

The Numerous Benefits of Energy Efficient Practices

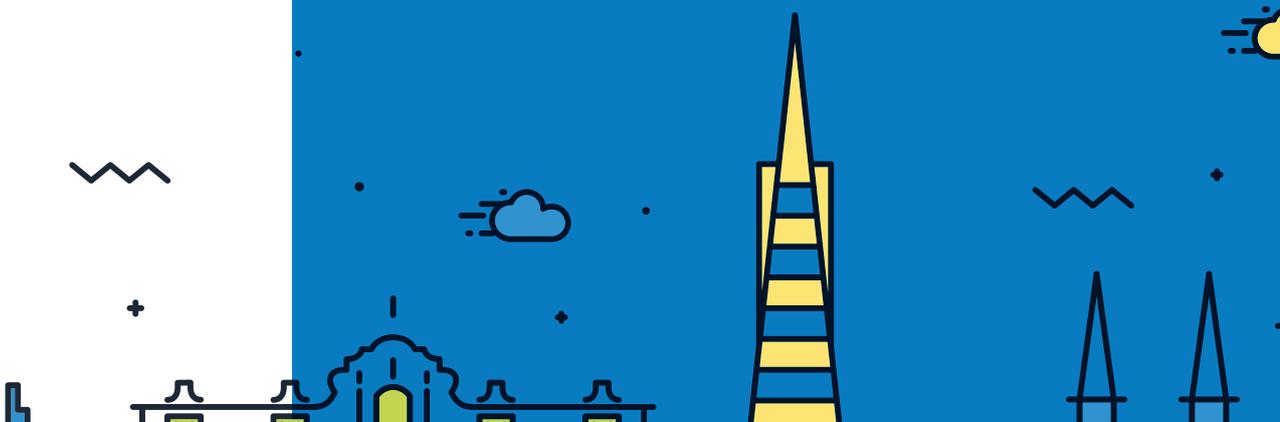


What is **energy efficiency**?

The goal of energy efficiency is to reduce the cost and environmental impact of energy use. For homeowners, this means making upgrades both small and large to use less energy and lower utility bills, while still maintaining the comfort and conveniences of a modern home.

Because of this, homebuyers have made energy efficiency and environmental impact a high priority, and realtors need to pay close attention. Realtors should focus not just on current home values, but also trends in energy efficient technologies applied to homes and renovations.

Energy efficiency is one of the **top five** “**must-haves**” for buyers.



Benefits for Buyers

Realtors can improve customer satisfaction by helping clients look for homes with maximum energy efficiency, so that they can reap the rewards of...



Long-Term Savings

By employing energy efficient practices, homeowners have discovered savings of 20% to 30% on energy bills and up to 30% savings on water bills. The average homeowner spends approximately \$3100 on utilities annually. Based on these figures, the average family could save up to \$930 every year.



Increased Value

Homes that are energy efficient, by virtue of saving homeowners on monthly bills, have a higher value on the market than non-energy efficient homes. As the population becomes increasingly aware of the benefits of energy efficient practices, they're willing to pay more for pre-installed appliances and features.



Tax Benefits

Available for certain energy efficient measures. Homeowners can claim a tax credit by installing government-approved Energy Star eligible products, which can save up to 30% of the household's energy consumption. Business owners who take energy efficient measures may also be eligible for both tax credits and deductions.



103 What energy efficient upgrades can realtors suggest to clients?

First, get a Home Energy Audit. A home energy audit can help you determine what other upgrades need to be made, and can be shown both to prospective sellers and buyers confirming how energy efficient the house is, or what upgrades will most benefit the home.

