

comfort at home

2014 Issue

Your guide to NYSERDA programs and a more comfortable, affordable, energy-saving home

BPI accredited contractors: the smart way to a more energy-efficient home

Light bulbs have changed—and changing yours can lead to serious savings

New Yorkers reach major energy efficiency milestone

What does the ENERGY STAR® label really mean?

Tap into the power of the sun

50,000
homeowners served through
Home Performance
with **ENERGY STAR®**
and counting





Take the guesswork out of home energy improvements

BPI accredited Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® contractors offer expertise, solutions and peace of mind for homeowners.

While there truly is “no place like home,” energy inefficiency can lead to problems that make your home less enjoyable: uneven temperatures from room to room, drafts, ice dams and high energy bills.

To make sure New Yorkers spend their time and money wisely when improving the energy efficiency of their homes, NYSERDA recommends calling the experts—Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractors accredited by the Building Performance Institute (BPI).

Participating contractors conduct free or reduced-cost comprehensive home energy assessments to help single-family homeowners (as well as owners of two- to four-unit homes) identify and prioritize home-energy improvements. They also help homeowners determine their eligibility for NYSERDA programs, incentives and low-cost financing that make energy upgrades more affordable. Most importantly, these professionals are approved to complete comprehensive home energy upgrade projects supported by NYSERDA's Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program.

Experts in their field, focused on your home

NYSERDA mandates that every contractor participating in its whole-house programs be accredited by BPI—an independent, non-profit organization that sets standards for the home performance and weatherization industry, accredits companies and certifies technicians around the world.

For homeowners, choosing a participating Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractor is an assurance of quality and integrity.

“We believe in the importance of ongoing education,” said Annemarie Smith, a home energy performance supervisor for a contractor that participates in NYSERDA's

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program. “Training and accreditation by BPI supports our mission to provide homeowners with real solutions, not just a temporary fix.”

