

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Getting The Most Out Of Your Windows

(NAPSA)—You wouldn't think of running your air conditioning or heat with your windows open, but that's essentially what you're doing if you neglect to replace your windows when they need it.

The good news is that new windows can make your home greener by providing energy efficiency, healthier by preventing water intrusion and mold, and safer if you consider impact-resistant products. Plus, a retrofit project provides one of the highest rates of return—up to 90 percent, according to some surveys.

The following tips can help you get the most out of your window replacement project:

- Consider your local climate, such as the number of heating and cooling days, average humidity and amount of sun exposure. Visit the Efficient Windows Collaborative at efficientwindows.org to compare actual energy costs by product and review available tax rebates. Ask your local power company about free inspections and information about rebates.

- Are you in an area susceptible to high winds such as hurricanes? Building codes require windows to meet certain performance criteria, depending on your location. Your local building department can be a resource for this information.

- Make this an opportunity to modify the look of your home. "WinGuard® and non-impact PGT® products are available in all shapes and sizes, such as circles, sun bursts and triangles," says window and door expert Debbie LaPinska of PGT Industries, manufacturer of custom windows and doors.

The three basic choices are



Homeowners should replace old windows for long-term savings.

products with wood, vinyl or aluminum frames. Vinyl units are most noted for thermal efficiency and durability, but require reinforcement upgrades in areas susceptible to extreme winds. Aluminum frames, ideal for coastal areas, are known for structural strength and low cost, but require upgrades to make them energy efficient. Wood frames are thermally efficient but tend to be high maintenance. They are best suited for low-humidity environments.

"It's important to think long term when evaluating a window replacement project," explains LaPinska. "Energy Star® options and energy-efficient vinyl frames can qualify you for tax rebates and reduce heating and cooling costs. In states where hurricanes are an issue, impact-resistant windows and doors, such as PGT® WinGuard®, can qualify homeowners for up to a 43 percent reduction in windstorm insurance."

Select reputable dealers and products and check references. Be wary of high-pressure telephone sales. You could end up with inferior products or pay too much. Visit pgtindustries.com or winguard.com for more information about replacing your windows and doors.