

## What makes a good energy audit?

At Build Green Maine we take pride in conducting thorough whole-house building assessments and then helping guide homeowners through the tough choices in improving health, comfort and savings in their homes. But, there are a few different approaches to building assessments that can range from a contractor walkthrough to a state utility program audit. While we'll discuss them here it is important to remember that these abbreviated walk-thrus have one thing in common, they are specific. An insulation contractor may inspect your attic and take measurements of the areas in which they propose to work, and ignore mold in the basement. An HVAC contractor can upgrade your heating system without noting the absence of insulation in the attic. A utility program visit may perform air sealing, but ignore the three empty refrigerators in the garage making your electric meter spin.

There is nothing wrong with these "audits" and they constitute the majority of evaluations in the industry. But this is not what we do at Build Green Maine. Our business model is simply to be the homeowner's independent residential energy expert and facilitator. When we conduct an audit, we look at the whole house and all of its systems. We do this with the understanding that the relationship between a home's energy performance and its occupants is a long and multi-layered one. Some building changes are important for health and safety, others for comfort, while still others to save energy and improve the family budget.

The Build Green Maine approach is to first fully inspect all assemblies and materials in the building, we do this visually and with the aid of infrared technology. We measure and document the building from top to bottom, from inside to out. Next, we diagnostically measure the air leakage of the house, but this isn't just a blower door test. We identify and measure different air leakage pathways and determine their extent and we measure the imbalances caused by the heating system and exhaust appliances, as well as their impact on connecting isolated wall and floor cavities. Finally, we take all of the collected data of the house and quantitatively model it in relation to actual utility bills, the math often finds weaknesses or connections invisible to the naked eye. The results are summarized and discussed in detail in a report presented to you.

<u>Audit Type</u>	<u>Attic</u>	<u>Basement</u>	<u>Infrared Scan</u>	<u>Safety Tests</u>	<u>Air Leakage</u>	<u>Zonal Pressures</u>	<u>Appliances</u>	<u>Energy Model</u>	<u>Final Report</u>
Build Green Maine	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Walk-thru	X	X	X						
Utility Program	X	X		X	X				

From this point onwards, what we do in your house is based on a fully informed and discussed perspective. Anything can show up in your report whether it impacts health and safety, comfort, finances or the durability of the structure. We do this because health is a relationship. You don't go to a hospital for a one-time fix for your body, nor should you expect the same for your house. There is a lot of great work being done in many homes by many energy efficiency professionals. Not every house or circumstance warrants a whole-house evaluation. Nevertheless, in this industry Build Green Maine is proud to offer the highest standard of care and diagnostics in the assessment of your home.