

Set Yourself Apart with the Home Energy Score

Most homebuyers enter into the largest investment of their lives without knowing how efficient or comfortable the home is, and little idea of how much utility bills are likely to be. The U.S. Department of Energy is starting to change that, and home inspectors are in a prime position to get involved.

What is the Home Energy Score?

Like a miles-per-gallon rating for a car, the Home Energy Score is an easy-to-produce rating designed to help homeowners and homebuyers gain useful information about a home's energy performance. Based on an in-home assessment that can be completed in less than an hour, the Home Energy Score not only lets a homeowner or homebuyer understand how efficient the home is and how it compares to others, but also provides recommendations on how to cost-effectively improve the home's energy efficiency.

The Home Energy Score uses a simple 1-to-10 scale where a 10 represents the most energy-efficient homes. The Score was designed to be easily understood and to tap into people's desire to improve their score or to outperform their peers.

Since the program launched in 2012, more than 400 Assessors have generated over 50,000 Home Energy Scores nationwide.

Why Use the Home Energy Score?

Offering the Score is

- ▶ **Fast.** Assessments can be added to a regular home inspection with little extra data collection.
- ▶ **Affordable.** Online training and access to the Scoring Tool are available at no cost.
- ▶ **Simple.** The Score is easily integrated into home assessment tools, like Home Inspector Pro.
- ▶ **Credible.** DOE supports robust training, testing, and mentoring to ensure a high quality product.
- ▶ **Flexible.** Assessors can customize the Score's recommendations according to each house and local incentives.



As a Certified Home Inspector, You Pre-Qualify! DOE's online training and testing are offered free and at your own pace. You can work under an existing Home Energy Score Partner, such as the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), Inspection Depot, or International Association of Certified Home Inspectors (InterNACHI).

Scoring A House Is Even Simpler Now. Many software vendors have integrated the Score into their software products. You can input the data directly into their products or use DOE's free Scoring Tool online interface.

Multiple Listing Services (MLSs) & States Recognize Customers Want to Know More About Home Energy Costs. MLSs are starting to provide the Home Energy Score to buyers. States across the country are adopting the Score to ensure energy efficiency information is consistent and credible. In some cases, states are offering additional incentives with the Score to encourage upgrades.

New Financial Incentives Make the Score Attractive to Homebuyers. Under a new FHA policy, homebuyers can qualify for a larger mortgage by buying a home that scores a 6 or higher, or by making improvements to a less efficient home. This policy reflects the fact that more efficient homes have lower operating costs. Home inspectors are in a great position to bring this opportunity to their clients' attention. Contact us at assessor@sra.com to get involved.

"A homebuyer with an income of \$75,000 who currently qualifies for a monthly mortgage payment of \$1,938 can now borrow an extra \$125 per month for a more energy efficient home. Financed with a 30-year mortgage at today's rates, the homebuyer can now qualify for a house valued at approximately \$26,500 more than a less efficient house."

— DOE Blog Post on FHA Policy, January 2016



The **Score** page shows the home's current Score, its Score with improvements, and estimated annual savings.

Better Buildings
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Home Energy Score

12345 Honeysuckle Lane
Smithville, AR 72466

SCORE TODAY **3**

Home Facts

The Home Energy Score's Home Facts includes details about the home's current structure, systems, and estimated energy use. For more information about how the score is calculated, visit our website at HomeEnergyScore.gov.

About This Home	Estimated Annual Energy Use
ASSESSMENT	ENERGY BY TYPE
Type: Official	Total: 204 MBtus
Assessor ID: #1234567	Score basis: 141 MBtus
Scoring tool version: v2016	Electricity: 11,956 kWh
	Natural gas: 519 therms
	Propane: 226 gallons
HOME CONSTRUCTION	COST BASIS
Year built: 1970	Electricity: \$0.091 / kWh
Number of bedrooms: 3	Natural gas: \$1.153 / therms
Stories above ground level: 1	Propane: \$2.171 / gallon
Interior floor-to-ceiling height: 10	Energy cost per square foot: \$1.45 / ft ²
Conditioned floor area: 1,500 ft ²	DEFINITIONS & CONVERSIONS
Direction faced by front of house: North	MBtu: Million British thermal units; generic energy unit
Air sealed?: No	kWh: Kilowatt-hour; electricity unit
Air leakage rate: 6,500 CFM50	Therm: 100,000 Btu; heat energy unit
	Electricity conversion: 1 MBtu = 29.3 kWh
	Heat conversion: 1 MBtu = 10 therms

The **Home Facts** pages provide both the data collected during the home walk-through and the estimated energy use for the home.

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Recommendations

The Home Energy Score's Recommendations show how to improve the energy efficiency of the home to achieve a higher score and save money. When making energy related upgrades, homeowners should consult with a certified energy professional or other technically qualified contractor to ensure proper sizing, installation, safety, and adherence to code. Learn more at HomeEnergyScore.gov.

REPAIR NOW. These improvements will save you money, conserve energy, and improve your comfort.

- ▶ **Air Tightness:** Have a professional seal all the gaps and cracks that leak air to save **\$110 / year**
- ▶ **Ducts 1:** Add insulation around ducts in unconditioned spaces to at least R-6 to save **\$43 / year**
- ▶ **Attic 2:** Increase attic floor insulation to at least R-19 to save **\$57 / year**
- ▶ **Ducts 2:** Add insulation around ducts in unconditioned spaces to at least R-6 to save **\$23 / year**
- ▶ **Ducts 2:** Have a professional seal all the gaps and cracks that leak air to save **\$74 / year**

REPLACE LATER. These improvements will help you save energy when it's time to replace or upgrade.

- ▶ **Windows:** Choose those with an ENERGY STAR label to save **\$61 / year**
- ▶ **Water Heater:** Choose one with an ENERGY STAR label to save **\$159 / year**
- ▶ **Electric Heat Pump:** Choose one with an ENERGY STAR label to save **\$32 / year**

The **Recommendations** page provides cost-effective improvements, divided into "Repair Now" (e.g. better insulation, air sealing, duct sealing) and "Replace Later" (e.g. replacing HVAC and hot water equipment with ENERGY STAR rated options).