

DREAM

HOME

Your

# Fusion Interiors

WHERE STYLE AND CONSERVATION COME TOGETHER





# A Fusion design for any room

**M**aking your home comfortable, stylish and environmentally-friendly has never been easier or more affordable. Fusion interiors bring together the best in design with green products and approaches to create eco-chic spaces for every taste and budget.

Fusion interiors respect the style of the home. A Fusion design considers a range of styles and marries these with eco-friendly, fashion-forward approaches and products to create a comfortable and elegant space.

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**Whether you plan to renovate your entire home, remodel a room or replace windows or appliances, use the tips provided in this guide to help you create your own Fusion-inspired space.**

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Modern energy and water saving fixtures and appliances and new and reclaimed materials for home renovations make living more in harmony with nature, stylish, convenient and easier on the pocketbook.

# Planning your Fusion renovation

**T**ake time to plan your update or remodel. Doing a little homework before you begin will help ensure you're happy with the results, avoid costly mistakes, and get the best return for your renovation dollar.

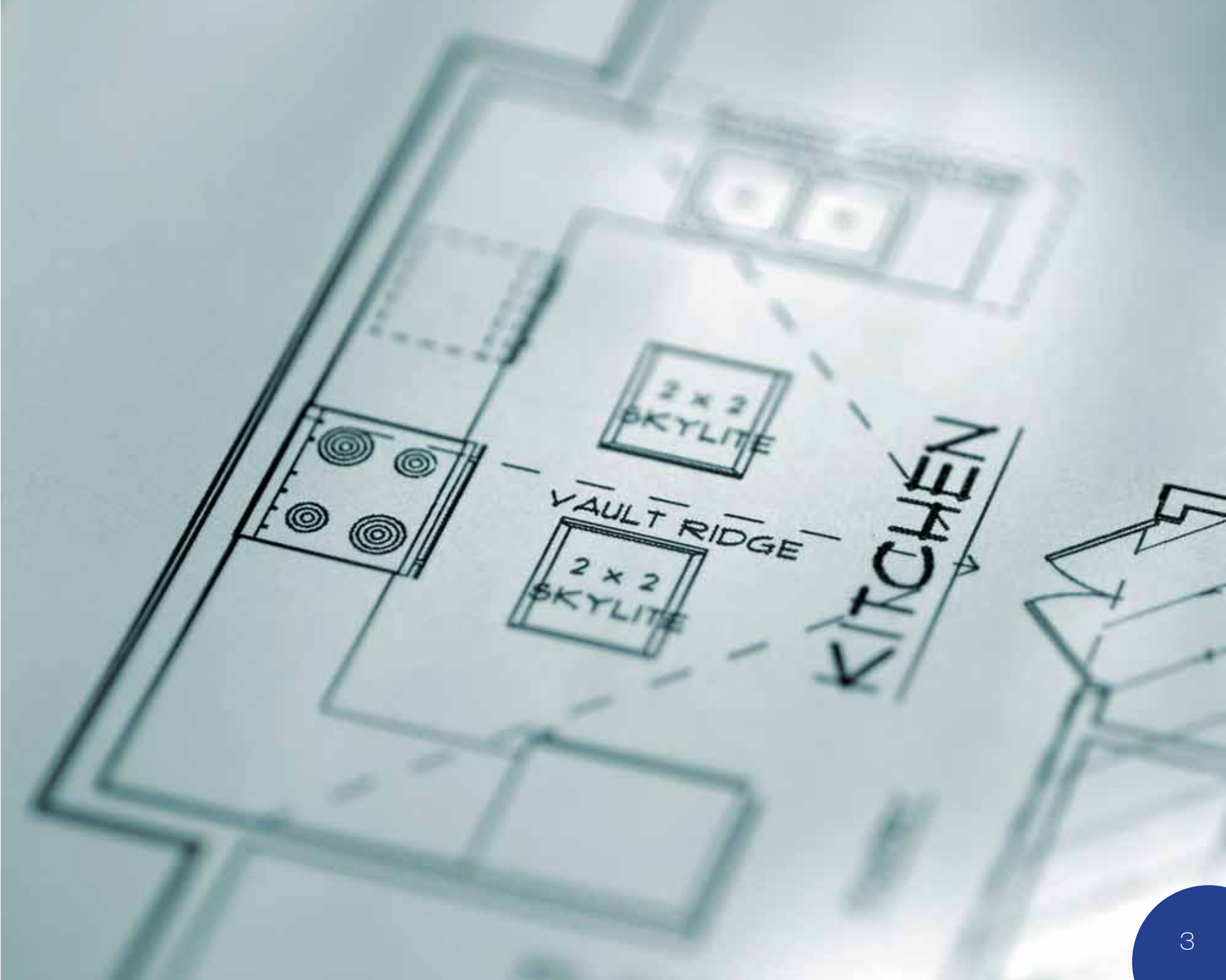
Renovating can be a costly and frustrating process so good planning is essential to a successful renovation. Here are some simple planning steps before you begin your renovation:

