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Snow, blizzards, Arctic winds and damaging ice storms have wreaked havoc across the country this winter. While it may feel as though spring will never come, building experts suggest that now is the time for homeowners to consider spring home improvements that add value and comfort to the home.

The push toward energy conservation and sustainable materials has introduced homeowners to a greater range of affordable options that can add true value to a home. Green options such as roof-mounted solar hot water systems, gray-water recycling systems and high-efficiency window systems are just some of the options available to homeowners that not only help contribute to a greener environment but also help save money each month.

Some of the most valuable “green home” improvements are able to facilitate reduced utility bills, as well as provide year round comfort. Before beginning a home renovation project, homeowners should assess their wants against the needs of their home. Building professionals will say that a home’s envelope, or the exterior-facing surfaces of the building, is typically regarded as the weakest link since it is constantly exposed to the elements. Reinforcing a home’s envelope can have a strong positive impact on how efficient and comfortable a home can be.

One area of the building envelope that can be boosted is the insulation. While traditional insulation materials provide thermal comfort, they fall behind sealing against air leaks, and therefore do not create a greener home. Modern insulation options such as spray foam insulation can help homeowners reduce energy consumption by adequately air sealing the home to stop any air leaks.

Air leakage can limit the effectiveness of heating and cooling systems. Floors, walls and ceilings can account for up to 31 percent of air leakage in a home, according to InsulationSmart.com. Spray foam insulation, which can help combat air leakage, is growing in popularity amongst homeowners since it is an energy-efficient material that delivers year-round benefits. Spray foam insulation, like that available from Icynene, works well in all types of homes across the country, regardless of climate.

Spray foam insulation performs for the life of the property, ensuring that homeowners can enjoy comfortable indoor temperatures all year round without overrunning their heating and cooling equipment. Insulation experts from Icynene note that quality spray foam insulation can noticeably reduce heating and cooling costs, in some cases by up to 50 percent. Additionally, spray foam insulation helps minimize random airborne moisture and pollutants from entering the home, ideal for allergy sufferers making an ideal home improvement investment that adds true value to a home.