

Fenestration

Energy Efficiency

In a Tough Market, Energy Efficiency is a Tipping Point

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What does it take to sell a home these days? Think beyond fancy quartz countertops, luxury hardware fixtures, and custom cabinetry. According to two major real estate surveys, energy-efficiency is at the top of buyers' wish lists. Just in time for the traditionally busy spring and summer selling seasons, a recent study conducted by Jeld-Wen Windows & Doors shows that nearly two-thirds of real estate agents polled have featured energy-efficient windows and doors in their home sales listings. That corresponds to information recently published by the National Association of Realtors confirming that exterior renovation projects, including mid-range and upscale window replacements, offer some of the highest returns.

The three key points driving the demand for window and door upgrades this year are homeowners' desire to save money on energy bills, environmental concerns, and fewer maintenance demands. "Homeowners will recover their investment in energy efficiency when they sell their home," said David Knode, branch manager of Coldwell Banker Barbara Sue Seal Proper-

ties in Vancouver, Wash. "It will also give them an advantage in this buyer's market."

Homeowners are increasingly aware of the fact that the average home loses up to 30% of its energy through inefficient windows and doors. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, installing energy efficient windows and doors can save homeowners an average of \$125 to \$450 a year on utility bills. To maximize window and door replacement value, it's important that homeowners do their homework before they buy.

The following key attributes will help buyers make the right choice to deliver maximum value for their home.

The Right Technology

Whether using wood or vinyl windows, replacing drafty single-paned units with insulated double-paned windows immediately helps lower cooling and heating costs. It's also important to look for Low-E glass, which reflects heat back to its source with two transparent, microscopic layers of silver. This allows visible light to pass through while blocking harmful UV light. For exterior doors, experts advise using durable weatherstripping. This will create a tighter seal to keep out unwanted elements and help lower energy bills.

Vinyl and wood options help homeowners easily and affordably upgrade for better energy efficiency. For homeowners looking to replace old wood windows, wood double-hung pocket windows with insulated Low-E glass is significantly more efficient than single-glazed units. Pocket windows

are designed to fit directly into existing window frames, making the remodel process quick and simple.

Savings Clues

Created by the U.S. Department of Energy, the Energy Star® label makes it easy for homeowners to find energy-efficient windows and doors. This label is recognized by many homeowners and helps add value to a home.

It's also important for homeowners to understand the ratings used to evaluate window and door performance features. U-values rate and compare the energy efficiency of windows and exterior doors by measuring the amount of heat allowed to pass through an object. Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) indicates the ability to block heat generated by sunlight. For both of these ratings, a lower number indicates a more energy-efficient product. Experts also evaluate Visible Light Transmission which is the percentage of sunlight that penetrates a window or door. A higher percentage means more light will enter through the glass.

"Energy efficiency is more than just a way to help homeowners save on utility bills; market indicators prove that it's also a key attribute for resale," said Rod Clark, product marketing manager for Jeld-Wen. "From better efficiency to increased curb appeal, there's no doubt that windows and doors are a smart upgrade project in a competitive market if homeowners know what to look for."

