



Gettin' Ready for Winter

Posted by [Glenn](#) on November 22, 2005 - 11:32pm in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

Topic: [Demand/Consumption](#)

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Well winter has finally arrived in the Northeast after a mostly unseasonably warm October and November and while heating and natural gas prices have come down since Katrina and Rita, the costs of home heating will probably set new records this year. So what can you do aside from just turning the thermostat down? Get an energy audit.

I read in [Crain's](#) (subscription req'd) that New York State is offering [energy audits](#) and [subsidized loans](#) for homeowners to make home improvements that save energy. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority ([NYSERDA](#)) has lots of great tips for reducing energy bills from heating or electric (including [compact fluorescent lighting](#)). The payback on many of these investments can be less than 5 years and you can even apply the \$200 fee from the energy audit to improvements suggested in the write-up.

Here's some exerpts from the Crain's article of one guy's energy audit:

Mr. Hatzis recommends replacing three windows in the basement with insulated vinyl windows. He shows me where one window doesn't close properly; the others fit better but aren't insulated. The cold goes right through the single-pane window. In total, he finds 13 windows in the house that need to be replaced. Cost: \$325 a window, including installation.

Four doors, including the two outside doors to the basement, need new weather stripping. Cost: \$225. Mr. Hatzis tells me the back door leading out of my kitchen will have to be replaced: another \$850.

I get my written report in the mail a few days later and find that the total cost for improvements is \$8,115. The price starts to look pretty good when I read the payback period. According to ASK's calculations, the upgrades will cut my annual energy bills by \$1,708 and will pay for themselves in less than five years.

My projected savings are well above the average of \$600 a year, because I'll no longer have to supplement my gas boiler with two electric space heaters.

And if it pays back in less than 5 years, imagine how much quicker it will be if energy costs continue to rise. It's either that, or you can rely on [Hugo Chavez](#).



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