



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Where Green Meets the Greenback**

**Sluggish economy spurs homeowners to invest in energy efficiency**

**INSERT CITY, STATE (ADD DATE)** – Times may be tough, but spending constraints have sharpened homeowners' interest in investing to make their homes more energy-efficient. This was one of the key findings of a recent survey sponsored by the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) and conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation.

Energy efficiency was a top priority for homeowners surveyed, with 80 percent reporting they are "concerned" about the energy efficiency of their homes. Their concern is as pragmatic as it is altruistic, with 70 percent of those concerned citing equal consideration for saving money and helping or protecting the environment.

In fact, fewer than two in ten homeowners (17 percent) said the energy efficiency of their homes has become less important in today's economy because they can't afford to make changes. Almost four in ten (39 percent) said that the energy efficiency of their homes has become more important due to long-term opportunities to save energy costs.

Propane can be an excellent energy-efficient option for many homeowners interested in "greening up" their home improvement decisions.

This survey indicates that homeowners who want to save energy and help protect the environment are choosing propane, a highly energy-efficient, clean fuel that's available right now.

### **Impact of the economy on energy decisions**

While construction professionals and appliance dealers might assume that homeowners with tighter belts are less interested in home improvement and new appliances, the reverse is true, according to this survey; more than half the homeowners surveyed (57 percent) said they are likely to invest in new home appliances or home improvements in

the next year or two.

Among those planning upgrades, most (61 percent) said they are likely to do so to save on monthly energy bills, while only 17 percent said they are likely to do so because it is the right thing to do for the environment. Just 13 percent cited improving the resale value of the home.

Among the energy-efficient updates survey respondents said they would like to make to their homes in the next five years, tankless water heaters garnered the greatest interest. Tankless water heaters became more appealing on January 1, 2009, when they qualified for the Energy Star rating. Energy Star is a government-backed program that helps builders and consumers identify the most energy-efficient products.

After tankless water heaters, homeowners reported interest in appliances that simultaneously use and generate energy, according to the study. For example, Freewatt technology is now available to heat a home while it generates electricity.

#### **What “living green” means to homeowners**

Homeowners surveyed said “living green” means many things in home energy use. Using energy from renewable resources was a definition cited by 83 percent of homeowners surveyed, with 77 percent defining green as reduced carbon dioxide emissions, and 69 percent citing reduced total energy usage or using appliances that simultaneously use and generate energy.

Homeowners also placed high priority on green home expertise. Eight in ten respondents said that if they were to build a new home or make improvements to their current home, they would work with professionals who have expertise in green building or green appliances.

For additional information on propane and making green energy decisions, homeowners can visit [www.usepropane.com](http://www.usepropane.com).

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