



Utah Energy Update

Utah Energy Conservation Coalition/Energy Rated Homes of Utah

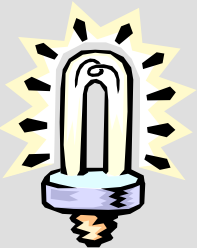
2nd Quarter 2004 / Vol 8:2

Inside this issue:

- Be Sure to Insulate
- Energy Star News
- Around the Office
- Furnaces
- Indoor Moisture
- Green Power & Moab
- Energy Mortgages

We've moved again!
Please make note of our
new address:

UECC/ERHU
112 S Mtn Way Drive
Orem, Utah 84058-5118.
phone at 801-765-0034 or
800-550-8322.



\$ Be Sure to Insulate Against Expensive Energy Bills \$

One of the least understood features of energy efficiency in a home is insulation. Even though it's usually visible in the attic, insulation isn't something most homeowners think much about. Few of them have ever checked to make sure they have enough of it.

Odds are good, though, that your home needs more insulation. If you have an older home, it probably doesn't have enough insulation to meet today's minimum recommended levels. And even if your home is new, the installed insulation may have settled, compressed when you stored things in the attic and may even have been inadequate originally.

Keeping your home's insulation at the right level can significantly cut down on your energy bills and make your home as comfortable as possible. If you think your bills have been too high or if you find your house isn't as comfortable as you would like it to be, call a home energy rater and have an energy rating conducted.

An alternative is to check out the insulation levels yourself. Generally, the key areas you need to look at are in the attic, especially between and over the floor joists that block the attic air from getting to the living space below; in exterior walls including between the living spaces and unheated garages or storage areas, and below floors over cold spaces like crawl spaces or unheated garages.

You can get more details on specific locations of a house needing insulation along with a fact sheet on insulation, from the U.S. Department of Energy at <http://www.ornl.gov/sci/roofs+walls/>. Click on Handbooks & Factsheets, then Insulation Fact Sheet.

Another good Web site is the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association (NAIMA), the trade association of companies making insulation products. It tells you how to find out the recommended insulation levels for your climate and details the various types of financial assistance programs available in each state. In a number of states, utility companies and state and local agencies have grants and loan programs to help insulate your home. Check them out at naima.org.

Having the proper amount of insulation in your home means that it will be cooler in summer and warmer in winter. The insulation will keep your conditioned air inside where you want it!

Though this may sound simple, insulation is complex. For one thing, the material itself comes in a number of different forms, including insulation blankets, batts, loose fill and rigid board. Further, the insulation itself can be glass fiber, rock wool, foam or other particles or material. Some of these are fairly easy for a do-it-yourselfer to install, others require a professional. And in all cases, you need to take special care when handling the material.

So if you're trying to make your home as energy efficient as possible, make sure that your insulation is adequate.

Sweeping Changes to the 2003 International Energy Conservation Code

The International Codes Council (ICC) recently approved significant changes to the 2003 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). These changes were designed to simplify the prescriptive path and create a robust performance path of the residential 2003 IECC (the national model code that is the basis for many state energy codes). These changes eliminate the window-to-wall ratio requirement in the prescriptive path and authorize certification in "beyond code" programs to demonstrate compliance with the code. The changes are in the 2004 Supplement to the International Codes at www.iccsafe.org.

Energy Star® News

EPA STATUS REPORT

Total emissions of the six principal pollutants identified in the Clean Air Act dropped again in 2003, signaling that America's air is the cleanest ever in three decades, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported in September.

Annual emission statistics for the six pollutants are considered major indicators of the quality of the nation's air because of their importance for human health and the existence of their long-standing national standards.

Emissions have continued to decrease even as our economy has increased more than 150 percent. Since 1970, the aggregate total emissions for the six pollutants carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, volatile organic compounds and lead have been cut from 301.5 million tons per year to 147.8 million tons per year, a decrease of 51 percent. Total 2003 emissions were down 12 million tons since 2000, a 7.8 percent reduction.

(See summary table at <http://www.epa.gov/airtrends/econ-emissions.html>.)

