

work very hard to seal the homes up to make sure there are no gaps or penetrations where air can get in."

In Ontario and Manitoba, code amendments outline a number of prescriptive construction methods or "recipes" to help builders achieve the new standards. In Ontario, for example, insulation in above-ground exterior walls will have to meet anywhere from an R24 to an R28 standard, depending on the types of insulation used elsewhere in the house, the efficiency of the home's HRV and other factors, such as the quality of the exterior barrier.

While the wall insulation requirement is a notable increase over the R19 minimum established in Ontario's 2006 code, it is totally feasible to achieve using traditional materials.



Manufacturers have been keeping a close eye on the move to Energuide 80. In January, Owens Corning Canada launched EcoTouch PINK FIBREGLAS insulation to replace its traditional product. This batt insulation contains over 70 per cent recycled content, making it a sustainable way to match or exceed Energuide 80 standards.

"With the codes going the way they are, we went to builders, we consulted the industry, we went to our customers and to their customers," says Andy Goyda, marketing development manager with Owens Corning Canada. "Builders are looking for a cost-effective way to meet the new standards. Yes, it is more expensive than before, but the most cost effective way to achieve this standard is still with batt insulation."

Rule Number Two: Ventilate it

"You don't want your house to be too tight," explains renovations contractor Joshua Abush, owner of Joshua Four Limited in Markham, Ontario. "You still have to have fresh air and good air quality in the house."

It may seem counterintuitive to the first rule, but this is the what-goes-in-must-go-out rule of energy efficient building, which most homebuilders are already employing.

HRVs have become standard in many provinces, and are essential to meeting Energuide 80. Exterior walls insulated to the

some challenges here because of how it's being used. A lot of people aren't using it properly, and it's causing a lot of condensation problems.

Steve Barkhouse, Amsted Construction Ltd. Ottawa

On green, I think improving education is the way to go. It must be consumer-driven; it can't be driven by the government or small interest groups. I think it's important to define what green is. It's different to everybody and there's a ton of greenwashing out there, so you really have to do your homework on the cork floors, bamboo floors, all of that stuff.

I personally believe it boils down, largely, to good or better building practices. Our company has actually been a green builder from day one. It's just that "green" wasn't a word back then like it is now. It was just good building practices back then.

We just finished a LEED Platinum renovation. We believe in a philosophy of the whole environment. It's important to us. We invest in green and we stay on the leading edge. We think it's important in Ottawa to be environmentally conscious.

Mark Hofstee, Rammik Construction Inc., Guelph, Ont.

As far as the green goes, some customers are initiating conversations regarding it. But I still think there's a bit of a disconnect between what the media is saying (that everyone is going green) and what the customers are actually asking for. The price gets in the way for a lot of green products. When they start figuring out what the cost is, customers back off. They'd rather that the cabinets are a little nicer than were full of all kinds of green products. I still think there's a bit of a disconnect there.

Pawel Matonog, Archer Construction Group Ltd., Mississauga, Ont.

I don't find clients are asking for too many green products. I don't pretend to be a specialist or an expert in the field. When I think of green building, I think things like insulation. I use spray foam wherever I can and I guess that can be considered green. You know, it's the cost difference. I think the main concern that people have is their return on investment. What they really want to know is how long before they get their money back for what we'll put in. Once they crunch the numbers they realize that it's a 10- or 15-year period before they actually get their money's worth out of this; the reality is most people don't live 10 or 15 years in the same home. So they usually choose to forget about it and put in nicer cabinets.