

Energy Costs

There are many reasons to reduce the energy costs associated with operating our homes or commercial buildings. Some focus on cost savings, while others take a more political/environmental approach. Whatever the reason, we can all agree that energy costs are going up & will continue to go up. Utility companies, like PG&E, have an average annual electric bill rate increase of 5%, which translates into each home/commercial building owner paying hundreds of more dollars in energy costs over the years.

4.3 What can we do to keep inflationary energy costs down? Installing solar panels is a definite alternative that can drastically reduce long-term energy costs. Many counties & utility companies offer low interest financing options and/or rebates for solar purchases. CA offers incentives & rebates through its Energy Upgrade California program, a statewide energy management initiative designed to help residents and small businesses learn the best ways to take action on energy to save money and be more comfortable at home and at work. The Federal Government also offers tax credits for energy efficiency upgrades.

2.4 Other less expensive energy efficiency upgrades, like air sealing, insulating & radiant barrier offer short-term & long-term returns on your investment. In fact, the EPA estimates that homeowners can typically save up to 20% of heating and cooling costs (or up to 10% of total energy costs) by air sealing their homes and adding insulation in attics, floors over crawlspaces, and accessible basement rim joists (EnergyStar.gov). In addition, studies have shown that radiant barriers can reduce cooling costs 5% to 10% when used in a warm, sunny climate (Energy.gov).

2 Air sealing & insulating are also eligible for incentives, rebates & financing through the same Federal, State & county programs.

If you are considering becoming as energy independent as possible installing solar & complimenting it with a well-sealed & insulated attic system with radiant barrier can make a big difference on your utility bills.

For more information on energy efficiency incentives, rebates & financing solutions visit energyupgradeca.org, smud.org, pge.com, energy.ca.gov, energy.gov, energystar.gov.

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