



Lucille LeBlanc

Wellington, Nova Scotia

Estimated annual savings:
\$1,300

Success story

EnerGuide evaluation points Nova Scotia homeowner to big savings on energy

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The last time Lucille (Lou) LeBlanc had the oil tank filled at her home in Wellington, Nova Scotia, the delivery person told her, “Lou, you’re gonna put me out of business.”

That may be a bit of an exaggeration, but there is no question that Lou is not using nearly as much fuel as she used to. In fact, after doing what she says are “really, pretty simple things,” Lou has cut her heating fuel consumption almost in half.

“The first year I lived in this house, in 2005, I used over 2,500 litres (L) of oil, and it cost nearly \$2,100,” says Lou. “The next year, I was down to 1,345 L of oil, and the bill came to just over \$1,100 – I saved nearly \$1,000!”

What changed? “Well, I went to the home show here. There was a booth about energy efficiency, and they talked about how I could save money,” says Lou. “That got me started.”

After the home show, Lou arranged for an EnerGuide home evaluation of her 1940s-era house by an energy advisor. “The advisor went through the house from top to bottom, pointing out things I could do to cut down on energy use, and then gave me a detailed report,” says Lou.

Since then, Lou has been on a mission.

“I’m retired, and I don’t have a budget for renovations, but I’ve been able to make a lot of the improvements myself,” says Lou, who was also able to take advantage of a number

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of federal and provincial government incentives available at the time of her renovations.

Lou could not do everything on her list before the deadline on the incentive programs, but still managed to raise the EnerGuide rating of her home by 9 points to 69 – making her 60-year old house as efficient as a typical new home in her region at the time. And she has made a lot more improvements since that final evaluation.

While Lou did hire contractors to install new window inserts and a new, more efficient entry door, without a lot of money to spend, Lou has discovered a talent for doing it yourself. Among many other projects, Lou removed the casing around all her windows and doors and filled the space with spray foam insulation. She also re-insulated the basement walls, including the headers, and wrapped insulation around exposed heating ducts.

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Along with saving hundreds of dollars a year on heating costs, Lou is also enjoying lower electricity bills. She invested in a new, energy-efficient fridge and stove and replaced all her light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. “I used to pay over \$200 every two months for electricity,” says Lou. “Now, my electric bill never goes over \$150 for two months, and it’s often not much over \$100.”

Lou’s commitment to making her home more energy-efficient is doing more than help her save money on her energy bills. “The first winter after I moved into this house, I thought I was going to freeze to death,” she says. “The furnace was going full blast, and I was still freezing. Now,” she laughs, “I don’t have to wear socks to bed.”

Her home is a lot more comfortable, and her energy bills a lot lower. And Lou has continued to make improvements using her new skills and confidence.

As for the value of an EnerGuide home evaluation, Lou says she would recommend it to anyone who wants to reduce their energy costs. “It’s amazing how much you can accomplish just by doing some really simple things,” Lou says. “But without the information I got from the energy advisor, I would hardly have known where to start.”

Lou is among the more than 1 million Canadian homeowners who have benefitted from the unbiased, expert advice offered by energy advisors. Service organizations that offer EnerGuide home evaluations are licensed by Natural Resources Canada, and the program is recognized across Canada. EnerGuide home evaluations are also used as the basis for many of the energy efficiency promotions and incentive programs offered in different parts of Canada.



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