- Consider having an energy and water audit of your home before renovating. You will get good advice that will save you time and money!
- Determine your budget. Include a contingency of 20 to 30 percent of your total renovation budget for unforeseen costs such as old wiring hidden behind a wall or design changes that you might want to make.

## Get a minimum of three quotes

*Be as specific and detailed in your work request as possible. Ask the contractor to provide a written, itemized quote. This approach will help you avoid costly surprises and your contractor will have a good understanding of your wants and expectations.*

- Understand as much as you can about your planned renovation before contacting contractors for quotes. Information and understanding are key to making the right choices throughout the renovation process.
- Consider the impact of the renovation on your lifestyle. If you are doing a kitchen renovation, you may need to set up a makeshift kitchen in your basement or dining room. If possible, you might want to wait until summer when you can take the cooking and eating out to the patio.
- Check for the availability of materials before beginning your renovation. If there is a countertop or a shower stall that you want, find out if it is available and if not, how long it will take to order it in. Always add a few weeks to the promised date of delivery. If the product comes in on time you can always store it, but if it is late arriving and you have a contractor waiting, costs can add up.
  - In planning your renovation and making design selections, consider how you will be using the space. A bedroom should be a sanctuary where you feel relaxed and calm; while a kitchen should be bright and open with good lighting and counter space for food preparation; a family or great room should be comfortable and inviting with ample seating space and a good view of the television.



# Fusion planning



*Install ceiling fans for better air circulation and to create a more even and comfortable temperature throughout the house.*

**B**efore your renovation begins, look for the following opportunities to get maximum return on your investment and create a Fusion interior you'll enjoy for years to come:

- Locate windows or enlarge window areas on the south side of your home to capture natural light and warming sun rays in the long winter months.
- Install only double-glazed, low-e argon gas-filled windows to keep in heat during winter and cool air in the summer
- Always use "low VOC" paints and finishes. VOCs are Volatile Organic Compounds that give off harmful fumes.

- Reuse and/or re-purpose existing materials and furnishings. An old dresser can make a unique and stylish vanity or old wood flooring can be refinished – it has a great patina and adds character to any home.
- Look seriously for ways to reduce water and energy use when planning your renovation. There are so many new and innovative products, like new high efficiency toilets and showerheads, you'll want to do your homework. With everything from solar water heaters to new insulation materials and rain water harvesting systems to heat pumps, there are dozens of ways to improve your home, reduce your monthly utility costs and step lightly on the earth.

# Your Fusion colour palette

**B**efore you begin the process of selecting materials for countertops, floors, walls, and cupboards and the fixtures and appliances you need, decide on your colour scheme. It will make selecting from the wide array of choices, much easier. Your favourite colours can be a place to start, but keep in mind the following tips when making your choices:

- Cooler colours, such as blues, mauves, greys, and greens create a more soothing room palette.
- Warm or hot colours like reds, oranges, and yellows are more stimulating.
- Muted or half tones of a colour soften it and provide a more calming effect. Butter yellow as opposed to sunflower yellow is a good example of how a paler version of a colour creates a softer look.



