Spread a two inch layer on flower and vegetable beds in the fall, and mix it into the soil to a depth of six inches. Any compost you have left over from the fall treatment should be worked into the beds in the spring.

Bert

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### A MUST TO SEE

This roomy brick two-storey features 4 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, separate dining room, eat-in kitchen, quality broadloom throughout, garage, paved drive, and a fully fenced yard backing onto greenbelt. Just reduced to \$57,900.



### TRY AN OFFER, MUST BE SOLD

Set on approximately 2 acres of attractively landscaped grounds, this quality split level home features 3 large bedrooms, 3 baths, ground floor family room with fireplace and walkout to large patio, custom eat-in kitchen, separate dining room, rec room, games room, ground floor laundry, double car garage, and separate storage building. Must be seen to be appreciated. Asking \$107,500.

### OPEN SPACES

See this 20 acre property with fenced paddocks, a large fully equipped barn with excellent box stalls, a pond and a 4 bedroom brick and aluminum sidesplit located on a paved road close to main hwy. south of Acton. Call today for all the features included with this property. Asking \$129,900.



### COUNTRY BARGAIN

Pleasant country living can be yours with this spacious brick rancher set on a large lot minutes from Acton. This home features 3 bedrooms, 4 pc. bath, separate dining room, living room with stone fireplace, eat-in kitchen, rec room with bar and fireplace, and double car garage. Priced at only \$63,500.



### PICTURESQUE VIEW

of Fairy Lake set on a beautiful landscaped lot with two patios and a built-in gas BBQ. This attractive 4 bedroom brick side split also features two 4 pc. bathrooms, eat-in kitchen with stove and fridge included, rec room with bar and more. Asking \$59,900.

### RETIREMENT HOME

Centrally located to all amenities, this brick bungalow features a large kitchen, 2 bedrooms, 2 porches, bathroom, living room, and full basement and it's set on a large lot, ideal for a garden. Reduced to \$42,500.



### IMMACULATE

Set on an attractively landscaped lot in Fairy Lake area, this spacious tri-level is in immaculate condition and features a ground level family room, 1 1/2 baths, 3 bedrooms, extra large modern kitchen, formal living room, and broadloom throughout. It's a must to see at only \$55,900.



### FIRST TIME BUYERS

For only \$40,400, and a low downpayment, you could own this attractive townhouse featuring 3 bedrooms, living and dining room with walkout, 1 1/2 baths, and large fenced rear yard

### COUNTRY HOME SITE

Building site located on a paved road south of Acton close to Hwy. 25. 300' frontage, half bush, overflowing stream. Asking \$45,000.