

### 3 home improvement upgrades that will save you money

If you're worried about sweltering throughout summer and are starting to notice that your cooling bills are increasing, now may be the opportune time to consider some home improvement upgrades that will let you better manage your HVAC equipment while lowering your monthly expenses.

Building industry experts suggest that creating a comfortable home shouldn't mean homeowners have to compromise on which upgrades they complete or the materials used. Smart home improvement investments can mean homeowners are better protected from the elements while creating a greater level of comfort. There are three key home improvement upgrades that homeowners can do to improve the quality and comfort of their home.

1. Natural Resources Canada says that windows can account for up to 25 percent of total house air loss. This significant amount of air leakage can often mean cooling equipment will work overtime to compensate - meaning an increase in monthly expenses. Replacing your existing windows and doors with newer Energy Star-rated options can mean better energy efficiency resulting in lower bills as well as increased comfort. If your budget is tight, energy efficiency improvements such as weather-stripping and caulking to existing windows can also help reduce air leakage.
2. One of the easiest ways to optimize overall home performance is researching and selecting high efficiency, green materials. Low-flush water systems, solar hot water systems and even small-scale geothermal energy systems along with Energy Star-rated appliances can significantly slash energy consumption and your overall carbon footprint while maintaining a comfortable, enjoyable living space for you and your family.
3. Although many homeowners might not realize it, a finished basement can make a noticeable impact on the overall performance of a home. The majority of basements in older homes, and even in some newer homes, are often just poured concrete with bare walls and floors creating a cold, unwelcoming space that moisture can seep into very easily. Investing in spray foam insulation, like that from Icynene, in an unfinished basement as well as throughout the entire home, ensures a greater level of comfort, moisture management and cost control.

Spray foam insulation provides thermal insulating value as well as air sealing, meaning air leakage is significantly reduced allowing your HVAC equipment to perform optimally. Spray foam insulation both air-seals and insulates to stop air leakage from occurring, allowing homeowners to reduce energy consumption, effectively control their indoor environments and live greener.

When installed, spray foam insulation expands to completely seal a home's walls, floors and ceilings to prevent air leakage. Insulation experts from Icynene note that quality spray foam insulation can noticeably reduce heating and cooling costs. More information on how spray foam insulation can help improve household energy efficiency and reduce air leakage is available at [icynene.com](http://icynene.com).