

50 Ways to Green Your Home and Save \$\$\$ in Greater Vancouver

→ LOCATION

Choosing Where You Live

1 Green neighbourhoods

Buy a home in a neighbourhood close to work, transit, shopping, community centres and other services.

2 Transit-oriented density (TOD)

New, compact, complete green neighbourhoods are being built with transit as their focus. Instead of owning a car, join a car share cooperative, take transit, cycle or walk.

3 Lower Cost Luxury

If it's features such as a gym or pool you want, buy a strata unit with these amenities and share costs.

4 Score your location

Walkable neighbourhoods offer health, environmental, financial and community benefits. Enter your address or the address of a home you want to buy at www.walkscore.com. This tool calculates a walkability score based on the home's proximity to transit, grocery stores, schools and other amenities.

→ HOME IMPROVEMENT

Heating and Cooling

5 Get an energy audit

[LiveSmart BC](http://LiveSmartBC.com) will cover \$150 of the cost.

6 Install a high-efficiency heating system

Make sure it's [ENERGY STAR](#) rated.

7 Weatherize your home

From windows (BC Hydro provides [grants](#) of \$60-\$120) to doors to insulation and weather stripping. Don't forget to [seal your ducts](#).

8 Insulate your pipes

It will prevent costly heat loss. [Here's how](#).

9 Insulate your hot water heater

Buy a pre-cut jacket or blanket for \$10-\$20. You'll save up to 10% on heating costs.

10 Install a programmable thermostat

Set it lower at night and during the day when you're away. Lower the temperature. Each degree below 20C saves you 3-5% on heating costs.

11 Clean your furnace filter

This optimizes performance.

12 Get the most from your fireplace

[Here's how to make it efficient](#).

13 Use curtains

In the daytime during summer, close to help cool your home.

14 Install ceiling fans

The energy it takes to run a fan is less than an air conditioner. In summer, make sure the fan's blades are rotating anti-clockwise for a cooling effect. In winter, the fan should be running clockwise, pushing the warm air down.

15 Use an electric fan

Skip the air conditioning. On hot summer days, place a bowl of ice in front of a fan to cool down.

→ WATER

16 Fix leaks. Fix leaking taps

One drop per second equals 7,000 litres of water wasted per year.

17 Install a filter

Stop buying costly bottled water which adds to the landfill.

→ LIGHTING

18 Change your light bulbs

Lighting accounts for 15% of your energy bill. Replace old bulbs with ENERGY STAR rated bulbs. Check for [rebates](#).

19 Sensor lights

Turn lights off outside when not in use.

20 Keep it dark

Light pollution is an increasing problem. Turn off outdoor lights to save energy and encourage night life such as bats and frogs. A single bat can eat tens of thousands of mosquitoes nightly. If you have safety concerns, use motion detector lights – which come on, only as needed.

21 Holiday lights

Use [LED lights](#).

→ KITCHEN

22 Replace your fridge

An old energy guzzling fridge costs you about \$85 a year to operate. Replace it with an ENERGY STAR fridge. BC Hydro

will [rebate you \\$50](#). BC Hydro will also not only come and pick up your old fridge free-of charge, they'll [rebate you \\$30](#).

23 Replace your dishwasher

Buy an ENERGY STAR appliance. BC Hydro will [rebate you \\$25](#).

24 Replace your freezer

Buy an ENERGY STAR appliance and BC Hydro will [rebate you \\$25](#).

→ BATHROOM

25 Low flow shower

Hot water accounts for 25% of your energy costs. For a \$15 investment you can save half the water of a standard shower say [experts](#).

26 High efficiency or dual flush (you choose the amount of water used) toilets

These are now required in new homes because of [water savings](#).

→ OFFICE

27 Use smart strips

Also known as power bars, this lets you power off all equipment at the same time.

28 Buy energy smart electronics

There are [rebates](#) available.

29 Recycle your old electronics

[Here's how](#).

Continued on page two

→ YARD IMPROVEMENT

30 Conserve water
Fresh water comprises just 3% the world's total water supply, so conserve. Get a rain barrel and harvest water you can use in your garden. Local governments such as [Vancouver](#) and [Richmond](#) will subsidize the cost.

