

## Expert can help homeowners cut their utility bills

□ Consumers want more energy efficiency.

By JAN McLINN  
For The Globe-Gazette

With the news of increased heating costs a common topic almost everywhere you turn, North Iowans are taking these predictions very seriously.

According to information from Alliant Energy's "Home Energy Audit" 60 cents out of every dollar you spend on energy goes to heat and cool your home.

"Every year, the average American home loses \$150 worth of energy through inefficient appliances, lack of insulation or drafty windows and doors."

Alliant will send a certified energy expert to inspect your home and help you identify ways to reduce your energy use, give you estimates on how much they will cost and how much you can expect to save.

To qualify for this program, you must be a residential customer of Alliant Energy in Iowa or Minnesota, and your home must meet certain criteria including:

- The home must be built prior to 1992
- Attic insulation measures six inches or less
- Primary heating energy is through Alliant Energy

According to Jeff Craig with Globe Siding and Insulation, an

authorized Alliant Energy insulation contractor, there are a number of factors which explain the growing concern by consumers for a more energy-efficient lifestyle.

"The rate increase predictions combined with the fact that people are more conscientious has created a greater sense of urgency," Craig said. Other factors which Craig feels are significant include an increased awareness of energy issues, and also the public is assuming a more proactive, "be prepared" stance when faced with the rising energy costs.

Craig's third generation company, Globe Insulation and Siding, was established in 1920. Craig alone has over 30 years of experience. He said, "When we provide an evaluation we record the existing insulation, and then determine what needs to be brought up to code."

Craig's services include the full scale evaluation, an explanation of benefits from their recommendations, a comprehensive explanation of the actual application as well as the reasoning for recommending a particular product or products, and then the installation of the products. "We take care of the energy-efficiency from A to Z," Craig said.

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Especially helpful to the average consumer that may have trouble understanding the term "R Value" or other industry terminology, Globe Insulation and Siding assists customers in the administrative processes necessary to obtain the rebates available to them by improving their home insulation.

A new program available through Alliant in just the past 30 days is a Replacement Window Rebate. The Efficiency Solutions Replacement Windows Program "is designed to improve the energy efficiency of your home by installing high performance windows that can significantly reduce annual energy bills without sacrificing style, versatility or comfort."

Craig's specialty is attic and sidewall insulation, replacement windows and siding. "However," he said, "I feel am in the field of conserving energy."

Craig said many homes have the "original equipment" with the windows considered "moving parts" which in time will need to be replaced.

Craig added that in a home that is turn of the century on up to 1960, generally the cavities are empty. Craig's company specializes in what is known as "Retro Fit" energy efficiency for these older homes.

And how much can you save by making these improvements?

Craig provided a hypothetical example. "If an attic is under-insulated and the sidewalls are empty and have no material, and you decide to bring this home up to code, then you can expect to save 30 to 40 percent off of your fuel bill."

For details on the Home Energy Audit, the Replacement Window Rebate, and other energy incentive programs available through Alliant Energy in the Mason City area, visit its web site at [www.alliantenergy.com](http://www.alliantenergy.com), or phone 1-800-255-4268.