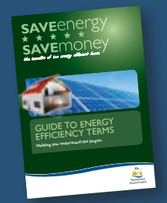
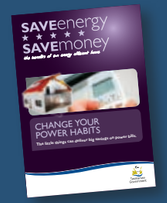
Ask the real estate agent if the home has a star rating, because, at the end of the day, your comfort matters and you will be paying the power bills into the future.

Other information available in the *SAVEenergy SAVEmoney* series:



GUIDE TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY TERMS
helping you understand the jargon.

STAR RATINGS
your guide to ongoing power savings.



CHANGE YOUR POWER HABITS
the little things can deliver big savings on power bills.

For more information from the *SAVEenergy SAVEmoney* series:

VISIT: www.climatechange.tas.gov.au/
PHONE: 1300 13 55 13 to request a brochure

Tasmanian Government

SAVEenergy ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ SAVEmoney

the benefits of an energy efficient home

LOCATION, LOCATION, ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The benefits of buying or renting an energy efficient home.

Tasmanian Government

SAVEenergy SAVEmoney

Energy efficient homes make financial sense.

When you're looking to buy or rent a property, factors like price, location, size and even architectural style are often high on many buyers' shopping lists.

A home's energy efficiency may not seem important at the time, but with electricity prices rising a home's energy efficiency – that is, using less electricity and gas to produce the same level of performance, comfort and convenience – should be a higher priority for buyers.

Owning or renting a home is usually a long-term investment, so selecting a property that is more energy efficient, resulting in lower power bills, is an investment that can pay significant dividends over time. It will also provide increased comfort levels through reduced home temperature fluctuations.

An energy efficient home can contribute to attracting a higher resale value and reduces your impact on the environment through lower greenhouse gas emissions.

So when you're searching for your next home consider the energy efficiency of the property. Homes constructed since 2003 have an energy efficiency star rating applied to them, making the comparison process quick and easy. Ask the real estate agent if the home has a star rating, because, at the end of the day, you will be paying the power bills into the future.

YOUR HOME SELECTION CHECKLIST:

This guide is to help you choose a home that will meet your needs, be cheaper to run and provide the best energy value for money in the short and long-term. You can also use it to help compare the energy efficiency of different properties.

There are four main factors affecting the energy efficiency of a home:

1 Size and situation;
2 Design and construction;
3 Appliances and lighting; and most importantly of all
4 How energy smart you are when you are there.

To assist your choice of home, let us consider the first 3 factors:

1 SIZE AND SITUATION

- [ ] A compact house will require less energy than a big house. Does the house make good use of space? Is there an indicative annual power or running cost for the house?
- [ ] Check that it makes good use of natural light and gets free heat from the sun in winter and on cold mornings. Consider the effects of trees, surrounding buildings and hills - these may reduce the benefits of getting heat from the sun in winter. The sun has a lower and shorter path in winter and is approximately north at midday.
- [ ] Check for any cracks, gaps and holes on the outside of the house as these can let in cool draughts.

2 DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- [ ] Does the property have a star rating? If so, what is it? The more stars the better.
- [ ] Does the house have a concrete slab or some other form of internal 'thermal mass', like a large brick fireplace or internal wall, preferably exposed to the winter sun? Remember, heavy materials are better at holding and slowly releasing heat.
- [ ] Check for gaps around doors and windows and between walls, ceilings and cornices, as well as for unused fireplaces, and unnecessary vents. Are the windows and doors weather-stripped /caulked to maintain more comfortable room temperatures? Gaps in these areas can allow warm air to escape and rob a home of its warmth and comfort.
- [ ] Good insulation is also important, with the priority being the ceiling and then the walls and the floor. While it is not always easy to check, it might be a good question to ask.
- [ ] Check the type of floor coverings. In areas receiving good winter sunlight, materials with high thermal mass are ideal for capturing and slowly releasing heat. Carpets can provide some additional insulation for floors not getting direct sunlight (e.g. south facing) and so will help stop some heat loss from these areas.
- [ ] Are windows north facing to receive the sun's natural warmth? Check whether windows are single or double-glazed. Double-glazing can effectively reduce heat loss, as can some special types of glass. Metal frames can contribute to heat loss.
- [ ] Also review the number and size of windows. Large window areas can lead to heat loss, especially if facing south. North and west facing windows can lead to overheating in summer, but this can be reduced by overhanging eaves and shade trees.
- [ ] Look at the type of window coverings installed. Thick, heavy curtains and pelmets will keep the warmth in on cold nights. Some types of blinds or shutters are also good at this.

3 APPLIANCES AND LIGHTING

Hot Water

- [ ] What type of hot water system is installed? Is it an energy efficient system? (e.g. solar, instantaneous gas or heat pump hot water system).
- [ ] Is it installed close to the bathroom and kitchen? Heat is lost from the pipes during use and afterwards.
- [ ] Are the pipes insulated?

Heating and Cooling

- [ ] What type of home heating system is installed (heat pump, wood heater, gas heating)?
- [ ] Is the heating system heating the whole house or just one room? Single room heating is more efficient than heating the whole house, unless this is a requirement for your lifestyle needs.
- [ ] Does the heating system have an energy efficiency star rating? If so, what is it? The higher the better.
- [ ] Does the heating system in the house have timers, thermostats and sensors so that it can be turned off or down when not needed?
- [ ] Are there other heaters installed in individual rooms, allowing you to just heat the rooms you need?
- [ ] Does the house have good cross ventilation? If it needs air conditioning, fans or evaporative coolers are cost effective options.
- [ ] Will warm air escape upstairs and into rooms that are not being used, or escape through gaps and holes in the walls and ceiling.

Lighting

- [ ] Check what type of lighting is present in the house. Fluorescents and LEDs are cheaper to run than halogen lamps and old style incandescent lighting.
- [ ] Assess how many lights or 'banks of lights' controlled by one switch are installed. Large 'banks' can contribute to increased energy consumption.
- [ ] Check the downlights, as older styles can allow heat to escape through holes in ceiling.

Once you have decided on your new home and you have moved in you can make small but important changes to improve your energy efficiency. Pick up a copy of the *CHANGE YOUR POWER HABITS* guide to show you how.

LOCATION, LOCATION, ENERGY EFFICIENCY
The benefits of buying or renting an energy efficient home.