

Do-It-Yourself Home Energy Walk-Through

Ever wonder why your monthly energy bill is higher than you think it should be? In many cases it may be because the energy you purchase is not being used as efficiently as it could be. You can find this out by doing a walk-through energy audit of your home. In most cases, you will find at least several things you can do to reduce your energy bill and make your home more energy efficient. Some of the ‘Possible Actions’ you can do yourself. Others may need a contractor.

Thermal Envelope - The thermal envelop refers to how well your home prevents heat from moving from inside to outside in the winter and outside to inside in the summer.			
On a windy day can you feel air movement around the edge of windows or doors? Try holding a candle near the edges and see if the flame flickers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Problems here can usually be solved with caulking and/or weather stripping. The point is to stop the air leakage.
Can you feel a draft around light switches and receptacles on outside walls?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Foam covers are inexpensive and can be installed behind the switch and receptacle covers. Be sure to turn the power off to the switch or receptacle before removing the plate.
Do you have at least 12” of attic insulation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In Ohio your home should have at an R-38 insulation in the attic. If you have fiberglass batts, add more layers. Each 6” batt is equivalent to R-19. If you have cellulose, measure the average depth and add more until you get 12”. Each 1” is equal to R-3.7.
If your floor is over an unheated basement or crawl space, is there at least a 6” fiberglass batt under the floor?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In Ohio your home should have at least R-19 insulation under the floor. Add 1-6” fiberglass batt.
Do the windows have more than one pane of glass?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Add a storm window to windows with only one pane of glass. Use rope caulk around the storm window so it will be easy to remove it in the spring for fresh air.
If you have recessed ceiling lights, are they IC rated?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	IC rated recessed fixtures can be covered with insulation to reduce air leakage. <u>Do not cover recessed lights with insulation unless the fixture is IC rated! Doing so may cause a fire!</u>

Is your attic vented?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If not, temperatures in the attic can exceed 120 degrees in the summer time. Install proper venting to reduce your cooling costs.	
Heating and Cooling System - The single biggest user of energy in your home is the heating and cooling system. It can also be the single biggest area for increasing energy efficiency!				
If you have duct work and it is in an unheated area, is it sealed and insulated?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If you have metal ductwork, use mastic to seal all the joints, and wrap the ductwork with fiberglass insulation (at least 2", R-6).	
If you have a forced air system (furnace or heat pump), is the filter clean?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	A dirty filter restricts airflow and makes your system work harder and longer to keep your home warm in the winter or cool in the summer. If the filter is washable, clean it once a month. If not, replace it every month.	
If you have a central air conditioner or heat pump, is the outside unit free of debris?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Remove anything that blocks the airflow around the unit. Without proper ventilation, your central air unit will not efficiently cool your home and your heat pump will not efficiently heat your home.	
Do you have your heating and cooling system checked annually?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If not, do so, especially if you use a natural gas, propane or oil furnace. An annual inspection will find any leaks or cracks that could lead to carbon monoxide build up. The HVAC technician will also check for proper coolant levels in central air conditioners and heat pumps. Low coolant levels will not allow the system to effectively heat or cool your home.	
During the winter, do you check your heat pump's outside unit for frost?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	A properly working heat pump will detect and melt frost as it forms. If the frost continues to build up, the system will shut down and the backup heat will come on, costing you more to keep warm.	
Appliances - This includes everything from lights to water heaters.				
Is your water heater set to a temperature above 120 degrees?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If so, turn it down. The only appliance that needs a water temperature higher than 120 degrees is a dishwasher, and most new models have a built-in pre-heater.	

Do you have compact fluorescent light bulbs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	A compact fluorescent light bulb uses ¼ the electricity as an incandescent bulb for the same amount light. Today there is a compact fluorescent bulb for nearly every possible use.	
Are the seals on your refrigerator and freezer tight?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Put a dollar bill between the frame and door. If you can easily pull the dollar bill out when the door is shut, you're spending a lot more to operate your refrigerator than you need to.	
When not in use do you turn your computer's monitor off?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Even if you leave your computer running 24 hours per day, turning the monitor off can save 25¢ a day. That's \$7.50 per month!	