



What Exactly is an Energy Audit or Assessment?

The value of an Energy Assessment on your largest investment

(Toronto, ON, February 24, 2009) – Buying a home is, for many, the largest investment that they will make in their lifetime. Yet, unlike buying a car (mpg ratings) or buying an appliance (Energystar ratings), there is really nothing which would indicate to the homebuyer how efficient their new home and investment will be. The new provisions in the Ontario Green Energy Act aim to change all that and provide full disclosure. The energy ratings, generated through an energy assessment will empower homebuyers, help homeowners save money on energy, improve the environment and create new Green Energy jobs.

An Energy Assessment (EA) is a thorough analysis of the behind-the-walls workings of a home and a reliable indicator for homeowners of how efficient their newly purchased home will be. They also help home owners anticipate utility expenses, and to prioritize any future energy and money saving renovations.

An EA based on the Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) *EcoENERGY for Homes* will take between 1.5 and 2.5 hours. Each Certified Energy Advisor is trained and certified to meet the national standards for assessing homes, regulated by the federal government, through NRCAN. The inspection includes:

- measurements of the house both inside and out;
- a detailed inspection from attic to basement collecting such information as: type, age and condition of heating and cooling equipment; number of rooms; number of windows; facing of the house; etc.
- a blower door test which simulates wind pressure against all sides of the house in order to identify total air leakage as well as the individual areas that are the leakiest;
- a computer model of the home with a detailed report that shows where your energy dollars are going and recommends the most cost-effective ways to upgrade
- an energy efficiency rating label that shows you how energy efficient your home is, compared with other similar homes

Mandatory energy assessments were recommended in Ontario's Green Energy Act, which was introduced yesterday by Minister George Smitherman. This would provide home buyers with more tools to help them prioritize renovations that could significantly lower their utility costs, which is one of the largest home expenses after mortgage. \$150 of the costs of an energy assessment (\$300–350) are covered by the province of Ontario.

"There is a parallel between the mandatory auto emissions test and mandatory home energy assessments," said Vladan Veljovic, President and CEO of GreenSaver. "But, unlike the emissions test, the homeowner does not have to make any upgrades in order to sell. A house is the largest investment in a person's lifetime and this type of disclosure will protect homeowners from expensive surprises."

After investing over 25 years encouraging homeowners to perform energy efficient upgrades, GreenSaver stands firmly behind mandatory labelling. New homes are subject to energy efficiency requirements in the Building Code, and Ontario's existing housing stock must be upgraded for us to contribute to a healthier environment in the future. Mandatory labelling will give home buyers the information they need to make informed, economical and environmentally responsible choices.

For further information, or to arrange interviews, please contact:

Tracy Chong, Marketing and Communications, GreenSaver, 416.797.7210

GreenSaver is an independent non-profit corporation dedicated to environmental energy efficiency. They have pioneered Ontario residential energy conservation for 25 years with economically viable and environmentally friendly measures to help individuals and organizations with their energy need (www.greensaver.org).