- Whites can be warm or cool, so be sure you decide the rest of your colour scheme before selecting the white you will use. That way, you will find a complementary white and avoid harsh contrast or end up with a white that looks dirty or dull.
- Strategic use of a strong colour can create visual impact, for example a red chair or dark grey accent wall will draw the eye and add punch to any room.
- Lighting affects colour so look at colour samples during different times of the day before making your final colour choices.
- Always get lots of samples. Try out colours in the room and try different combinations before making your selections. Getting it right from the start will help ensure you are happy in the long term and avoid potentially costly re-dos.

# Fusion bathrooms sleek to chic

**B**athroom renovations are one of the most common updates homeowners make. The choices for fixtures, flooring, wall coverings, cabinets, lighting and accessories are infinite, allowing you to create the bathroom of your dreams within your budget. Perhaps you would like a palette of soft colours with clean surfaces and simple fixtures for a spa-like atmosphere, or bead-board walls and a reclaimed dresser turned vanity with a recycled copper sink for a rustic country feel; or recycled glass tiles and chrome with a raised vessel sink for a modern, stylish bathroom. Whatever the choice, bathrooms are a great place to indulge your imagination.



## **F**or your Fusion bathroom renovation, consider the following:

- Try an alternative to the typical ceramic tile such as recycled glass tiles which are very contemporary and stylish; or look for natural stone with a minimum of 40 percent recycled content which gives the stone a rustic and unique look. For a modern and beautiful twist, try a concrete floor and add texture and colour with acid-staining.
- Fixtures, from taps to toilets come in a wide range of styles at all price points, so consider the look – modern, traditional, contemporary, rustic, spa-like, elegant – you want to achieve when making your selections. Simple fixtures with clean lines are contemporary, while more ornate fixtures offer a traditional or classic look.
- Always select a high efficiency toilet, showerhead and faucet. You'll not only save money with lower water and heating costs, you'll be getting great performing products from the best manufacturers.
- Ensure good ventilation. Protect your family's health and reduce the likelihood of mould by ensuring good ventilation in your bathroom. Even if you have windows in your bathroom, installing an ENERGY STAR™-rated exhaust fan to draw humid air out of your bathroom helps maintain good, healthy air quality. Check the label: the fan should exhaust one cubic foot of air for each one square foot of space every minute. Consider an exhaust fan with a humidistat or timer to save energy when the bathroom isn't being used – they cost a little more but they pay for themselves with energy savings.
- Use paints, caulks and sealants that are labelled low VOC. Bathrooms are confined spaces and using materials that don't give off a lot of gas fumes is a good idea.
- To achieve a warm attractive style, choose a fabric shower curtain. Consider one made with organic hemp, bamboo or cotton for soft, clean, spa-like look and the added bonus of no off-gas and the associated plastic odour!

## Finding Fusion-oriented Fixtures

Whether you need a toilet, faucets, showerhead or all three, always purchase **WaterSense™** labelled products.

- When purchasing a toilet look for a WaterSense labelled High Efficiency Toilet (HET). They come in a wide range of styles and price, deliver superior performance, are highly efficient and offer water savings of at least 20 percent over a 6-litre toilet.
- Replacing or installing a showerhead or faucets? Again, you'll want to buy a WaterSense™ labelled High Efficiency Showerhead (HES) for superior performance, water and energy savings and a large selection of styles and features.
- For a listing of WaterSense™ HETs and HESs visit: [www.map-testing.com](http://www.map-testing.com) or [www.epa.gov/owm/water-efficiency/products\\_search.html](http://www.epa.gov/owm/water-efficiency/products_search.html)



# Fusion kitchens where form meets function

**Y**ou've decided to renovate your kitchen. Where do you begin? List what you like and don't like about your existing kitchen to help you focus your renovation dollars on the changes you really need. Once you have your list, flip through renovation magazines, scan the Internet, visit showrooms and ask friends who have been through a kitchen renovation to get ideas.