ENERGY STAR and other voluntary programs prevented 48 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2003, EPA reports. With ENERGY STAR, Americans prevented greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those from 18 million automobiles and saved \$8 billion on their energy bills. More than 2,000 builders have constructed over 200,000 ENERGY STAR qualified new homes, locking in financial savings for homeowners that exceed \$60 million annually. About 5,000 homes have been improved through Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, which continues to grow with the addition of U.S. Department of Energy sponsored pilot programs in a number of cities.

Copies of the 2003 annual report are available at www.epa.gov/cppd



Utah Greenergy Program News

The major Utah Sustainability Program currently available encourage a "whole-systems" approach to residential construction through design and building techniques to minimize environmental impact and reduce the energy consumption of building construction while contributing to the health of its occupants.

These Utah Sustainability Programs strive to be recognized as strong consumer driven programs that work to educate and change how the public views sustainability, the environment, energy and resource efficiency. These programs are innovative, flexible, and adaptable to all areas and regions. Please visit our website for new and updated information and links at www.utahenergy.org under Sustainability Program.

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOME ENERGY RATER TRAINING

March 28 – April 1, 2005

May 23-27, 2005

August 15-19, 2005

October 3-7, 2005

Announced on our website www.utahenergy.org and to be held at 112 S Mtn Way Drive, Orem, Utah.

Phone or email if you have questions at 801-765-0034 or cris@utahenergy.org.

Around The Office

Get to know the Utah Energy Conservation Coalition by reviewing upcoming staff biographies on our website www.utahenergy.org under Inside UECC/ERHU.

Utah Energy Conservation Coalition Board of Trustees:

Marci Milligan

Jerry Zenger

Bob Stackhouse

Staff:

David A Wilson

Executive Director

Cris Peterson

HERS Coordinator

Mark Eldredge

Energy Code Specialist

Brenda Argyle

Technical Assistant

Sponsors:

Advanced Thermal Solutions (ATS)

ATS Systems help lower energy costs, while increasing the overall value of the building to the consumer.

CertainTeed Insulation

Provides many building products and materials to help lower energy costs and increase comfort.

Thank you for your support now and in the future!

High Efficiency Furnaces

Furnaces are the most common residential heating system in the U.S. Earning the ENERGY STAR means products meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy.

- ENERGY STAR qualified furnaces have an annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE) rating of 90% or greater, making them about 15% more efficient than standard models.

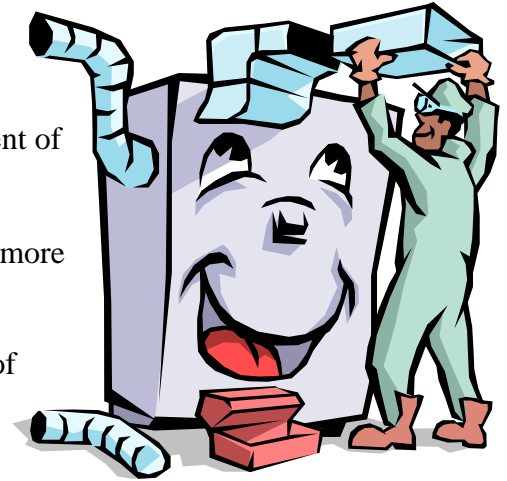
Remember, saving energy prevents pollution.

By choosing ENERGY STAR and taking steps to optimize the performance of your heating equipment, you are helping to promote cleaner air while enhancing the comfort of your home.

You may also be interested to know:

- Though these products can be more expensive to purchase up front, the cost difference will be paid back over time through lower energy bills.
- When buying new equipment, sizing and installation are as important as product quality.
- You can get better heating and cooling performance at home with ENERGY STAR home sealing (insulation and air sealing) and duct sealing.

Consider regular maintenance to maintain your heating and cooling system performance.



Indoor Moisture Problems Can Affect Energy Consumption

A homeowner can have moisture problems and not know it. Too much moisture may have reduced or ruined the effectiveness of a home's insulation. When this has happened, a homeowner may have been wasting valuable energy for years without knowing it. When the summer air inside a home is exceedingly moist, air conditioners and central cooling systems must work harder, and use more energy to create a comfortable environment.

