

ENERGY MATTERS

Light Your Home Without Lightening Your Wallet

(NAPSA)—There's good news for homeowners concerned about rising energy costs. You can save hundreds of dollars in taxes, and even more in lower power bills, by taking steps to reduce the amount of energy you use at home.

The Energy Tax Incentives Act of 2005 provides federal income tax credits for installing equipment upgrades, including qualifying energy-efficient exterior doors, windows and skylights. According to David Westbrook, a Charlotte, North Carolina, CPA and CFP™ (Certified Financial Planner), the regulations are quite specific but researching and purchasing qualifying products can be worth the effort for the tax breaks, not to mention ongoing energy bill savings.

"Residential tax credits, which are dollar-for-dollar reductions in your federal income tax, can be realized for heat pumps, central air conditioners, water heaters, furnaces or boilers and even insulation improvements such as sealing ducts," Westbrook says. "Exterior doors, windows and skylights also qualify," he says. He advises homeowners to do their homework prior to making purchases or improvements to be sure that specific government guidelines are met and the expenditures qualify. "A good starting point is www.energy.gov/taxbreaks.htm."

Joe Patrick, senior product manager with VELUX America, agrees that qualifying energy-efficient skylights, either replacements or new installations, can help to reduce power bills by bringing more balanced natural light and ventilation into homes.

"And there is a model and price range for every home,"



Energy-efficient skylights can earn tax credits while helping to reduce power bills.

Patrick says. "Available skylights include electric or manual venting; fixed with or without a ventilation flap; and fixed for replacing faded plastic bubble skylights with clear, energy-efficient glass. There are also models specially designed to meet code for use in hurricane-prone and other high-wind areas, as well as models with electrochromic glass that can be lightened or darkened by remote control and that don't restrict the view to the sky," he says.

In addition to skylights, roof windows are available for in-reach applications requiring egress, such as in finished attics, and VELUX Sun Tunnel™ skylights can be used when a view to the outside is not needed, as with closets, laundry rooms, pantries, hallways and second baths.

For information on skylight selection and the benefits of natural light, call (800) 283-2831 or visit www.veluxusa.com. For government information on window and skylight energy efficiency, visit www.energystar.gov, and for independent agency information visit www.nfrc.org or efficientwindows.org.