Simple But Effective Upgrades

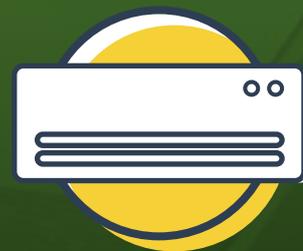
Energy Star qualified products. Examples of energy efficient home appliances include:



Refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers/dryers



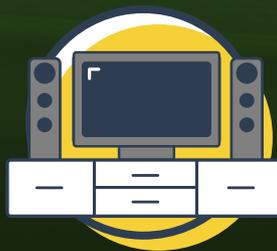
Air purifiers



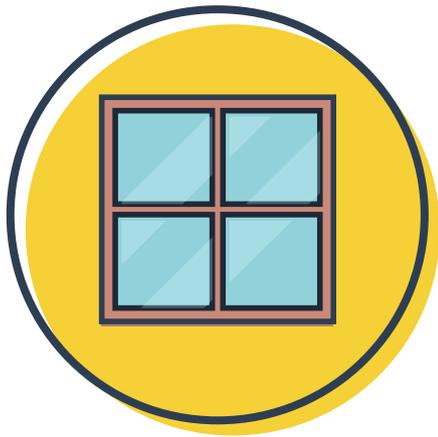
Air conditioning units



Water heaters

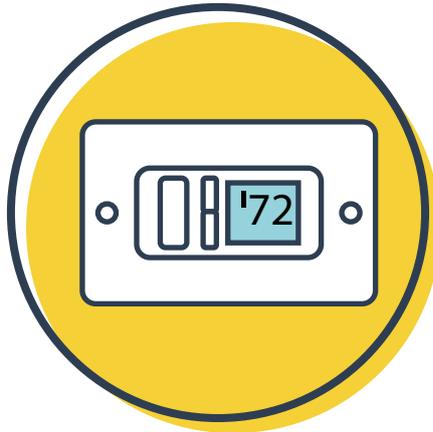


Television sets



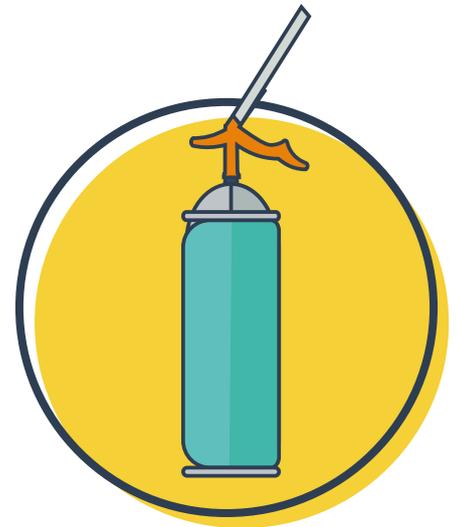
Energy efficient windows.

There are a plethora of double-paned energy-efficient window styles available, as well as enforcements that can be made to existing windows. Weatherstripping around windows, doors, and skylights can fix and prevent small air leaks. Another options is solar film, an easily installed vinyl window covering, which reflects UB rays while still allowing light to enter.



Programmable thermostats.

There is rarely a need for temperature to be regulated while a building or home is unoccupied, and proper programming can ensure the system will turn on before occupants arrive so that there will be no discomfort in temperature.



Insulate.

Attics should be well-insulated. If existing walls require insulation (more common for older buildings), use spray foam, also known as injection foam, to keep the building interior more comfortable without using energy.

These small upgrades can go a long way to improving the selling power of a home.



104 Growing Business

Energy efficiency is a powerful tool for realtors to leverage both home listings and sales. To keep on the pulse of energy efficient trends and attract clients, realtors should pay attention to:

- **Who's buying.** Millennials make up the largest percentage of homebuyers, and consider energy efficiency one of their top priorities.
- **Hierarchy of efficiency.** The best-selling features of an energy efficient home are heating and cooling, appliances, community features, and commuting distance.
- **Products.** Know which appliances and upgrades you are recommending and how their efficiency compares to other products.
- **Rebates.** Many homeowners want to save in the long run, but need incentives to get going. Helping a seller or buyer qualify for an energy rebate from their utility company or government will help them save money, and help you build stronger relationships with your clients.





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