

# Remodel projects that improve your home's efficiency

By: Chris Dorsi



*“New high-efficiency windows and doors can save a lot of energy if installed properly.”*

Improvements to the outside of your home offer excellent opportunities to incorporate energy-saving measures with little additional effort. New siding, windows, and doors, for example, can improve the efficiency of your home if they are installed carefully. They add beauty and value, too.

If you plan to repaint or replace the exterior siding on your home, don't miss the chance to add wall insulation. Many older homes have wall cavities that are un-insulated or only partially insulated, allowing rapid heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer.

Wall insulation is one of the most cost-effective energy savers available. Loose-fill insulation can be installed in these wall cavities through holes that are drilled through the siding or sheathing underneath the siding. This

requires specialized tools, so you should have a professional insulator do the job. Your new siding will cover the installation holes, saving the price of repair.

Some types of siding can be installed over a layer of foam insulation that's added between the old and new siding. This layer can be added with or without the new cavity insulation described above.

New high-efficiency windows and doors can save a lot of energy if installed properly. One key to maintaining their efficiency is sealing the edges where they meet the wall, so cold air and moisture can't enter the home. Pay close attention to the hidden joints where the window or door meets the wall framing, as well as the visible seams at the siding. Fill large, hidden gaps with liquid urethane foam in a can, or with tightly packed fiberglass. Install a bead of good quality caulk at the surface of each joint, and paint it to match. Now your new window or door will perform at its best.

Chris Dorsi is a nationally recognized expert on energy-efficiency. For more free energy-saving tips, visit the Saturn Resource Management Web site at [www.srmi.biz](http://www.srmi.biz)

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