THE CLIMATE IS CHANGING
AND SO MUST WE

WASAGA BEACH
Climate Action Team

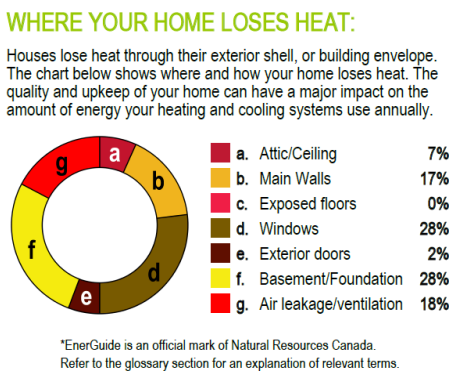
MY HOME ENERGY AUDIT STORY

Drafty homes waste a lot of energy and that's lost dollars. Most people don't know how energy efficient or airtight their homes may be. Surprisingly even newer homes can be less efficient then you think.

Personally, I was excited to schedule an energy audit last year. I wanted to find out how much of my money was flowing out the windows, doors, ceilings, walls, and floors.

The auditor came to my house and scrambled everywhere, poking her head into the attic, peeking into the crawl space, checking out the windows and doors. But the most exciting part was the blower door test. This is meant to determine to what degree a home is airtight. The auditor inserts a temporary door equipped with a powerful fan and fits it into the frame of an existing door. The fan sucks the air out of the house and blows it outside. Digital gauges compare the difference in air pressure between the inside air and the outside air to determine how much air is leaking into the house. The system will provide a reading called an ACH - Air changes per hour. This indicates how many times the volume of air in your home would be completely replaced in one hour's time if the blower fan continued to run. An ACH of 4 indicates a reasonably airtight house.

When I received my Renovation Upgrade Report a couple of weeks later, I was pleased at how comprehensive it was. It was 13 pages with lots of graphs and recommendations. It started by giving my house a rating. Houses are rated in terms of gigajoules/per year. An annual gigajoule rating (GJ/year) allows you to see your score as a unit of energy consumption, similar to how you would see a consumption rating of litres of gas per 100 kilometres for vehicles. The lower the number; the better energy performance of the home. The best high performing homes can have a rating of zero gigajoules per year meaning it produces as much energy as it consumes. These are often called passive homes. My house was far from that.



The report gave me an Energy Efficiency Roadmap which told me which upgrades to do first in order to obtain the biggest impact on my energy efficiency. It contained things like add insulation to the attic, perform air sealing, insulate the foundation, install a heat pump and many other ideas. It also provided information regarding the rebates.

After doing some of the upgrades, I then got a post-audit report which showed me how successful I was at arriving at my target gigajoule rating. And the best part … a rebate cheque arrived in the mail.