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Home Energy Audits Save Money, and Even Lives

Having a home energy audit performed is a vital step towards ensuring the health and safety of your home. Testing the safety and efficiency of combustion appliances (such as your furnace, water heater, gas fireplace and gas range oven) saves you money, and it could even save your life.

Known as combustion appliance zone (CAZ) testing, this quick and easy test is part of a complete home energy audit package that improves the comfort, safety and value of your home.



GreenSavers Energy Specialist David Fittipaldi
Performs CAZ Testing on a water heater.

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, 1,500 Americans die each year from accidental exposure to carbon monoxide (CO), and there are more

than 10,000 injuries from exposure each year. Although most CO poisoning happens during a one-time sudden incidence, it is possible to suffer from chronic CO poisoning. This occurs when someone is exposed to low levels over weeks or months (for instance, due to a faulty furnace), and experiences symptoms over a longer period of time.

Just last week, an energy auditor from GreenSavers USA prevented a potentially tragic situation. Performing a routine CAZ test and gas detection tests, home energy specialist Dave Bowman discovered extremely high levels of natural gas in a home. The Home owner's had become so accustomed to the smell they did not realize it was coming from their improperly installed gas range oven.

Because CO is colorless, odorless, and tasteless, the homeowner was completely unaware of the issue and had been living in a toxic environment ever since a furnace was improperly installed. Dave acted quickly, alerting the homeowner of the danger of the situation and taking steps to mitigate the problem.

While this scenario was due to an improperly installed furnace, other problems can arise. Your bath exhaust fans, kitchen hoods, clothes dryers, laundry room and attic exhaust fans, and HVAC air handlers all work to depressurize your home. When one or more of these is operating at the same time, negative pressure is created in your home, allowing combustible gases to leak from these appliances, creating a potentially dangerous situation.

Vented combustion appliances—gas and fuel oil water heaters, furnaces, boilers, even fireplaces—need to exhaust all of their combustion by-products outside the home at all times. That's why it's so important to have a CAZ test performed in your home as part of a broader home safety and efficiency test.

CAZ Tests include:

- **Depressurization** - Ensures there is adequate combustion air for the water heater and furnace to operate properly
- **Carbon Monoxide** - Checks the air for carbon monoxide, a by-product of improper combustion.
- **Natural Gas Leak** - Checks for natural gas leaks at all pipes and connections.
- **Spillage Test** - Checks for spillage of combustion gases and moisture at the hot water heater draft diverter.
- **Draft Test at Common Flue** - Checks for negative pressure at the exhaust flues for the furnace and water heater.



Dave Bowman, from GreenSavers USA conducts an in-depth home energy audit.

Having a home energy audit performed isn't just for people concerned about health and safety. High performing, energy efficient homes are highly desirable in the housing market and increase the value of your home.

Now is the time to take advantage of generous cash incentives and available financing options to improve your home's performance. As a Trade Ally contractor of Clean Energy Works of Oregon and the Energy Trust of Oregon, GreenSavers USA helps ensure that you receive the maximum savings from rebates and zero-down financing options to maximize your home's performance. GreenSavers eliminates the hassles and processes your incentive applications for you!

Homes built before 1993 may qualify for a FREE home assessment. Our comprehensive 4-hour Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® assessments include:

- Air leakage test
- Duct leakage test
- Gas leakage detection
- Insulation inspection and assessment
- Attic and crawlspace assessment
- Window and door assessment
- Ventilation and Building Airflow Standards reports
- Safety analysis of your combustion appliances
- Appliance efficiency ratings
- Thermal imaging

If you're interested in seeing how you can benefit from an in-depth home energy audit, call GreenSavers USA at (541) 330-8767 or visit our website at greensaversusa.com.

GreenSavers Home Performance Upgrades

- Insulation
- Window and door replacement
- Furnaces and air conditioners
- Tank and tankless water heaters
- Ducted and ductless heat pumps
- Attic & roof ventilation systems
- Air sealing with foam insulation
- Duct sealing

GreenSavers USA is a “one-stop-shop” solution for all your home performance contracting needs. As certified and technically trained building performance analysts, we believe it's impossible to make a change in one part of the home without having an impact on another. We also believe a sustainable home is a healthy and comfortable home for you, your family, and the planet. That's why we use a holistic approach to transform your home.

Call us today at (541) 330-8767 or visit us at greensaversusa.com