

HOMEBUYERS EMBRACE ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOMES

Submitted by: BJL Group

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As we shiver our way into spring, energy-efficiency has never been more important. A combination of a 'Big Freeze' winter, rising fuel costs and the drive towards reducing our carbon footprint, means we're all looking for new ways to stay warm – while keeping costs down.

And a new survey shows energy-efficiency is top of the list for home-buyers too. The Pilkington energiKare™ 'MOT Your Home' research reveals that 76 per cent of homebuyers now rate it as a major deciding factor when purchasing property.

Loft insulation, an energy-efficient boiler, energy-efficient heating, energy-efficient windows and cavity insulation were the five fittings most of us were concerned with.

1. Loft insulation (80 per cent)
2. Energy efficient boiler (79 per cent)
3. Energy efficient heating (74 per cent)
4. Energy efficient windows (73 per cent)
5. Cavity insulation (62 per cent)

But as we weigh up the cost of one of the coldest winters for 30 years – and wait for our updated fuel bill to arrive – there are some simple steps we can all take to make our homes more energy and cost-efficient.

TV presenter and architect, George Clarke – best-known for Channel 4's The Home Show – has teamed up with Pilkington to suggest changes we can all make.

As he says: "It's reassuring to know that more and more people are taking their home and their carbon footprint seriously, after all our homes are the biggest investments we are ever likely to make. What's important is that people are taking steps to change and recognising the added value greener living brings, such as cost savings and increasing the saleability of homes.

"Installing good-quality loft installation is one of the most effective energy-saving jobs homeowners can do, which is good news as 80 per cent of homebuyers in this survey consider it the most important green factor when buying a new home. You could chop a whopping £150 annually off the average energy bill by installing insulation that is 270mm thick.

"Another big saving over time is replacing the windows with more energy-efficient glazing. This can cut fuel bills by 20 per cent over their lifetime. Pilkington energiKare™ glazing, for example, can reduce heat loss by up to 90 per cent, compared to single-glazed windows, and at the same time allow in more heat from the sun. Even turning down the thermostat and fitting energy-saving light bulbs can make a difference and be done instantly and cost effectively."

The research carried out about by Pilkington energiKare™ also revealed that the installation of solar panels and self-cleaning windows were two of the most popular areas for home improvement among homeowners

looking to add value by going green.

Julia Berkin, Marketing Communications Manager at Pilkington comments: "This winter has certainly led more people to re-evaluate the energy efficiency of their homes and it's encouraging to see that despite the recent recession, people are continuing to place sustainable living high on their agenda."

Upgrading from single glazing to Pilkington energiKare™ energy efficient double-glazing could save more than £10,000 in fuel bills over the lifetime of the windows. Promising energy-efficient solutions for every style of home, the advanced glazing technology reduces the amount of heat lost through windows while allowing more heat from the sun in, helping to create a warmer environment. This offsets the normal central heating used to heat the home.

The sun is the most efficient heat source available and solar panels trap it to heat your home and provide you with hot water. Meanwhile, saving on cleaning products and waste, Pilkington Activ™ glazing is the first glass to include self-cleaning technology, with a special coating that reacts with sunlight to break down organic dirt. It also encourages rain to sheet down the glass, washing the loosened dirt away to leave clean, streak-free windows.

For further information on the Pilkington range of products visit www.pilkington.co.uk.

ENDS

*Over a lifetime in an average semi-detached property

To interview George Clarke or to obtain further statistics / imagery, please contact Jennie Madden on jennie.madden@bjl.co.uk or 0161 831 7141.

Notes to editors:

The Pilkington energiKare™ range:

Pilkington energiKare™ Classic - The original Pilkington energiKare™ unit is capable of achieving a minimum C Window Energy Rating in most framing systems. By using Pilkington K Glass™ and Pilkington Optiwhite™ in an Insulating Glass Unit with either an argon gas filling or a warm edge spacer bar. It provides a cost-effective solution that meets all current building regulations and expected minimum compliance for 2010.

Pilkington energiKare™ Plus – This exceeds current and future government regulations providing the optimum thermal insulation option. It can also achieve a window energy rating of A or B depending on the framing system.

Pilkington energiKare™ Triple - The choice for the best possible window energy rating performance and highest levels of energy-efficiency in low/zero carbon new homes. These high performance triple-glazed units optimise the balance between u-values and g-values to maximise energy-efficiency.

Pilkington energiKare™ Legacy – This uses advanced Pilkington Spacia™ technology, the world's first commercially available vacuum glazing. It allows the manufacture of extremely thin glazing which can be fitted in old-style fine frames, maintaining the original appe

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