Easy-to-see or hard-to-spot moisture problems can cause energy waste and have the potential to damage the home's structure and furnishings. Knowing where the excess moisture comes from and how to control it can save the homeowner valuable energy and money.

The weather is the major factor determining the amount of moisture in the air. The level of moisture in and around the home can be increased beyond acceptable limits from water evaporation during cooking, showers and baths, clothes washing and drying, poor lawn drainage, and even breathing. Experts estimate that a family of four converts three gallons of water into water vapor per day. It only takes four to six pints of water to raise the relative humidity in a 1,000 square foot space from 15 to 60 percent. To avoid the problems of excess moisture, limit or control the amount of water vapor in the house. This can be done by modifying lifestyle habits and by using mechanical means such as exhaust fans and dehumidifiers.

Reduce moisture vapor production within the house by:

- Decreasing bath time
- Avoid boiling water or liquids excessively when cooking
- Wash only full loads of clothes
- Vent clothes dryers to the outside
- Use a dehumidifier in confined areas
- Fix water leaks right away

When excessive moisture or water accumulates indoors, mold growth will often occur, particularly if the moisture problem remains undiscovered or un-addressed. The key to mold control is moisture control.

For more information about indoor air quality visit the EPA's website at www.epa.gov/iaq

Moab homes and businesses buy Utah Power's Blue Sky renewable energy to exceed EPA goal

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that Utah's Greater Moab is the nation's first Green Power Community.

In August 2004, the City of Moab, Castle Valley, Pack Creek Ranch, and Spanish Valley, Utah became the first community the nation to meet and exceed the EPA Green Power Partnership's minimum benchmark for green power usage with voluntary purchases. Moab homes and businesses purchased Utah Power's Blue Sky renewable energy to exceed the EPA goal.

"The U.S. EPA is delighted to recognize the Moab Area Community as the first Green Power Community for pioneering a collaborative and voluntary effort between businesses and residents to increase the areas' green power usage," said EPA Regional Administrator Robbie Roberts.

"By choosing green power, the Moab community members are demonstrating environmental leadership by supporting new, clean, renewable power facilities that generate electricity with less air pollution and no net increases in greenhouse gas emissions," he said.

Green Power Communities are a new type of Partner for EPA's Green Power Partnership, which provides assistance and recognition to organizations that demonstrate environmental leadership by choosing green power. Green Power Communities are recognized by EPA's Green Power Partnership for having area homes, businesses, organizations and local governments voluntarily commit to switch a portion of their collective electric power usage to green power through individual and organizational purchases.

By having 4 percent of the Moab Area Community's electricity offset by green power, EPA estimates the environmental benefit is equivalent to avoiding the generation of 4 million pounds of carbon dioxide or planting roughly 750 acres of trees.

The City of Moab's municipal government was recognized by the EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy in 2003 with a Green Power Leadership Award for its exemplary purchase of green power.



Energy Efficient Mortgages Can Counter the Effects of Increasing Energy Prices

Consumers looking to buy or renovate a home have every reason to consider including energy efficiency in the design. Fuel prices are at record highs, and the impact of this is only just beginning to hit consumer pocketbooks. Meanwhile mortgage rates are on the rise, meaning that the amount of money for which a consumer may qualify is declining. However, consumers can actually lower their energy bills and qualify for larger loans by adding energy efficient home features financed through energy efficient mortgages (EEMs). Energy efficient windows can reduce heating and cooling energy costs by up to 30%, so EEMs are the perfect vehicle for financing window upgrades in both new and existing construction.

Banks offering EEMs recognize that energy efficiency will lower a consumer's energy bill, and that consequently a consumer will have more cash available for a larger mortgage payment. After the mortgage payment, the monthly utility bill is usually a family's next largest housing-related expense.

Increasing the number of energy efficient homes through EEMs help to:

- Qualify more first time home-buyers for mortgage loans
- Reduce the cost of home ownership
- Reduce America's dependence on imported oil

EEMs also encourage the use of utility and manufacturer rebates, by allowing these rebates to be applied toward the loan transaction under some programs.

"We are in existence to encourage more people to use energy efficiently and to conserve while still remaining both physically and financially comfortable in their homes."

Visit us on the web: www.utahenergy.org