

# Save Money by Going Green.

You don't need to build a home from the ground up to reap the benefits of an environmentally friendly home. Check out these ways to be green and save some green.

## ✓ Start in the front yard.

It's the envy of every neighbourhood—the perfectly manicured front lawn. However, it requires constant attention, including watering, mowing with a gas-powered engine and fertilizing with chemicals. Consider replacing some grass with ground cover, decorative grass or eco-friendly grass that requires no fertilizing and grows well in sun and shade.

## ✓ Now go in the backyard.

Turn loose nature's secret weapon: animals. Install birdhouses to shelter your fine feathered friends who dine on pesky beetles and grubs. Put out egg cartons of ladybugs to eat the aphids.

## ✓ Colour your world with all "green" paints.

New paints that are low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are now available in a wide range of designer colours. These paints are better for your lungs and the planet. Recycled paints can be purchased for \$15 per gallon—they're a great deal compared to \$35 to \$50 per gallon paints.

## ✓ Light up your world.

Replacing traditional light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs will save 5 percent on your annual electric bill. New premium fluorescents are now available everywhere; they cast a pure white or buttery golden light in your home and cost \$5 to \$16.

## ✓ Buy local, organic food.

Organic food is fresher because it is likely grown within a couple hours of your home. When you go organic, you'll reduce the amount of diesel fuel needed to ship food. You'll also reduce the fossil fuel consumed to create commercial fertilizers.

## ✓ Recycling dos and don'ts.

Everyone knows the basic items—paper products, glass, green clippings, plastic and aluminum. Unfortunately, not all plastics are recyclable yet. Plastic items with a 1 or 2 marked on their bottom qualify to be recycled. In addition, don't place light bulbs, broken glass or bits of food in your recycle bin.



## ✓ Have a barbeque.

Outdoor grills use less energy than electric kitchen stoves. They keep heat out as well. Always use grills that burn propane or natural gas. These grills emit 2.5 kilograms of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere per hour. A charcoal grill belches 5 kilograms of the air-polluting compound for the same period of time. Consider eating on recycled paper plates made from bamboo and adding organic food to the menu.

## ✓ Use solar power.

Install solar panels on your roof that will work with your conventional water heater. These panels cost between \$800 and \$14,000, and can reduce the need for conventional water heating by around two-thirds. These efficient panels cut around 12 percent off the average household's annual utility bill. Use solar powered outdoor lighting to

efficiently light walkways and high traffic routes. They look great and cost you nothing after their initial purchase.

## ✓ Friendly high-tech.

LCD flat panel computer monitors use as little as one-third of the electricity of conventional tube-based models. When you shop for your next-generation TV, choose

an LCD or rear-projection model. They use less than half the energy of plasma televisions and have comparable picture quality.

Energy-efficient appliances can complete your new high-tech suite. ENERGY STAR® appliances consume far less electricity, and new front loading washers use much less water and detergent.

Old furniture, such as a couch or easy chair, can be easily reupholstered with neutral eco-friendly fabrics. Don't forget the throw pillows as well!





# Going Green Pays Off.

Helping the environment and saving money are the perfect homeowner's combination. Any upgrade to your home that reduces your energy consumption will lower gas and electric bills, cut energy production and reduce your carbon footprint.

Transforming your residence into a green home can include several upgrades that will pay for themselves within a few years and continue to save you money in the future. What's more, by improving the energy efficiency of your home, you can now qualify for federal grants through the ecoENERGY Retrofit program. Below is a list of some energy saving retrofits and their corresponding grant amount.

- Install a minimum of five electronic thermostats for electric baseboard heaters. Electric baseboards must be the primary system: **\$30**
- Replace your central air conditioner with an ENERGY STAR® qualified unit: **\$200**
- Replace your heating equipment with:
  - an ENERGY STAR qualified gas furnace that has a 90 percent annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE) or better: **\$300**
  - a CAN/CSA-C448 compliant ground- or water-source heat pump: **\$3,500**
- Exterior wall insulation: A minimum of 20 percent of total wall surface must be insulated to qualify. Insulating 100 percent of wall surface: **\$900-\$1500**
- Replace windows/skylights/doors with models that are ENERGY STAR qualified for your climate zone: **\$30** (per unit replaced)
- Install a heat recovery ventilator that is certified by the Home Ventilating Institute: **\$300**
- Replace your domestic hot water heater with an instantaneous gas water heater that has an energy factor (EF) of 0.80 or better: **\$200**
- Replace your toilet with a low-flush or dual-flush toilet rated at 6 litres per flush or less that meets required specifications and with a flush performance of 350 grams or more: **\$50**
- Install a solar domestic hot water system that meets CAN/CSA Standards: **\$500**

Source: [www.energywisesolutions.ca](http://www.energywisesolutions.ca)



## More Ways to Save Energy.

In addition to home upgrades, there are several practical ways to go green, save energy and lower your utility bills.

Reduce the workload of your heater and air conditioner. During winter, set the thermostat to 20 degrees or lower and wear more clothing. During summer, set the thermostat to 25.5 degrees or higher and use ceiling or table fans to circulate air.

Put your computer on sleep mode or stand-by when you're not using it and turn it off at night. If you don't use your computer often, turn it off when it's not in use.

Some electronics use energy even when they are off. Plug your TV and DVD player into a power strip and turn the power strip off when you're not watching television. Keep in mind that cutting the power to a VCR will force you to constantly reprogram it.