A kitchen renovation is likely the most expensive renovation you will undertake in your home. Depending on the scope of your renovation, it might be worthwhile to hire a designer who has kitchen reno experience. Their know-how can prove invaluable and help you avoid costly mistakes.

A good rule of thumb is to use the "cook's triangle" arrangement as the foundation for your kitchen layout. Arranging the sink, oven and refrigerator in a triangle is the most efficient for food preparation and allows for optimization of cupboard and counter space. Keep in mind it's never a good idea to locate the oven or dishwasher next to the fridge, as the fridge has to work much harder to maintain its cool temperatures.

**From countertops to cupboards, and appliances to flooring, there are many stylish and eco-friendly options available at every price point. The suggestions in the next few pages might help you narrow down your choices for your Fusion kitchen renovation.**

## Cabinets

New cabinetry is expensive. Give serious consideration to refurbishing your existing cabinets, particularly if they are solid wood. Stripping the cabinets and replacing fronts (or simply adding moulding to them), repainting or staining, and switching handles and knobs can give you the look of new without the price. If new cabinets are needed, be sure to use FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified wood and the low VOC stains and wood finish.

## Countertops and backsplashes

- For tile or stone countertops, look for those with a high recycled content.
- Stone countertops with a minimum of 40 percent recycled content provide a beautiful working surface that is highly durable.
- Recycled glass slab can be used for countertops and recycled glass tiles for backsplashes. They come in all colours and styles and offer a unique look that works in both modern and traditional kitchens.
- Wood counters are definitely attractive and inviting, so if that is the direction you want to take, consider bamboo, FSC certified wood or reclaimed countertops. Salvaged wood or a repurposed table top, buffet or bench seat reused as a countertop can have lovely patinas and add real warmth and beauty to your kitchen.

- Paper composite counters have the durability of laminate without the formaldehyde resins which can off-gas. Paper composite counters are waterproof and heat resistant.
- Concrete can be expensive but can be moulded for unusually shaped counters. Consider acid washing for colour and be sure to seal the concrete with low VOC sealant to protect the surface.
- Recycled steel tiles for backsplashes are truly unique and work for a modern or rustic look. Recycled steel countertops are also uniquely beautiful, but they can be a lot of work to keep clean and are more prone to scratching than other surfaces.

Selecting your cabinet style is the first step once all the pre-planning is done. Your cabinet style will inform your other choices, but don't order your cabinets until you have selected your countertop, just in case you change your colour choice.

With so many options in countertops and backsplashes, it's helpful to choose these first before picking the colour for your cabinets. Often people fall in love with a countertop after they've ordered their cabinets and it's too late to change colours.

Choose FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified wood, it's a high quality product from sustainably managed forests.

## Sinks

If your existing sink is in good shape, you'll save money by reusing it. If the sink needs replacing consider an under the counter sink. Several companies now manufacture sinks containing 70 to 85 percent recycled content. The result is a beautiful, durable product with clean lines and solid texture that works in any style of kitchen. Recycled aluminum sinks come in brushed, sandblasted or vibrated finishes so you can find one to suit your decor. Recycled copper sinks are absolutely beautiful and add warmth with a handcrafted look that works well in a craftsman, country or other rustic-style of kitchen. Bamboo sinks are both stunning and unique with the added bonus of durability.

## Faucets

There are so many choices in kitchen faucet styles from brushed or aged finishes with vintage looks to modern sleek designs. Your sink choice is a good place to start when selecting the faucet style. As for the type of faucets, there are single and dual handle, pullout spray, wall-mounted and bar sink options. Reach and height for filling pots are the two main considerations when selecting the type of faucet. Pullout spray faucets are the most popular type as they are good for washing vegetables, cleaning the sink, and rinsing off pots that don't fit in the dishwasher.

Whatever your choice of faucet, always purchase one that is **WaterSense™** certified. With lots of options, great performance and efficiency, and independent laboratory testing; **WaterSense™** certified faucets are the ideal choice.

