

YOU'VE HAD YOUR HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENT.
So what's next?

Now that you know where your home is wasting energy, here's what you need to do to fix it.





step 1

The home energy assessment.

Your participating contractor is required to perform an energy assessment of your home and its energy-using systems, which generally lasts two to three hours, to analyze how all the elements of your home work together to affect the amount of electricity and fuel you use. The result is a top-to-bottom look at where your home is wasting energy and a report detailing the recommended home energy improvements you should make. A participating Building Performance Institute (BPI) GoldStar Contractor represents the most knowledgeable home energy efficiency experts in the industry. They are trained to provide you an unparalleled analysis of your home's energy efficiency, and are experts in how these programs work.

During the energy assessment, the contractor completes a visual inspection of the living space, attic, and basement (or crawl space), and performs a number of tests using special diagnostic equipment such as a blower door. The blower door test measures how airtight your home is. Contractors will also perform required health and safety tests to ensure that major combustion appliances (furnace, boiler, water heater, stove, clothes dryer) are operating properly. If these tests identify any potential threats in the home, BPI health and safety standards require the health and safety-related repairs to be addressed in order for any other work to proceed. During the assessment, you are encouraged to accompany the contractor and share any concerns such as drafts, hot or cold spots, evidence of moisture or mold, or strange smells. After the assessment, your contractor will prepare a report to identify areas where improvements can be made and develop a detailed project proposal with an estimate of project costs. Depending on the home energy improvements recommended, your contractor may subcontract work to other specialty companies in order to offer a more comprehensive set of energy efficiency and health and safety upgrades.

Take Advantage of Financing and Discounts

By using a participating Home Performance contractor, home-owners are able to take advantage of financing to help pay for the work. You can visit nyserdera.ny.gov/residential-financing for more information on available financing.

For income-eligible households, a 50% discount is available through Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR. For more information and to see if you qualify, visit nyserdera.ny.gov/assisted-home-performance or call 1-800-361-5663.



step 2

Map out your project and sign the contract.

When you have decided which home energy improvements you want to complete, you will be presented with a written contract to review and sign. Check this contract carefully.

- Make sure that all the work you want done is detailed and that there is nothing you do not want in the contract.
- In general, the price offered should be a fixed price that cannot be changed without your written permission. Make sure the contract clearly states if it is a fixed-price contract or estimate.
- The contract should cover payment terms, such as a down payment, installment payments, and when the final payment is due.
- The program recognizes only contracts between a customer and a participating BPI GoldStar Contractor. If other contractors are called in to complete a part of the comprehensive work scope, they must be subcontractors to your participating BPI GoldStar Contractor (unless they also are a participating contractor). BPI GoldStar Contractors typically carry their credentials with them, or you can verify their status by calling 1-866-NYSERDA.

Never sign a contract that does not include a detailed work scope and the cost of the proposed work. Prior to signing a contract, you should also discuss the expected project start and completion dates with your contractor. The Office of the Attorney General provides New York State residents with the tools needed to make informed decisions when it comes to hiring a home improvement contractor. Do your homework and be sure to hire a qualified professional.



step 5

Keep copies of all documents for your records.

Once you have signed the contract and the Home Performance Eligibility Summary Report, be sure your contractor provides you with a copy of both documents. Your contractor will be responsible for submitting these documents to the program. No work can begin until both you and the contractor have signed these documents.

Making Changes to Your Contract

The work scope may change during the course of the job. Potential reasons include:

- You decide to add or remove something from the work scope.
- The contractor discovers a problem.
- An opportunity for additional improvements presents itself during construction or installation.

If there are changes in the work scope, the contractor will give you a Change Order to sign. Be sure you fully understand the impacts before you agree to the change. NYSERDA requires that your contractor submit all Change Orders, signed and dated by the customer, before you receive any financing or discounts.

Oversee the installation of your home energy improvements.

It is recommended you meet with your participating contractor in the morning and again at the end of the day to review completed work. Be aware that as the work is being performed, your normal household routine may be disrupted.

Test the effectiveness of your project.

The energy efficiency work will often result in your home being more airtight. The contractor is required to do a “test-out” after work is complete to ensure that the increased air tightness does not cause air quality or combustion-related health and safety problems. It is recommended that you be present when your contractor repeats the tests performed during your initial home energy assessment. On rare occasions, this test reveals conditions that do not meet the program’s health, safety, and technical requirements. In that case, your contractor will recommend modifications to bring your home into compliance before a completion document can be signed.

step 6

Confirm that the project has been completed.

When all of the work in the original work scope, Change Orders, and final tests is complete, your contractor will prepare a completion document for you to review and sign. By signing the completion document, you are agreeing that the work on your project has been substantially completed. **DO NOT SIGN** the completion document until the work (original work scope and Change Orders) is substantially completed. You should notate on the “punch list” section of the certificate any remaining minor items that need completion. Once you sign the completion document, your final payment becomes due. Loans and discounts will be processed once the contractor submits the signed completion document.

step 7

Complete additional projects at your own pace.

If you choose not to make all the recommended home energy improvements at one time, you can continue to access low-interest loans and discounts up to the caps. Your participating contractor can provide you with more information on the current caps for program discounts and financing.

PLEASE NOTE: Participating contractors will provide you with a written warranty on labor and materials for a minimum of one (1) year from the date the service is performed. Equipment installed will carry the manufacturer's warranty and any optional extended-warranty coverage that you select. Neither the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), nor the Program implementer, warrants the products and/or services of participating contractors; nor are they responsible or liable for any work performed by participating contractors or their suppliers. Participating contractors are responsible for dealing directly with any customer concerns about quality and workmanship.

To obtain information on a participating contractor's customer dispute resolution policies, contact BPI at 518-899-2727. For all other questions about Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, visit nyserdera.ny.gov/home-performance or call 1-866-NYSERDA.

NYSERDA, a public benefit corporation, offers objective information and analysis, innovative programs, technical expertise, and support to help New Yorkers increase energy efficiency, save money, use renewable energy, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. NYSEDA professionals work to protect the environment and create clean energy jobs. NYSEDA has been developing partnerships to advance innovative energy solutions in New York State since 1975. To learn more about NYSEDA's programs, visit nyserdera.ny.gov or follow us on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or Instagram.

