

Money Saving Ideas

High-Performance Windows Curb Rising Energy Costs

(NAPSA)—While home energy costs are on the rise, homeowners can stop them in their tracks with high-performance windows.

The average cost of energy used to heat and cool homes rose more than 33 percent in the last decade, according to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Fortunately, homeowners can find relief today by upgrading their windows. ENERGY STAR-rated windows are a good starting point. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy, ENERGY STAR-qualified windows, doors and skylights reduce energy bills—and carbon footprints—by about 7 to 15 percent compared to nonqualified products.

Estimated savings vary depending on regional heating and cooling costs, but ENERGY STAR models currently save U.S. homeowners an average of \$320 annually when replacing single-pane windows or \$160 when replacing double-pane windows.

“The energy savings your windows provide today may be a fraction of what they will be in 10 years, especially if energy costs rise another 33 percent this decade,” notes Ric Jackson, energy efficiency expert for Quanex Building Products. “When you multiply those savings over 10 years, you will discover a surprising return on investment for installing new windows.”



High-performance windows offer significant home energy savings.

Maximize Your Savings

When considering new windows, Jackson reminds homeowners that high-performance windows offer even greater energy savings potential—up to 40 percent more than minimum ENERGY STAR windows. High-performance models use a combination of more energy-efficient components to provide better insulation against temperature extremes.

To maximize savings, he recommends looking for high-performance models labeled Envirosealed Windows and Doors with Duralite. These windows feature nonmetal spacers that provide the best insulation and greatest impact on energy bills.

“Nonconductive spacer systems minimize the transfer of cold and heat energy from a home’s exterior to its interior,” says Jackson. “Windows with nonmetal spacers provide a warmer edge-of-glass tem-

perature for increased interior comfort compared to models using conductive metal spacers.”

In addition to nonmetal spacers, look for the following window features to maximize energy savings:

- Low-emissivity (low-e) glass to block heat-generating UV light and reduce cooling needs;
- Energy-efficient frame materials with insulated cores for a superior thermal barrier;
- Argon or krypton gas filling to reduce cold and heat transfer.

High-performance windows are available in both double-pane and triple-pane models. In some cases, a double may provide better efficiency than a triple. However, as a general rule of thumb, triple-pane windows offer the greatest performance. In either case, look for windows with low U-values (or high R-values), which indicate better energy efficiency. In addition, homeowners should watch for characteristics such as a window’s solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) and visible light transmittance (VT).

Additional Savings

This year, the savings don’t stop with the installation of new energy-efficient windows. Homeowners can save up to \$200 on their 2011 taxes by installing qualified windows. Check with your window provider or the IRS to learn more about this tax incentive.

For more information, visit www.EnvirosealedWindows.com.