



Pauline and Wayne Pelkey

Woodstock,
New Brunswick

Estimated annual savings:
Reduction in energy costs
by as much as
67 percent

Tips from an EnerGuide home evaluation help make a 60-year-old house better than new.

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When Pauline and Wayne Pelkey bought the house a couple doors down from their home in Woodstock, New Brunswick, they were not quite sure what they were going to do with it. “We were thinking we might rent it out or that we might even move into it ourselves,” says Pauline, “Either way, we knew the house needed a lot of work to bring it up-to-date.”

While the Pelkeys were drawing up their renovation plans, a friend mentioned they should look into having an EnerGuide home evaluation. “Since we were going to basically gut the house and start over anyway, it seemed like a good idea to see how we could make it more energy-efficient at the same time,” says Pauline. “And if we qualified for some of the incentive programs that were available at the time, so much the better.”

When the energy advisor submitted the results of the energy evaluation of the house, the Pelkeys were convinced that energy efficiency had to be one of their renovation priorities. “The evaluation gave the house an EnerGuide rating of 37,” says Pauline. “That’s really not very good, even for a 60-year old house.”

The evaluation identified issues, from poor insulation to air leaks, that were making an already inefficient heating system even less efficient. “If you added up all the air leaks the advisor found, it was like having a hole nearly a metre square in the wall,” says Pauline.

The Pelkeys went to work on the house, stripping it down to its bones, inside and out. “We did just about everything you can imagine,” says Pauline. “Along with plumbing

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and electrical, we replaced all the windows and all the doors with new, energy-efficient models; insulated the walls, attic and basement; pulled off the old exterior siding, added another layer of insulation and then new siding; put in an air source heat pump system for heating and cooling – you name it.”

Pauline says the EnerGuide home evaluation was a real help. “We were going to do most of those things anyway,” says Pauline. “But thanks to the information we got through the evaluation, we were able to make the best choices and do some additional things to make the house more energy-efficient – things we might never have thought of if we hadn’t had the evaluation. And our advisor was really helpful any time we had questions.”

When the energy advisor did the follow-up evaluation on the house, the results were close to spectacular. “The advisor told us the average EnerGuide rating for a house of this age in New Brunswick is 52,” says Pauline. “Ours got an 82. That’s about as good as you can get.” Pauline is not exaggerating when she says that – a rating of 82 is as good as an energy-efficient new home.

Since they do not know what the energy bills were like for the previous owner of the house, the Pelkeys are not sure how much they are saving, but there’s no question that energy costs are down by a substantial amount. In the initial home evaluation, the energy advisor had estimated that the recommended improvements could reduce energy costs by up to 67 percent. And the Pelkeys made them all.

Pauline says she would recommend the evaluation to anyone looking to save money on energy. “The home evaluation is a great investment,” she says. “It’s as simple as that.”

Organizations that offer EnerGuide home evaluations are licensed by Natural Resources Canada, and the home rating system is recognized across Canada. The expert, unbiased evaluations are also used as the basis for many of the energy efficiency promotions and incentive programs offered in different parts of Canada.

As for the Pelkeys house, Pauline and her husband did not have to worry about deciding whether to rent it out or move in themselves. “While we were trying to make up our minds, our daughter and her family said they wanted to rent it from us. So, they’re in the house now,” she laughs, “They tell us it’s very warm and cozy.”



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