

## Lettres à la rédaction



## Our readers write

### How my old house performs

This spring I took Donald Fraser's advice ("Making Ottawa homes energy-efficient and healthy" — IMAGE, February-March 2002) and booked a home energy performance evaluation, using EnviroCentre's efficient online booking service ([www.envirocentre.ca](http://www.envirocentre.ca)).

Let's not save the best for last: the evaluation cost \$175 (my house has more than 2,500 sq feet of living space), but I can recover \$150 through a rebate from Enbridge Consumers Gas if I improve the overall energy efficiency rating. Here's how it works...

Jonathan Ham of Green Home Inspections Ltd, spent about three hours hunting through the basement, attic, crawlspaces, and every room of our century-old house, searching particularly for drafts, heat leaks, and inefficient appliance hook-ups. I tagged along for the detailed live commentary, and to get advice on special problems—in my case, increasing the year-round comfort of a home office space that's freezing in winter and sizzling in summer.

A couple of weeks later, Jonathan sent me an eight-page standard-format Envirocentre report with plenty of specific information about where I'm consuming energy in my house, and advice about the most efficient improvements I can make — how best to spend my money at the hardware store and my fix-up time at home. For example, I'll caulk window frames and ceiling mouldings, to stop drafts I wouldn't have found without a smoke test, increase the attic insulation, where I can recover a lot of lost heat, but

forego insulating the old, cold lathe and plaster walls, because it won't do much to prevent heat loss. If I replace the black shingles on my home office roof with white shingles, and install window awnings, I may be able to scrap a more costly plan to install a rooftop air conditioning unit.

My old house doesn't come close to the overall energy efficiency rating of a well-built new house (80 to 90 points out of a possible 100), and it scored surprisingly low even for an old house. Most renovated old houses already score better than 50 points, and have the potential for more effective improvements and a higher energy efficiency rating than some new houses. My house scored 29 points without the recommended improvements, and with them just might reach a humble score of 39, but now I know which improvements are most likely to make the house more comfortable, less expensive to heat (I might save \$600 per year) and more energy efficient (I might reduce my home energy consumption by 15%). The recommended priorities for improvements are small, relatively inexpensive jobs I can do myself, rather than large, expensive jobs I might otherwise have paid a contractor to do for me. I'll get a free re-evaluation from Envirocentre after I've made some improvements. As a client of Enbridge Consumers Gas, I can apply for the rebate with an improved energy efficiency rating of three points. That's a pretty good investment of \$25.

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### Taxing problem

After returning to Canada after thirty years in the U.S., I was amazed and shocked at the excessive levels of taxation and how it was undermining the Canadian family.

As I see it, we need a reduction in tax-

### Ouvre les yeux

Ayant lu avec beaucoup d'intérêt votre journal IMAGE, je me permets de vous soumettre le poème ci-inclus, Jérusalem, qui, j'en suis persuadée, intéressera vos nombreux lecteurs. Comme vous le constaterez ce texte d'actualité se veut

est un journal communautaire à caractère lucratif dont les seuls revenus proviennent des annonceurs. Les textes publiés sont ceux de leurs auteurs et ne reflètent pas nécessairement l'opinion de la rédaction qui est composée de bénévoles.

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Les articles, lettres, avis, photos et autres contributions pouvant intéresser les lecteurs de la Côte-de-Sable sont plus que bienvenus. Leurs auteurs doivent indiquer leur nom et leur numéro de téléphone.

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