For a listing of **WaterSense™** certified kitchen faucets, visit <http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>

Purchase **Energy Star™** rated dishwashers and refrigerators  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/appliances/energy-star.cfm?attr=4>  
Be sure to compare energy use of different brands and choose those that use less. Always check for water use information and buy the most efficient one.

## Ventilation

A good range hood provides proper ventilation for good indoor air quality. Choose an ENERGY STAR™ rated range hood which use up to 60 percent less energy than standard models. Look for a model that pulls air at a minimum rate of 2.8 cubic metres (100 cubic feet) per minute up to 14.2 cubic metres (500 cubic feet) per minute.

## Appliances

For a contemporary or modern look, you can't beat the look of stainless steel. That said, combining a country or craftsman style with modern, stainless steel appliances creates a warm but highly stylized space. Steel reflects light and therefore is a good choice to brighten a small or windowless kitchen. If you prefer clean and uniform, consider false fronts on your fridge and dishwasher so they blend in with the cabinetry. White appliances are a safe choice unless you are planning on installing dark coloured cabinets and flooring which would create a sharp contrast with white appliances that could be jarring to the eye. Black front appliances can work in contemporary and traditional kitchens but like steel, can show grease and smudge marks. Always buy an ENERGY STAR™ rated dishwasher or refrigerator.

For ovens and cook-tops look at the EnerGuide label and purchase the most energy efficient one – you'll ensure you get a quality product that will save you money over time.

For ovens and cooktops look for the **EnerGuide** label and the most efficient appliance.

[http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/appliances/energuide.cfm?attr=4#household](http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/appliances/energguide.cfm?attr=4#household)

## Lighting

LED (Light Emitting Diode) lighting is the most flattering for any space, but particularly the kitchen. LEDs provide bright yet warm light that is direct without being too intense. Under-the-cupboard LED task lighting is not only practical; it will expand the look of your kitchen giving it an open and inviting feel. If your remodelled kitchen has an island, install a well-sized LED hanging fixture above to illuminate the island and add another dimension to the space.

For lamps and existing fixtures, be sure to replace incandescent light bulbs with LED or compact fluorescent bulbs. The new ones come in warm colours to mimic incandescent bulbs yet offer huge energy savings!

Before purchasing, be sure to check the type and size of the light bulb base to ensure it will fit the socket of the lamp.

## Flooring

When it comes to the kitchen, there is an on-going debate about the best flooring material. Tile and stone are seen as practical and able to withstand spills but they can be hard underfoot, dishware shatters if dropped, and grout lines are hard to keep clean. Wood is warm and comfortable but doesn't withstand spills and endure wear and tear as well as tile and stone. Cork flooring is a beautiful and durable compromise that is comfortable to stand on and comes in a huge range of colours and textures. If you want wood, consider reclaimed wood which adds character and warmth and is well suited to both rustic and modern kitchens. If new wood is your thing, use bamboo or wood flooring with an FSC label – you'll get a quality product with high style in an environmentally and socially responsible product. Heart set on tile or stone? Try recycled glass tiles or stone with a minimum of 40 percent recycled content. In both cases you will find beautiful and unique products to reflect your individual style. Marmoleum is a great alternative to linoleum, it's a natural material made from linseed oil, wood pulp, rosin, jute and limestone with different styles from which to choose.

# Fusion laundry rooms

## Practical style

Laundry rooms are often the last room in the house to be renovated and tend to be dull, dark and small. Using bright paint colour on the walls, installing good LED task lighting and finding a front loading washer/dryer unit in a bright colour or stainless steel, will go a long way to creating an attractive and inviting laundry room.

