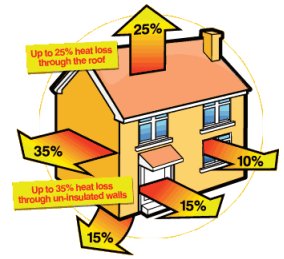


How to Prepare Your Home for an Audit

Steps To Making the Most of Your Home Energy Audit

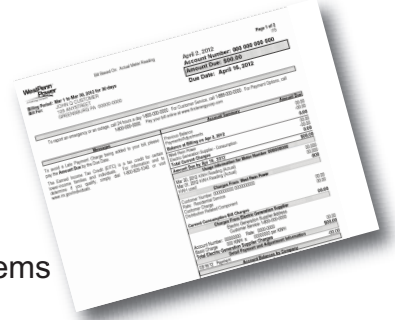
So you've decided to have a home energy audit conducted for your home. Smart choice. You are about take the crucial first step toward getting your house into shape. Herein, a few quick tips to help you make the most of that experience, by preparing yourself and your home.



1. Prepare Your Self

Have your recent utility bills handy. Think about what comfort, health and safety issues you might have in your house. Make a list of places in your house that are not as comfortable as you wish they were and the things you think might be costing your family excessive energy.

(This is a fun learning experience and nice to see where you have real problems and what you didn't know about)



2. Prepare Your House

Your auditor will need to close and tighten all windows. Be prepared to turn on major systems: bathroom fans, dryer, kitchen appliances, etc. Your auditor will turn off the furnace / boiler before he or she gets underway. Be prepared for your auditor to look in every nook and cranny to locate energy leaks and deteriorating building systems. He or she will also need to get into any attic and basement spaces you have.



3. Be Prepared to Learn A lot about your House

Our auditors are good teachers too and will explain a lot about the causes of your concerns and we strongly suggest being fully present and engaged when your home is being audited. Take notes about the literally hundreds of opportunities for small, but consequential improvements that you can do yourself. (Some of the larger retrofits will likely require a pro). When your auditor says, "Seal this crack," (maybe 50 times over), be sure you keep a good record of where, with what tools and materials and how to do a good job. Don't be afraid to ask questions. And *definitely* ask to take a peek in the infrared camera. It's cool.



4. Know what to expect: A visual inspection

An auditor is likely to spend some time assessing the quality of insulation, moisture penetration and air leakage by walking around your home with you. In order to gain a full understanding of your existing insulation, an auditor will use a thermal camera and may remove a switch or outlet plate to probe for insulation. They may temporarily loosen the edge a piece of vinyl siding to probe the wall from outside. The auditor will seal and close it up after the investigation is complete.

5. Know what to expect: The Blower Door Test

The blower door test is an instrumented evaluation that verifies your home's air tightness. To conduct the test, the auditor closes all exterior doors and windows. He installed his blower door fan in one exterior door to draw air from the house. He or she will measure the rate of airflow required to keep your home at a constant pressure, which tells him (and you) how well your house resists air infiltration and whether you have enough air exchange to breathe healthy. When the air pressure in your home is reduced, it is easier to detect airflow in - through cracks, leaks, and structural faults. The blower door test is safe for your home, all humans, and for large pets like cats and dogs. Birds and other smaller animals should be moved to an area where they won't be affected and domesticated birds should be kept in their cages.



6. Know what to expect: The Report

A week or two after all the testing is completed our auditor will sit down with you and go over the comprehensive report that will walk you though all the systems of your house and prioritize issues from critical to satisfactory so that you know where to best put your resources and make an educated decision about what solutions will can best improve your quality of life.

