

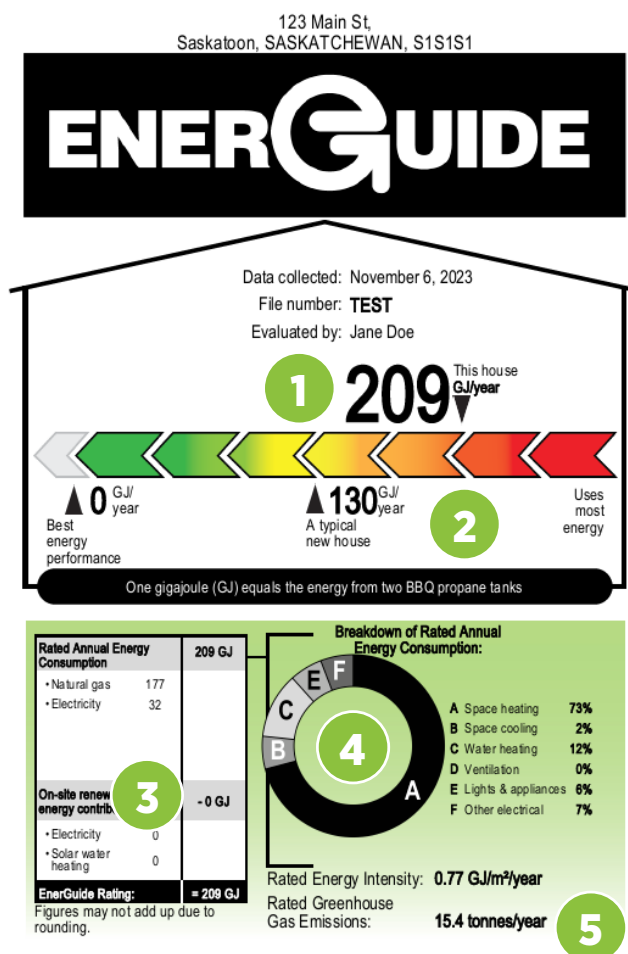
HOW TO INTERPRET ENERGUIDE LABELS

Have you seen a house with an EnerGuide label? Just like the EnerGuide or Energy Star labels on appliances, a home's EnerGuide label tells you about the home's energy use. It is an excellent tool for understanding whether a house is lean and green, or a "gas guzzler." Getting your home EnerGuide rated is also required for many energy retrofit funding opportunities.

The label is normally located on a house's electrical panel. It's a summary of the full Homeowner Information Report you'll get if you hire an EnerGuide certified Energy Advisor to assess your home.

Let's look at the 5 parts of the EnerGuide Label, referencing the red numbers in the photo on the right.

1. This is your home's total annual energy use. It includes everything from the furnace to the TV. The unit GJ stands for "gigajoule." One GJ of energy is roughly the amount of energy in two BBQ propane tanks.
2. This is how much energy a typical new house of the same size and shape as yours would use. ("Typical" means built to meet the minimum building code requirements). If your home's rating shown by point 1 is less than this value, that's a good thing!
3. This section shows how much of each type of energy you use. Most homes in Saskatoon use natural gas for heating and hot water, and electricity for everything else. Electricity can come from the power grid, or from solar panels.
4. This chart breaks down where all that energy is being used. Most Canadian houses use the lion's share of their energy for space heating (64% on average). Water heating is often the next biggest use.
5. This section shows you two things. First, your energy use divided by your floor space. This can help you compare energy use between houses of different size. A house that uses the same amount of energy as yours but is twice as big is much more efficient per unit of floor space. Second, it shows your home's greenhouse gas emissions, based on average emissions factors for the electricity and natural gas in your area (not including any power from solar panels, if installed).



The energy consumption indicated on your utility bills may be higher or lower than your EnerGuide rating. This is because standard assumptions have been made regarding how many people live in your house and how the home is operated. Your rating is based on the condition of your house on the day it was evaluated.

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Now, let's dive a little deeper into the things that the EnerGuide label doesn't tell you.

1. Your specific energy use habits. The label is based on Canadian average values for number of occupants, appliance energy use, hot water use, etc. So, if you often take 30-minute showers or have a large family, you will end up using more than the average values used in the label.
2. How your home will compare to future homes. The energy efficiency requirements in the building code in Canada are steadily increasing. So, just because your house is looking better than the average new home today, doesn't mean it still will in 5 or 10 years. That's why it's always wise to look for ways to improve energy efficiency when you repair or renovate your home.
3. Detailed information on your home's energy use. While the EnerGuide label is just a snapshot, you can find additional information on your home in the Homeowner Information Report that comes with the label.
4. The best energy improvements for your home. If you are looking to improve the efficiency of your home, be sure to review your Renovation Upgrade Report, which also comes with your label. This report will include a list of the energy efficiency upgrades that the advisor recommends, along with how much energy each upgrade will save.

