

Studies Show Sustainable Homes Sell for More

Are energy-efficient renovations worth the investment? Learn here how sustainable homes sell for more

Whether buying a new home or retrofitting an existing home or condo, more and more people are opting for energy-efficient improvements over cosmetic changes. Energy-efficient homes not only save money while you own them, but the improvements you make actually add value to your home.

Each province has a different way of defining energy efficiency, and varying incentives to encourage sustainable buildings. This makes it difficult to pinpoint which energy-efficient improvements are the most sought after. New homes today use half as much energy as those which were built in 1985, according to David Foster, spokesman for the [Canadian Home Builders' Association](#). If your home is older, retrofitting can help you stay competitive on the housing market and save money while you are living there. Mike Reynolds, co-founder of [EcoHome](#): "... show me the bills. What did you pay to heat it last winter? And then I'll know what I'm going to pay to heat it."

So just how much value do energy-efficient improvements add to your home? This question depends on the housing market you are dealing with. In very competitive markets like Vancouver and Toronto, most homeowners are just trying to get into the market. When prices are very high, considerations like energy-efficiency tend to take a back seat. "Consumers in Vancouver are very green-conscious, but at the end of the day, it's what they can afford," says [Dan Morrison](#), president of the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver.

While there are no studies to show the exact amount that energy-efficient features add to homes in Canada, we can look south of the border to see how American markets are affected. Here are some salient studies that show just how important energy efficiency has become:

- Up to 90% of people surveyed by the National Association of Homebuilders said that they considered energy efficiency a [very important](#) aspect when buying a home.
- A California study showed that energy efficient houses sold for an average of [US\\$34,800 more](#) than equivalent homes in the state.
- An [IMT study](#) of homes in Washington DC found that homes with energy-efficient features sold for 3.6% more than homes without these features.
- A [report](#) found that Seattle homes with green features not only sold for 8.5% more per square foot, but also spend 22% less time on the market.
- A cost vs. value report by [Remodelling Magazine](#) looked at the thirty most common remodelling projects in 100 different markets and found that the only one that had more than a 100% return on investment was an attic insulation project. Increasing the efficacy of your attic insulation was found to have a 166% increase in value after 12 months.

Investing in the right energy-efficient improvements will mean you enjoy savings on your hydro bills while you own your home or condo and also capitalize in increased property prices should you choose to sell. You can find which investments will save you the most by using our [home energy savings calculator](#). Find which investments in energy efficiency will earn you tax rebates and incentives by following the link here.

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