

Industry News

Energy use costs us all

LAURA KEYS

Australian households generate nearly one-fifth of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions annually.

A little foresight and professional advice at the planning stage of your new home could save thousands of dollars over the years by reducing your energy usage and costs and help the environment at the same time.

Reducing your household's energy bills by just \$120 will prevent one tonne of greenhouse gases from being emitted into the atmosphere, according to the Australian Greenhouse Office.

There are many ways to improve the energy efficiency of a home and the best time to do it is before it is built.

Changes can be made once a home is built but it is far more economical and effective to do it before building starts.

Common mistakes people make when designing a new home are having the wrong insulation for their house type, the wrong glazing and

having the house face the wrong way on the block.

By taking account of these matters before construction starts, homeowners can enhance their homes' energy efficiency, resulting in a more sustainable houses with lower power bills.

BSP Construction Consultants is a Perth-based firm which offers energy inspections for people planning to build or who have already built.

For an initial outlay of a few hundred dollars, BSP's consultants can liaise with homeowners over the plans for their new house and in a comprehensive report provide advice and suggestions on how to improve its energy performance.

As well as recommending options for orientation, window placement, size and glazing, the inspection can also cover the best materials to use in terms of bricks and tiles.

Energy inspections can also be used by those who have already completed their new homes.

"Some people think once they've built it's too late to make any changes, but it's not," said BSP managing



director Brad Porteus. "It might be a little more difficult or expensive to retrofit an existing home, but it's still worth it."

Existing windows, for example, could be fitted with a laminated film to reduce heat penetration and changing the type of insulation in a home was also possible, he said.

BSP's energy inspections start at \$365, which includes a written report.

BSP managing director Brad Porteus: "Some people think once they've built it's too late to make any changes but it's not."