



Wayne Carey

Kelowna,
British Columbia

Estimated annual savings:
\$1,200

Success story

Reducing emissions is good – saving money at the same time is even better.

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Wayne Carey says he is happy that improving the energy efficiency of his home is helping to reduce harmful emissions. As the Kelowna, British Columbia, homeowner explains, “I think we all understand that one person is not going to save the world, but one person can still play a part.”

At the same time, Wayne freely admits that the environment was not the primary reason he decided to make his home more energy-efficient. “I’m like anybody else,” says Wayne. “It’s all about the money.”

That is why, when the time came to replace the aging furnace in the home that he bought new in 1991, Wayne knew he wanted something with a high efficiency rating – but he also wondered if there was anything else he could do to save on his energy bills.

“I was sure there were probably other things I could do,” Wayne says, “But that’s a long way from my area of expertise.”

That is when he decided to bring in some outside help in the form of an energy advisor who carried out an EnerGuide home evaluation.

The results of the evaluation came as something of a surprise. “I knew a high-efficiency furnace was a good idea,” says Wayne. “What I didn’t realize was how much heat – and money – was disappearing through the floor of our house.”

Along with upgrading the furnace, the energy advisor strongly recommended Wayne insulate the walls of the metre-high crawl space under the house.

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“It was a pretty easy fix,” says Wayne. “I did some research, figured out what I needed to do, bought the materials, and installed the insulation and vapour barrier myself. The installation itself only took a couple of hours.”

Has it made a difference? “The first winter after insulating the crawl space and getting the new, 95 percent-efficient furnace, our gas bill was down nearly 40 percent,” says Wayne. “We used to pay well over \$300 a month to heat the house. Now, it’s rare for our monthly bill to be more than \$200 – that’s an extra \$100 or more in our pockets every month.”

The average EnerGuide rating for a house like Wayne’s in British Columbia is 62. Before the improvements were made, Wayne’s house had a below-average rating of 56. With the new, high-efficiency furnace and insulation in place, the EnerGuide rating of Wayne’s house jumped to 72 – well above average. In the process, along with cutting his energy bills, Wayne has reduced greenhouse gas emissions from his home by more than 2.5 tonnes a year.

Wayne is one of more than a million Canadian homeowners who have had their home’s energy efficiency evaluated using EnerGuide home evaluations, which are recognized across Canada. They are the basis for many of the energy efficiency programs and incentives offered in different parts of the country.

EnerGuide energy advisors are employed by service organizations licensed by Natural Resources Canada, so homeowners can depend on them for expert and unbiased advice on the best ways to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Based on his own experience, Wayne recommends an EnerGuide evaluation to anyone looking to reduce their energy costs – even without the incentive programs that helped to cover the costs of the furnace and insulation. “If we hadn’t had the EnerGuide evaluation, I’d never have thought of insulating the crawl space,” says Wayne. “And if we hadn’t done that, we’d never get anything like the full benefit of the new furnace. A lot of our investment in that would have been wasted.”

As much as he likes saving money on his energy bills, Wayne says he is also enjoying his house more. “I was expecting and looking forward to spending less to heat the house,” he says. “What I didn’t expect was how much more comfortable the house would be. Before the improvements, the living room at the back of the house was always noticeably colder than the rest of the house. Now you can go from room to room, and there’s no variation in temperature at all.”

Having seen what something as simple as a bit of insulation can do, Wayne says, “We’re on track. We’ve replaced all our incandescent light bulbs with more efficient CFLs and LEDs, and we’re a lot more conscious of how much water we use, so we’re saving money there, too.”

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