

# Energy Remodel

By Bobby Ferrel

Many designers and home builders are diversifying by seeking remodeling business during the economic slowdown that has affected new sales and starts. The energy-efficient new-home building and marketing methods are just as strategic and important for remodeling business. Buyers of resale homes value updates that improve air quality, comfort and energy savings. They find these improvements worthwhile — especially when documented and verified by qualified raters. Remodeled rooms, paint and wallpaper have commonly become do-it-yourself projects and a more difficult sell for professionals seeking remodeling business.

What exactly is an “Energy Remodel?” Simply stated, it is an important and

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responsible home improvement or maintenance project that can improve the health of the family and the performance of their home. Homes most needing of Energy Remodels have uncomfortable temperature variations, high energy bills or poor indoor air.

Potential areas in an existing home that may be addressed with an Energy Remodel

include air leaks from the attic or crawl space, windows, doors, insufficient insulation and the air and duct systems. The most impactful and simple modifications can eliminate hazardous (although invisible) pollutants and allergens that trigger allergies, asthma and COPD irritations.

To scientifically detect and repair the source of air or energy inadequacies, the

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following is a list of potential services and technologies that can be employed for an Energy Remodel:

- thermal imaging
- spray foam insulation
- central vacuum
- blower door test
- air and duct sealing
- closed crawl space
- unvented attic assembly
- waterproofing
- comfort issue resolution
- HVAC passive fresh air and advanced filtration

To get started with Energy Remodel business, consult with an expert offering these assessment/audit services. Then, present the homeowner client with the results and help them decide where to begin their remodel. Point out the benefits of saving money on energy bills, creating a healthier living environment for their loved ones, improving

indoor air quality, increasing their home's resale value and reducing their home's environmental impact (carbon footprint).

The same issues and assessments can be evaluated for new homes you build, to detect areas that can be tightened up and improved for better energy efficiency. Documentation that can be presented to potential buyers certifying the home for utility discounts and resale value can be built in from the beginning, saving resources in the future.

*Bobby Ferrel and Walker Harris are principals of Sustainable Building Solutions, located in Durham, NC. Sustainable Building Solutions strives to decompartmentalize the build process because components and systems of the home do not work independently. Appropriate consideration to the effects of each on the others maximizes energy efficiency and cost for their clients. SBS is currently trademarking their Energy Remodel service. For more information, call (919) 321-9985 or visit [www.buildinggreennnc.com](http://www.buildinggreennnc.com). ■*