



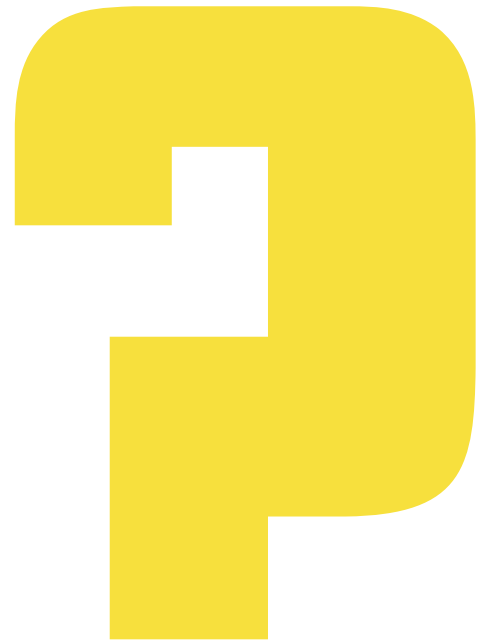
Is Your Home Energy Efficient?



Have you ever thrown money out the window?

It's a funny question with serious consequences. If your house is not energy efficient, it's almost like you are throwing money out the window in fuel costs. There's nothing funny about that.

Energy efficiency is not a seasonal problem, it's a year-round concern and every homeowner can use this checklist to make sure they are not throwing money out the window.



**Is Your Home
Energy Efficient?**

1.

For starters: what's your bill?

If you are spending more than \$1,500 per year on energy costs, you probably have opportunities to make cost-effective improvements. From top to bottom, there are spots in your house you can make more energy efficient. Some, like ice dams on the roof, are obvious to the eye. Others, like the use of window-mounted air conditioners, are sometimes overlooked as energy wasters.

2.

Why is the attic so hot while the basement is so cold?

Significant pressure differences due to air leakage or inconsistent insulation lead to temperature differences and opportunities to improve the building envelope.

3.

Aren't those icicles pretty?

Maybe, but, they are an indication that you are losing heat through your roof. The melting snow runs down the roof and refreezes on the eaves and gutter - which are colder - forming ice dams and icicles that can cause leaks in the roof and considerable repair costs.



4.

Oil? Gas? Wood? Does it really matter what I am heating the house with?

Yes. Yes. And, yes. Depending on what type of fuel you use and how you use it, you should consider installing a high-efficiency heat pump or switching to a cleaner source of fuel.



5.

What's the best kind of air conditioner to mount in my bedroom window?

There is none. Wall-mounted air conditioners are horribly inefficient. A better alternative is to use an air source heat pump (ductless mini split), which is considerably more efficient and will reduce your carbon footprint.

6.

What's in the envelope?

Your house. The foundation, floor systems, interior and exterior walls and the roof system form the envelope of your house. Those barriers determine how weather tight your house is and, in turn, how comfortable it is.

Do you have noticeable drafts or areas of the home which you close off during winter? That means your envelope is not sealed properly and your house won't be able to deliver on its full energy efficiency potential.

7.

Are you in hot water?

There's nothing better than a hot shower, but the way you are delivering that hot water could be improved.

A tank-less on demand or solar array may be a significant improvement. Consider installing faucet and shower aerators to reduce wasted water consumption.



8.

Your windows may be clean, but are they costing you money?

Window and door technology continues to improve dramatically. Windows that are low quality or poorly installed can undermine the effectiveness of your home's insulation.

9.

Are you an energy star?

The Energy Star® label helps ensure the products you are buying are as energy efficient as they can be. Energy Star is "a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency voluntary program that helps businesses and individuals save money and protect our climate through superior energy efficiency."



When it comes to lighting, LED technology continues to evolve and the Energy Star label will probably help you reduce your baseload electrical usage.

10.

Finally, have you considered solar energy?

Producing electricity on site can significantly lower your bills.

Green & Wired's Home Performance Assessments will help you identify savings opportunities, take advantage of tax credits and utilize incentive programs to reduce your upfront costs.

For more information, contact us at:
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