31 Drip irrigation
It saves water compared to sprinklers.

32 Elbow grease
Don't power wash your driveway. Sweep it or use a scrub brush and pail.

33 Less lawn
Lawns waste water. Instead conserve and beautify using [indigenous plants](#) such as ferns, tiger lilies and hostas.

34 Grow your own
How much more will you spend on food this year? Even a few miniature fruit trees and a small vegetable garden in a raised bed or in containers will help keep you healthy and save you dollars. Lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, strawberries and blueberries thrive in our climate. [Here's how.](#)

35 Preserve your produce
Invest in home canning jars and equipment and a small freezer and enjoy your produce year round – at considerable savings. [Here's how.](#)

36 Bee friendly
We need [bees to pollinate](#), so get a few plant bee-friendly annuals such as asters, marigolds, sunflowers, zinnias; or perennials such as clematis, foxgloves, hollyhocks, roses or shrubs such as Buddleia.

37 Go chemical-free
“Get rid of weeds without using chemicals that harm us and our pets,” advises REALTOR® and Richmond City counselor, Derek Dang, who led the way to a bylaw banning cosmetic pesticides. His suggestion, “Use dish detergent or weed by hand.”

38 Plant fruit trees
They'll give you shade and fruit. [Plum, apple, pear and more.](#)

39 Compost
It will [make your garden grow](#) and divert waste from the landfill.

→ GREEN AND CLEAN

40 Clean green
Vinegar, baking soda and lemons clean as well as expensive, chemical-filled cleaning supplies for a fraction of the cost.

41 Green Laundry detergent
Use phosphate-free, biodegradable detergent.

42 Upgrade your washing machine
Replace your old washing machine with an ENERGY STAR washer that gets clothes clean using cold water and BC Hydro will [rebate you \\$75](#). Wait until you have a full load instead of washing clothes as you need them. Clean your lint trap after every use.

43 Install a clothesline
Dryers use a [huge amount of energy](#).

44 Get a rack
If your neighbourhood or strata prohibits clotheslines, buy a small drying rack.

→ LIVING GREEN

45 Recycle
Replace your old washing machine with an ENERGY STAR washer that gets clothes clean using cold water and BC Hydro will [rebate you \\$75](#). Wait until you have a full load instead of washing clothes as you need them. Clean your lint trap after every use.

46 Buy local
Your food doesn't travel long distances, you support local farmers and the local economy and you consume less pesticides.

47 Don't use paper or plastic
Use cloth bags when you shop or reuse your plastic bags.

→ FINANCING

- 48 Borrow green**
Most financial institutions offer “green” mortgages, including:
- [BMO Eco Smart Mortgage](#) offers home buyers a 3.89% rate on qualifying green properties.
 - [RBC Energy Saver™ Mortgage](#) gives home buyers a \$300 rebate for a home energy audit and a five-year 4.34% rate.
 - TD Canada Trust offers a [Green Mortgage and Green Home Equity line of credit](#). For each green mortgage TD donates \$100 to the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.
 - Vancity offers a [Bright Ideas home renovation loan](#) at prime +1% to home buyers and owners making green renovations.

- The [City of Vancouver](#) with Vancity offers a [home energy loan program](#) for home buyers and owners making energy efficient upgrades at 4.5% fixed rate over 10 years. The loan program is a 12 month pilot project with a goal of 500 homes participating. It will wrap up October 21, 2012. For more information attend a [loan info workshop](#) or call 604-374-0507.
- CMHC offers a [10% Mortgage Loan Premium refund](#) and possible extended amortization for buyers purchasing an energy-efficient mortgage or making energy saving renovations.

→ RESOURCES

49 Green Tool Kit
BC Real Estate Association's [Green Tool Kit](#) provides information, references and links. It also provides comprehensive information on rebates and incentives.

→ COMING SOON

50 Loan programs
Pay-as-you-Save (PAYS) loan program will help home owners and businesses finance energy efficiency improvements through a loan from BC Hydro or FortisBC. Expected to launch in 2012.



Source REBGV.