Because laundry rooms tend to be smaller, a good layout is really important. To make the most of the space you have in your laundry room, consider the following:

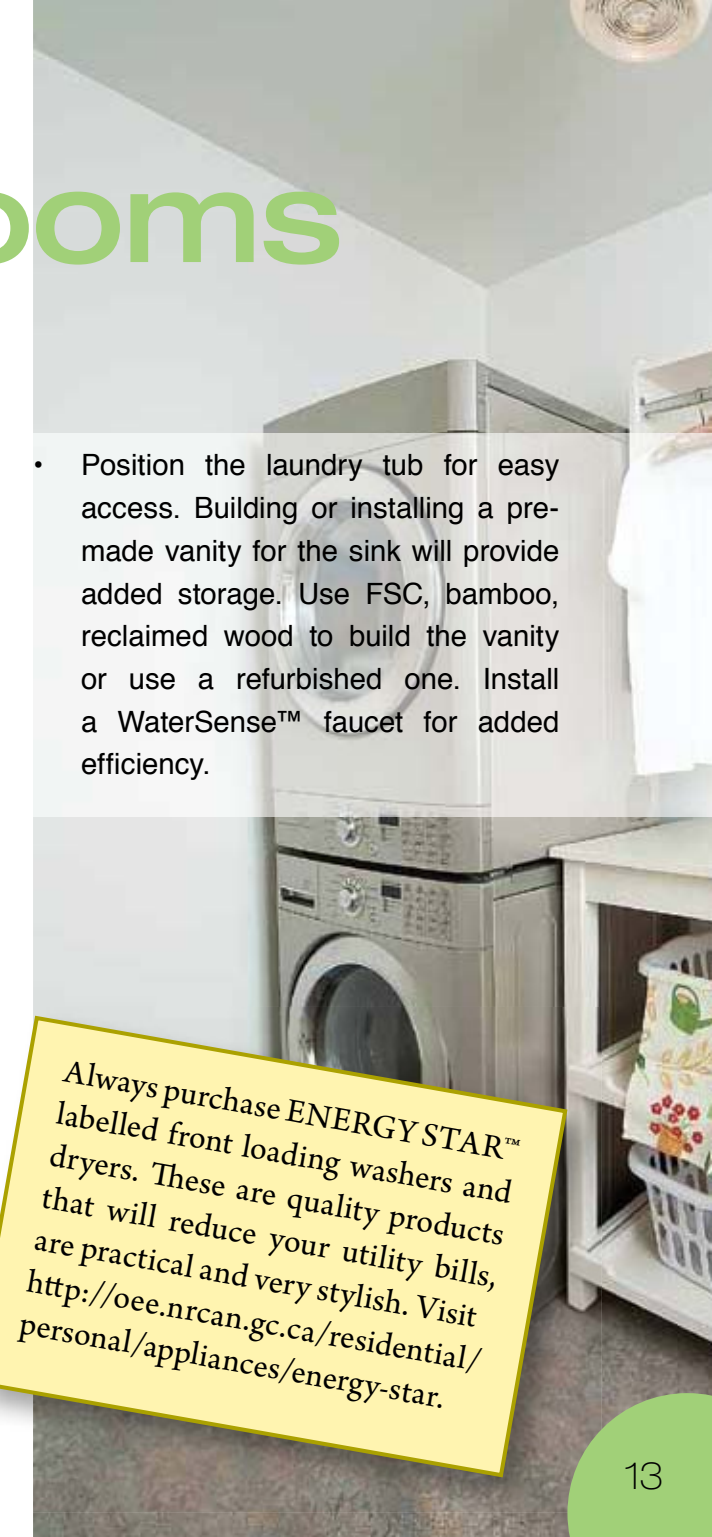
- Purchase a stackable front-loaded washer/dryer unit. If you prefer side-by-side units you may want to buy the optional drawer pedestals for the washer and dryer for extra storage space and easier access.

- Place the dryer as close as possible to the exterior wall to improve airflow and efficiency and minimize condensation and possible clogging in the exhaust system.
- For extra storage, install open shelving above your washer and dryer.
- A wall mounted retractable clothes line or fold-out drying rack provide valuable drying space and either is great to use instead of the dryer in the warmer months when you want to keep the house cool.

- If you are using a side-by-side front-loading unit, position the washer and dryer so the doors open in the opposite direction to make it easier to transfer clothes from the washing machine into the dryer.

