

THE TOP 10 ENERGY-EFFICIENT REMODELING PROJECTS

The Public-Private Partnership for Advancing Housing Technology (PATH) recently released its annual recommendations on the top remodeling technologies to make existing homes more durable, stronger and more resource efficient.

- 1 Air Sealing:** You can reduce your home's heating and cooling costs by as much as 30 percent through proper insulation and air sealing techniques. Adding insulation to your existing home will help improve the thermal resistance of exterior walls for increased energy efficiency.
- 2 Smartvent Ventilation / Ventilation Control System:** This new mechanical ventilator system measures the moisture content of outdoor and crawlspace air and only provides crawlspace ventilation when the outdoor air is drier than crawlspace air.
- 3 HVAC Sizing:** Proper HVAC sizing is an essential step in the efficient operation of HVAC systems. A right-sized system will operate for long periods of time (rather than frequently cycling on and off), resulting in the optimum equipment operating efficiency and better control over indoor environmental conditions.
- 4 High Efficiency Toilets:** Designed for water conservation, high efficiency toilets have been defined as those that use an average of 20% less water per flush than the industry standard of 1.6 gallons. Using a high efficiency toilet unit can save a family of four up to 8,760 gallons of water each year. And high efficiency toilets save water that would otherwise be wasted, not only reducing your utility bill, but also the amount of available fresh water used.
- 5 Compact Fluorescent Lighting:** Use compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) in fixtures throughout your home to provide high-quality and high-efficiency lighting. CFLs are four times more energy efficient than incandescent (standard) bulbs and last about 4 to 10 times longer.
- 6 High Performance Windows:** Window technology has evolved over the years to the point where windows can be selected not only for their aesthetic qualities, but also for their performance abilities. In most U.S. climates, low-E coatings reduce heating costs associated with energy loss through windows by lowering the window's U-value.
- 7 Wireless Lighting and Thermostats:** These controls can be set on timers or programmed using a variety of sensors with wireless systems to increase home efficiency without sacrificing home owner comfort.
- 8 Solar Hot Water:** Solar water heaters are systems that use the sun to heat either water or a heat-transfer fluid in collectors generally mounted on a roof. They can help save on water heating costs by reducing the amount of gas and electricity needed to heat water. Solar water heaters come in a variety of configurations that differ in design, cost, performance and level of complexity. Most systems have back-up water heating such as electricity or gas.
- 9 Recycled/Renewable Flooring:** The two types of environmentally-conscious flooring that lead the market are recycled flooring from old structures and renewable flooring from fast-growing trees, such as bamboo.
- 10 Tubular Skylights:** Tubular skylights add natural lighting to rooms through a small tube rather than a large roof window as with conventional skylights. They are generally easier to install than typical skylights and, from the home's interior, resemble conventional lighting fixtures.



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