

## **How to prepare your home for winter with smart home improvement projects**

Although it is still summer and the temperatures are high, it is only a matter of weeks before the temperatures cool down and winter is in sight. Now is the ideal time for homeowners to prepare their home for winter and think about home improvement plans that they can complete during Fall.

When it comes to home improvements, building experts recommend that homeowners carefully consider and prioritize their plans by looking at structural improvements over cosmetic.

Fundamental for homeowners hoping to invest smartly in their home is understanding what improvement is deemed essential and what is considered purely cosmetic. For example, a home's "skin" is a key investment area during a renovation project. Hiring an energy inspector to examine your home will give a better sense of the required work and avoid any subsequent costly headaches.

If you're thinking of going green, small changes such as using compact fluorescent light bulbs can contribute to reducing your home's carbon footprint. Fluorescent light bulbs typically have a longer life and use less energy thereby reducing excessive energy waste as well as monthly energy bills.

Investing in energy efficient appliances is another effective way to live green and add value to your home. Newer air conditioners tend to use 30 to 50 percent less energy to produce the same amount of cool air as air conditioners from the 1970s. Homeowners with an old central air system can consider having a new, more energy efficient HVAC system installed. While these may come with an expensive up-front cost, the savings on energy bills over the long-term will prove to be a wise investment. Additionally, the inclusion of other energy efficient appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines and dryers will contribute to lower energy bills.

Another significant way to reduce energy consumption is to adequately seal the home to stop any air leaks by considering a smart insulation material. Insulation experts say that homeowners should survey their house from top to bottom, and assess any trouble spots such as drafty areas or cold zones which could be caused by air leakage. Air leakage can limit the effectiveness of heating systems. According to spray foam insulation manufacturer Icynene, floors, walls and ceilings can account for up to 31 percent of air leakage in a home. Spray foam insulation, which can help combat air leakage, is growing in popularity amongst homeowners since it is an energy-efficient material that delivers year-round benefits. Spray foam insulation, like that available from [Icynene](#), works well in all types of homes across the country, regardless of climate.

Spray foam insulation performs for the life of the property, ensuring that homeowners can enjoy comfortable indoor temperatures all year round without overrunning their heating and cooling equipment. Icynene says that high performance spray foam insulation can noticeably reduce monthly heating and cooling costs. Additionally, spray

foam insulation helps minimize random airborne moisture and pollutants from entering the home, ideal for allergy sufferers.

Icynene recently released a comprehensive home insulation mobile app, available on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store, to allow homeowners understand where air leaks can occur in their home as well as how a modern insulation material like spray foam can help make a difference and why it is a smart home improvement investment.

More information about Icynene spray foam insulation can be found at [Icynene.com](http://Icynene.com).