

As concerns over climate change continue to grow, more homebuyers will demand sustainable features in a home.

If you are planning to update your home to sell it, a REALTOR® can advise you on sustainable improvements you can make to enhance your home's "salability".

If you are buying a home, talk to a REALTOR® about what sustainable features you should look for that will help save you money.

Honesty and Integrity

Most real estate professionals in our province are members of the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) and only members of OREA can call themselves REALTORS®.

When you work with a REALTOR®, you can expect strict adherence to provincial laws, which includes a Code of Ethics. That code is very important to you because it assures you will receive the highest level of service, honesty and integrity.

Highest Professional Standards

Before receiving a real estate registration, candidates must successfully complete an extensive course of study developed by OREA on behalf of the Real Estate Council of Ontario. That is only the beginning; in the first two years of practice, registrants are required to successfully complete three additional courses as part of their articling with a brokerage. In addition, all registrants must continue to attend courses throughout their careers in order to maintain their registration.

Want More Information?

OREA has a 144-page book called How to Buy Your Home available free by calling 1-800-563-HOME. Check out homes for sale on the Internet at www.REALTOR.ca.

Other pamphlets available:

- Buying a Home
- Selling a Home
- Home Ownership Incentives
- Home Insurance
- Marijuana Grow House Operations
- Working with a REALTOR®



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Promoting Professionalism

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Sustainability at Home

Tips to save money and the environment



OREA Ontario Real Estate Association

What is Sustainability

The World Commission on Environment and Development defines sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”

As REALTORS® and homeowners, we know there are many choices we can make that will help us reduce climate change and become more sustainable in our homes and our communities.

Energy Efficiency

Conserve energy by switching to energy efficient light bulbs. A 15-watt compact fluorescent bulb gives as much light as a 60-watt incandescent bulb and can last 10 times as long. LEDs can use up to 95 per cent less energy.

Choose ENERGY STAR® appliances and equipment (your furnace for example). The ENERGY STAR® symbol means the product is among the most energy efficient on the market.

Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use for more than a day or two or plug them into a power bar that you can switch off.

Install an outdoor clothesline and reduce your reliance on your clothes dryer. Not only will your clothes smell great, you'll save money on energy costs too.

Turn down your thermostat to about 15°C when you go out or at night when you sleep and save 10 to 15 per cent on your total energy bill.

If you retrofit or improve your home, have an energy audit done and you could qualify for government grants and rebates under the EcoEnergy Retrofit – Homes Program.

For more information and to qualify for the federal government's EcoEnergy Retrofit – Homes Program grant, go to www.oec.nrcan.gc.ca (click on Grants and Incentives).

To learn more about saving energy in your home, visit the Using Less Living Better Web site at www.ecoaction.gc.ca and Hydro One Energy Efficient Tips and Tools at www.powersaver.ca.

Water Efficiency

Your toilet is the biggest water waster in your home. Water efficient toilets use up to 80 per cent less water than regular toilets. Save even more by installing a dual flush toilet that provides an option for a three-litre or six-litre flush depending on need.

Switch from having baths to taking showers and use about half the amount of water. Installing low-flow showerheads can also reduce water consumption by as much as 65 per cent.

Washing your clothes in cold water will save money over time since up to 80 per cent of the energy you use to wash clothes comes from heating the wash water.

If you are in the market for a new washing machine, consider buying an ENERGY STAR® model which uses 35 to 50 per cent less water and at least 50 per cent less energy per load.

For more water saving ideas visit www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca (go to CMHC for Consumers and search for Water Saving Tips). To find more tips visit www.on.ec.gc.ca/reseau/watertips.

Renovating and Recycling

If you are renovating, try to use recycled materials such as stone, tiles, bricks, windows or even flooring for your project. This practice saves money, and may add value to your home.

Renovations provide a good opportunity for you to make your home more energy efficient by insulating, sealing air leaks and choosing energy efficient windows, doors and other materials.

It's important to your family's health that the products and materials you choose are free of harmful

chemicals and compounds whenever possible. For example, when you are painting, select water-based paints that are free of VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) and don't contribute to air pollution.

Ensure harmful chemicals and toxins don't end up in the landfill. Dispose of hazardous waste such as old aerosol spray cans, leftover paints, fertilizers or other chemicals safely at your local Hazardous Waste depot.

For more information visit The Recycling Council of Ontario at www.rco.on.ca/Resources/Residents or Habitat for Humanity ReStores at www.habitat.ca/restore.

Landscaping and Gardening

Landscaping is a great way to add value to your home. But, think about sustainability when planning your outdoor space.

Planting deciduous trees and shrubs, particularly on the south side of your house, will help keep your house cool in the summer. In the winter, they will shed their leaves and allow the sun to shine in, helping you to passively heat your home.

Switch from water hogging exotic grasses to hardy native varieties and limit the amount of lawn you have in your yard. Try low maintenance grasses, like clover, that require less mowing and give a rich cover.

Use your green bin or bags as part of your municipality's composting program. With a backyard composter, you can turn your food waste into rich soil for your garden or house plants.

Find more ways to green your landscape at Composting Council of Canada www.compost.org/backyard and Native Plants directory www.evergreen.ca/nativeplants.

