

Say You Saw It In **The Independent** **Real Estate Digest**

Weekend Edition & Free Press

Efficient use of energy is a benefit to your wallet and health

The harsh winter climate in most of Canada makes energy efficiency at home a must. Care and maintenance of energy sources can shave many, many dollars off your heating bills, and provide higher levels of comfort and health for you and your family.

Many homes built over the past few years have used improved construction methods and materials, plus newer technology, to ensure a high degree of energy efficiency is already built into the home.

Older homes however, unless they've been upgraded with energy conservation in mind, need special care, and possibly some renovations to reach high standards or energy efficiency.

There are five elements that

can be coordinated to produce a high level of energy efficiency. They are controlled ventilation, good insulation, air-tight construction, some solar heating and an efficient heating system.

The place to start on your energy efficient checklist is the furnace. In fact, many experts say your heating system should be checked by a qualified inspector once a year. Filters, duct work and internal burning systems all need to be in proper order to have efficient heating. You also need to insure that chimneys and vents are clear of obstructions.

If you're thinking of a major upgrade of your heating system, remember that gas can save you 33 per cent in annual costs over oil and 50 per cent over electricity.

A heating system that is not in

good order can not only cost you money in extra fuel charges but can also be a serious safety hazard. A blocked chimney or loose vent can release deadly carbon monoxide into your home. Detectors are easily available, and recommended, but you can ease your concerns with proper and regular maintenance of the heating system.

The next thing to check for, in older homes particularly, are cracks, drafts and lack of weather stripping around doors, windows and vents. These things can result in significant heat loss, excessive moisture and discomfort. Any space that can let in air or water should be sealed by caulking or putty. The more air-tight your home is, the more energy efficient it will be.

Insulation in walls, ceilings, basements and other areas can have a major impact on the energy efficiency of your home. If it is too little, or not of high enough quality, the cold weather will seep through the walls, foundation or roof. A little upgrading of your insulation can be a do-it-yourself task, but if you need a major job done, you're better to hire a professional contractor.

If windows on the south side of your home are properly double-glazed and free of obstructions from trees, awnings or blinds, they can contribute solar heating to your home.

People, their lifestyles, use of appliances and utilities also contribute heat to a home. Or in some cases, such as leaving windows open in the winter but

setting the thermostat high, cause heat loss and higher costs. Being aware of the impact of your lifestyle choices can be a major part of the solution.

The goal of an energy efficient home is to minimize heat loss and maximize the no cost sources of heat. Rising energy costs and increased environmental awareness have made people more concerned about energy conservation. By checking the energy efficiency factors in your house and using proper maintenance, you can lower your maintenance costs and increase your comfort and safety.

This article is provided by local realtors and the Ontario Real Estate Association.



Tidings Of Comfort & Joy

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Thanks to all my friends for helping to make my year:

Marilyn Worrall*
Sales Rep.



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Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. *John 1:29*

May you be blessed with peace and understanding throughout this holy season.



CAROL WALRAVEN
*Sales Rep.
877-5211

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

May the warmth of the season be shared by you and yours.



To all my past and present clients. Thanks for the privilege of serving you. Merry Christmas everyone!



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