

Save Money and Energy: Local Barre Man Shows How Efficiency Can Be for Everyone

-Lauren Maus, UVM and Net Zero Vermont

Local Barre City resident Fred Pond, is a native Vermonter who has always been interested in reducing his carbon footprint. He sometimes found this hard to do however, on a librarian's salary.

These days, Fred has found ways to take some of the burden off his own handy man skills, while also saving himself money. In fact, because of Fred's home improvements he hasn't seen an electric bill since last March!



Attic insulation below the floor keeps heat from escaping through the roof.

Fred started his home weatherization project back in 2015, after spending a year to become more informed about the latest home energy projects. Efficiency Vermont, a statewide company, offered Fred help to pay for an initial energy efficiency audit and the project took off from there. Today Fred wants others to know how choosing energy efficiency measures and installing technologies can make projects like his much more manageable.

Improvements Fred made to his home started with insulating the attic, an initial step Efficiency Vermont helped him decide on. Choosing where to begin is often daunting, but thanks to green-minded Efficiency Vermont experts and businesses, this step became a lot less challenging. Other improvements

followed including insulating hot water pipes and installing heat pumps. Along with Efficiency Vermont, Green Mountain Power, Capstone Community Action, and Ace Hardware all provided invaluable assistance and guidance. Fred had no idea these services previously existed. Asking questions of the experts and being involved in the process were important factors in making this project a success for Mr. Pond.



Basements air sealing in floor joists, around pipes to outdoor walls, and more.

One of the most frequent concerns when it comes to home improvement projects, especially those meant to decrease carbon emissions, is the initial cost.

Saving money in the long run is all well and good but it requires having the money to invest in the first place.

Luckily, today there are more options. Vermont Credit Unions, for example, now partner with Efficiency Vermont to provide low or no cost financing options. What are known as Green Loans are also available for solar panels and electric cars.

When discussing the matter, Fred said "The loan is eventually going to go away and then I'll really start saving."

Fred proudly discussed how his initiatives cut his oil consumption by 75%, so much so, that he only purchases oil once a year.

Along with clear financial benefits, Fred frequently remarks on the increased comfort of his

home after completing the renovations. “There are no more breezes and the insulation has really quieted the house down” Fred commented.

“Its important people know that you can win by having a more comfortable house to live with lower bills, all while reducing your carbon footprint.”

When asked what he would want his neighbors to understand about home weatherization, Fred responded, “Be realistic about the time frame. Even though this might be a long process, the reward has been very worth it for me.”

Fred has set an example of how the average homeowner CAN participate in greening practices today and even save money doing it. Each year he ticks off the list of improvements. He’s on to another heat pump install to add comfort to his house.

The Barre City Energy Committee, commended Fred for his actions, so much so, they are considering to make Fred’s story into a campaign.

So, what’s holding you back? Start your process and join the “Be Like Fred” campaign today. Let us know by posting your story on BCEC’s Facebook page or email us at:

barrecityenergycommittee@gmail.com

At-a-Glance—

Low Cost Energy Efficiency & Conservation Tips

1. Clean and vacuum baseboards of dust, debris, pet hair
2. Change the filter on your furnace
3. Set window air conditioners higher (72+ degrees F) in the summer months
4. Layer-up (sweater and warmer clothing) Oct-April months
5. Ensure that fireplace dampers are secured tight when not in use
6. Install weather stripping
7. Check flapper plate on bathroom fans
8. Lock windows shut during winter months
9. Draw window blinds and curtains to retain heat inside, or maintain cool rooms (summer)
10. Replace old thermostat with programmable thermostat
11. Install electric variable speed circulator pumps (homes/businesses)



Heat map of the room, illustrates where losses are occurring. Dark areas indicate where heat is escaping.

Fred’s Home Efficiency and Solar Investments

Insulation (basement/attic)

Heat pump 12,000 BTU’s

Foam around pipes, cracks

Roof solar 6 kW installed