

**With Energy Bills on the Rise,
Six in Ten (60%) Canadian Homeowners Planning
Environmentally-Friendly Renovations
*Most are Motivated By Financial Savings***

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Ipsos Reid

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With Energy Bills on the Rise, Six in Ten (60%) Canadian Homeowners Planning Environmentally-Friendly Renovations *Most are Motivated By Financial Savings*

Toronto, ON – According to the 5th Annual Home Renovation survey conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of RBC, six in ten (60%) Canadians who are currently planning home renovations plan to include environmentally-friendly improvements in their work. While on the surface this appears to be the effect of Canadians ‘going green’, in reality, it seems to be mostly motivated by their pocketbook.

Most (76%) renovators say they would only ‘choose an environmentally friendly approach if it saved them money in the long run, even if it costs more now’. On the other hand, 15% ‘would choose the least expensive approach now, and not worry about the environmental impact’, while only 8% say they ‘would choose an environmentally friendly approach even if it costs more now’ and doesn’t save them any money in the long run.

With the average Canadian reporting an increase of 16% this year on their monthly energy bill, three in ten (30%) renovators say that among the primary reasons for their upcoming renovation is to increase energy efficiency, a significant rise from the 14% of Canadians who mentioned the same reason last year. Further, two thirds (64%) of Canadians say that they would consider having an environmental audit done on their home, where an inspector comes and tells you where you are losing energy and what can be done to improve the situation in your home.

Interestingly, three quarters (76%) of homeowners believe that eco-friendly or green home improvements would increase the value of their home. Thinking about which types of renovations would increase the value of their home the most, homeowners thought that ‘replacing windows’ (67%), ‘installing a high-efficiency furnace’ (64%), installing solar panels (61%), ‘installing high-efficiency appliances’ (59%), installing insulation (58%) and installing low-flow toilets and shower heads (51%) would be the best way to increase the value of their home. One in three (33%) even thought that installing sustainable products (i.e. bamboo floors, stone, etc) would increase the value of their home the most.

Canadian homeowners were also asked about two interesting concepts: living off the grid and being a net-zero user of energy:

- **Living off the Grid:** Referring to living in a self-sufficient manner without reliance on one or more public utilities, a home that lives off the grid is able to produce all of its own energy independently from the municipal systems. A majority (51%) of Canadians say that this is something that they would consider (17% definitely/34% probably). In fact, 52% says it’s possible (8% very/44% maybe) for them to live off the grid in the next 5 years, while seven in ten (71%) say it’s possible (17% very/53% maybe) in the next 10 years.
- **Net-Zero Energy User:** Referring to a home that generates as much, if not more energy, than they draw from the municipal grid on an annual basis, being a net-zero energy user means that sometimes you use more energy than you produce, and other times you use less energy than you produce and the excess is placed back on the grid. Two thirds (66%) of Canadians think that being a net-zero house is something that they would consider (18% defiantly/48% probably). A majority (56%) thinks it’s



possible (7% very/49% maybe) for their current household to become this in the next 5 years, while seven in ten (71%) think it's possible (14% very/57% maybe) in the next 10 years.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of RBC from August 13 to August 18, 2008. This online survey of 3733 adult homeowners was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 1.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, if all adults living in Ontario had been polled.

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