

2010 Earth Day Workshop on the Time of Sale Home Energy Labelling Pilot Program

The Earth Festival Society is teaming up with the Victoria Real Estate Board, CityGreen Solutions and realtor, Gord Ellis, to offer a free workshop to the community on energy-related considerations when you sell your home or look to buy a new one. The workshop is a part of Salt Spring's Earth Day celebrations on Sunday, April 18. Because space is limited, pre-registration will be required. To register, call Marion Pape at 250-537-4567 or e-mail marionpape@telus.net.

This workshop will provide a rare opportunity to hear about the EnerGuide assessment process on a recent Salt Spring listing, review the assessment report and tour the house itself. The owners and the realtor will be on hand to participate in the workshop and answer questions. A blower door demonstration will also be provided. This workshop will be presented by CityGreen Solutions, professionals in energy assessments.

The Time of Sale Labelling pilot project allows potential homebuyers to easily compare the energy efficiencies of various homes, based on the homes' EnerGuide for Houses rating, similar to a fuel economy rating for a car, which will be posted on the MLS listings of participating homes. The rating is calculated through the home energy efficiency assessment and takes into account windows, doors, insulation, air leakage, heating systems and calculates how the home uses energy as a system.

While many buyers are focused on the initial purchase price of a home, a secondary concern is the home's future operating costs which is one of the highest payments most people will make over the course of their lifetimes. The EnerGuide rating provides important information to have when trying to predict the future operating costs of one home versus another. The good news is, these costs can be reduced. "Energy efficiency is important to buyers in this market said Jim Bennett of the Victoria Real Estate Board. Findings from a recent survey conducted by the BC Real Estate Association suggest the majority of British Columbians (65 per cent) would be willing to pay more for an energy efficient home. This pilot is going to help sellers communicate the energy efficiency potential of their homes and help buyers find the right home for them."

A \$75 grant from the money Salt Spring won for the first Green Cities Award is being made available for this pilot. In addition, the province just recently extended the very popular LiveSmart BC program with funding for rebates. So now is an excellent time to consider energy efficiency for your existing or new home.

If you are selling your home and would like to participate in this pilot, contact your local realtor for an introductory information kit, which also includes a recently published Sustainability Checklist for even more valuable information. (www.saltspringenergystrategy.org)