



**A Closer
LOOK**
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Home Heating Costs on the Rise ASHI Recommends Simple Review of Home to Improve Energy Efficiency

As the U.S. Department of Energy claims average residential heating costs could rise an additional \$100-\$300 this year, homeowners around the nation are searching for ways to lower their future bills. According to the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), a review of a home's energy efficiency can help reduce heat loss and keep furnaces from being overworked.

“Surprisingly, many homeowners think that home heating costs are out of

their control,” says Jim Hemsell, president of Lone Star chapter of ASHI, the largest non-profit professional organization for home inspectors. “In reality, there are a number of things that the homeowner can do to increase the energy efficiency of their home and keep heating costs down.”

According to Jim, the following are some simple recommendations for homeowners to improve their home's energy use:

- **Doors and Windows** – Examine all of the home's doors and windows, looking for water damage, wood decay and energy dissipating drafts. If they are old and worn, new windows/doors may be necessary. Otherwise, a simple piece of weather stripping or minor caulking can help to reduce the amount of heat escaping.



- **Insulation** – Check the attic for sufficient or missing insulation - the current standard is 12” of material. Many older homes only have 4-6”, in which case having more blown in can prove to be cost effective. Additionally, insulation is often misplaced or removed where cable television or phone work has been performed.
- **Furnace** – Have your furnace inspected to make sure it is running properly. If the unit is old, it may be wise to invest in a new, more energy efficient model.

If you are unsure whether or not your home meets these recommended standards, consider obtaining an ASHI inspection. Aside from informing the homeowner about ways they can increase their energy efficiency, an ASHI inspection will provide a complete overview of the condition of the home, which can help prevent unpleasant surprises. You can locate an ASHI inspector at www.ashi.org, or by calling 1-800-743-2744.

“All homes are subject to the effects of aging, so periodically monitoring the overall condition of a home is crucial,” adds Jim. “Tending to problems in advance will help improve a home’s use of energy, plus save a homeowner from extensive and costly repairs down the road.”

For More Information

The American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) is the oldest and largest non-profit, professional organization of home inspectors in North America. With a membership of more than 6,000, it is the authoritative voice of the home inspection profession.

Those who wish to know more about the American Society of Home Inspectors or obtain the names of ASHI members near them may contact the organization at 932 Lee Street, Suite 101, Des Plaines, IL 60016. Phone: 800-743-2744. Web site: www.ashi.org.