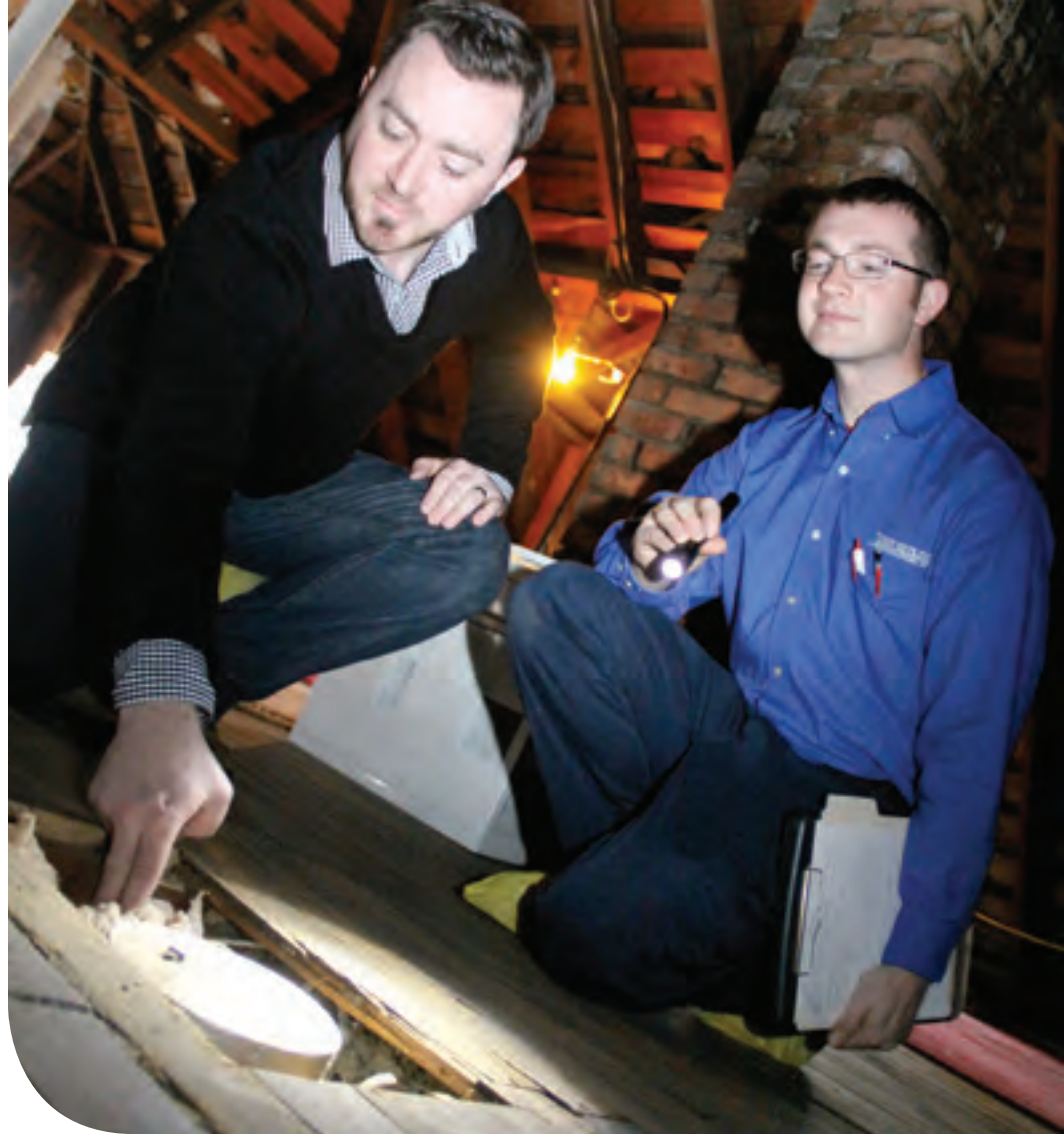
A whole-house approach

NYSERDA’s Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program strives to improve the energy efficiency and comfort of New York State’s diverse housing stock, helping homeowners control their energy costs. BPI accredited Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractors view a home as an integrated system of related components, each one contributing to energy waste or efficiency.

“Assessments take about two hours to complete. Our energy assessors are thorough and check everything, starting with the homeowner’s utility bills,” Smith said. “They gather information about the condition and size of the house, as well as the energy habits of the people living there.”

Trained in the latest tools and technologies, participating Home Performance contractors inspect homes from top to bottom, inside and out. They measure temperature differences throughout the home, depressurize the house and assess air leakage levels, and test for leakage in forced-air heating and cooling systems. They also perform functional and safety tests on equipment and appliances, including carbon monoxide levels and backdraft testing.

Homeowners get a thorough, objective view of their home’s systems and any problem areas in writing. Based on the homeowner’s goals and budget, the contractor helps prioritize any upgrades that might be needed—from must-do items to nice-to-do items.



BPI accredited technicians check your home from top to bottom in search of energy waste.

Accountability

Upon completion of an energy upgrade project, the participating Home Performance contractor performs a final test to verify the “tightness” of the home and ensure the integrity of the work. NYSERDA also receives this documentation to verify that the work was completed, then issues the incentives and loans for the project.

To ensure the high standards of work conducted through the program, NYSERDA randomly selects approximately 10 to 15 percent of the homes that go through NYSERDA’s Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program for quality assurance inspections following project completion.

Start with a professional, end with performance

Through their professionalism and energy expertise, BPI accredited Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractors provide homeowners with peace of mind.

NYSERDA’s Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program offers you a true energy efficiency partner to make the process informative and easy, every step of the way. 🏠

Find a participating Home Performance contractor in your area today. Call 1-866-NYSERDA or visit nyserdera.ny.gov/find-hp-contractor

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— Annemarie Smith
Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Contractor



Who says home comfort has to be costly?

When William Clar and Larry Grasso moved into their 1950s ranch house in Rush, NY, they quickly realized that an energy update was in their future.

“We had two furnaces, an old hot water heater and almost no insulation,” Clar explained. “Plus a 10-degree difference in temperature from room to room.”

After a Building Performance Institute (BPI) accredited Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® contractor conducted a free comprehensive home energy assessment, the couple replaced their oil and electric

heating and air conditioning with a geothermal system and installed properly-sized ductwork, insulation and dormers.

To help pay for their insulation, the retirees qualified for a \$5,000 grant from NYSERDA’s Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program. In addition to providing all the benefits of Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, this program offers income-eligible households grants of as much as \$5,000 to pay for up to 50 percent of the cost of qualifying energy efficiency projects.

Now temperatures are more even from room to room, and Clar, who has chronic bronchitis, is breathing easier, too. Working with the contractor was the best part of the process for Clar. “They explained everything, every step of the way, and handled all the paperwork for NYSERDA,” he said. “They made it all so very easy for us.”

To learn more, call 1-866-NYSERDA or visit nyserdera.ny.gov/assisted-home-performance