

## **Software Helps Homeowners Improve Energy Efficiency Made in Canada Solution to Energy Savings**

**May 9, 2006:** In response to soaring costs and increasing interest in energy efficiency, a Canadian company has given homeowners the ability to take charge of their energy use and determine cost-effective ways to reduce consumption and greenhouse gas emissions based on their unique pattern of energy use. Winergy Canada's EnergyWiz® is an easy-to-use software program which analyzes a household's unique habits and provides a detailed report of ways to improve efficiency in the home. The EnergyWiz program is now available from Zellers and is bundled with compact fluorescent bulbs as a first step to reducing energy consumption.

“Approximately twenty percent of home energy use is wasted, equating to \$2.4 billion thrown away on energy every year,” says John Elliott, co-creator of the EnergyWiz program. “Energy prices are spiking again, meaning people will be facing larger energy bills through the next several months. EnergyWiz® gives consumers the ability to take charge of their energy consumption and make energy-saving decisions based on current information.”

Incorporating the most current energy data and the homeowner's information about their home and behaviour, homeowners are able to perform a home energy audit and discover ways to reduce energy use and save money. EnergyWiz® is a comprehensive energy audit, examining details including hot water usage and overnight temperature settings. Over eighty-five energy-saving options can be analyzed ranging from behavioural changes to equipment upgrades. Reports include any combination of energy-saving options based on the homeowner's selections. EnergyWiz® is designed to be easily navigated and homeowners need only basic computer skills to benefit from the program.

An EnergyWiz® mini CD is bundled with extremely efficient compact fluorescent bulbs in Zellers stores across Canada, retailing for \$14.97. The Windows-based software package may be downloaded directly from the Winergy website for \$19.99 or a mini-CD may be ordered for \$24.99. In comparison, professional auditors charge between \$200 and \$300 and many don't take into account the homeowners personal behavior such as nighttime temperatures. The average energy consumption per house can be reduced by about 25% and CO2 emissions cut by 3.8 tonnes per year. CO2 is considered a greenhouse gas that is a major contributor to global warming.

EnergyWiz includes up-to-date energy values for all regions in Canada. These numbers are automatically used when the homeowner doesn't provide personal data so a comprehensive audit is provided. The report details dollars saved for energy-saving options selected and provides a timeline for when savings will 'pay for' an energy saving option such as a more efficient washing machine.

Homeowners choose from 89 energy-saving choices ranging from behavioral changes to equipment upgrades. A report of annual savings is generated for any change or combination of changes implemented in the home. Graphs display all energy types, water usage, heat loss breakdown and even the resulting reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

EnergyWiz® was conceived in the mid 1990s when Ontario Hydro launched the PowerSaver program. Homeowners were asked to fill out a detailed questionnaire that was returned to Ontario Hydro for an analysis and energy saving recommendations. A forty percent response rate indicated consumers were extremely interested in ways to cut energy use in the home, but the program was cancelled due to the high operating cost.

“We knew consumers were interested in taking charge of their energy use, it was just a matter of determining how to reach them in a cost-effective way,” says Elliott.

Founded in 1998, Winergy is a Canadian company that specializes in energy-saving techniques for the homeowner. In 2003 Winergy Canada launched EnergyWiz®, a software package, that helps Canadians determine the best ways to save money through reduced energy consumption. EnergyWiz home audit software analyzes a homeowner’s energy personal behavior and their physical structure in order to determine how to reduce energy use and save money. EnergyWiz® also calculates the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of reduced home energy use. See [www.winergergy.ca](http://www.winergergy.ca) for more information.

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