- Position the laundry tub for easy access. Building or installing a pre-made vanity for the sink will provide added storage. Use FSC, bamboo, reclaimed wood to build the vanity or use a refurbished one. Install a WaterSense™ faucet for added efficiency.

Always purchase ENERGY STAR™ labelled front loading washers and dryers. These are quality products that will reduce your utility bills, are practical and very stylish. Visit <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/appliances/energy-star>.



# Comfortable interiors

Temperature, humidity and air quality all affect the comfort level in your home. The best place to start when shopping for a high quality and efficient furnace, air conditioner or de-humidifier is to look for **ENERGY STAR™** labelled products.

The **ENERGY STAR™** website has a list of qualified furnaces, air conditioners and de-humidifiers; <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/appliances/energy-star.cfm?attr=4>.

Nothing is better for indoor air quality than a cross-breeze from open windows. Don't forget too, well placed ceiling fans circulate the air keeping a more even and comfortable temperature throughout the house.

Humidifiers, particularly those mounted on the furnace, can be a source of mould and bacteria. Selecting ones that don't hold standing water and are highly efficient is the best bet for ensuring good air quality with no wastage.

## Efficient Furnace Humidifiers

### Rotary disc type

#### Desert Spring

Rotary Disc with Auto Flush DS-3200 and DS-AF5

### Steam types

#### EWC (formerly Autoflo):

Ultra-Zone S2000 and S2020

#### Generaire:

Elite Steam RS-15P; RS-25; DS-15P; and DS-50

#### Honeywell:

TrueSTEAM HM506; HM509; and HM512

#### Thermolec:

Acu-Steam Acu-5; Acu-10; and Acu-15

#### White Rodgers:

HSP-2000; HSP-2600

Other steam humidifiers may offer the same level of efficiency. Always check to ensure that the humidifier you plan to purchase sends less than 10 litres of water per day to the drain. For up-to-date product information, visit manufacturer and consumer report websites.

*Independent field testing, Veritec Consulting Ltd., 2010*

# Fusion living making the change

Fusion living is a lifestyle. It's about making choices that are good for us, the natural world and future generations. Living lighter is catching on and it's changing the way people approach remodelling and maintaining their home.

## A few easy tips for Fusion living

- Adding an aerator at a price of 20 dollars or less to one faucet in the home can save you up to 2000 litres of water per year.
- Cold water laundry washing can save you hundreds of dollars on your energy bill. There are several laundry detergents available designed specifically for washing in cold water.
- Do not install or use an in-drain garbage disposal system. They waste large amounts of water at a significant cost to you, the water system and the environment. Use your Green Bin instead.
- For winter humidifying, install an efficient furnace rotary disc humidifier
- Wrap hot water pipes with flexible foam pipe insulation available at any hardware store.
- If you have a water heater and do not plan to replace it in the near future, purchase a hot water heater insulating blanket at any hardware store – you'll put money back in your pocket while doing your part to reduce energy use and air pollution.
- Recessed down lights are like having holes in your ceiling. Use insulators that sit over the fittings above the ceiling to reduce air flow and a potential fire hazard.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED or Compact Fluorescent light bulbs.
- Look for opportunities to add insulation. For example, when installing new or updated kitchen cupboards, add insulation in the walls behind before re-mounting the cupboards.
- Install and seal insulation to create a vapour barrier in basement and attached garage ceilings to keep the house warm in the winter and cooler in the summer.
- Insulate before installing basement flooring.
- Install weather stripping around doors to prevent drafts and heat loss.

## Finding and repairing costly leaks

A good first step to water conservation in your home is to test for water leaks.

### Checking for leaks

If you have a water meter, periodically check for hidden water leaks by recording the water meter reading in the late evening and again in the early morning—in the period when people in your house aren't using water. Then compare the readings. If the meter indicates water use during the night, track down the source and have it repaired. Some water meters have a red triangular dial beside the numbers that record the volume of water used. This dial turns when water is running through the meter. If the dial is moving while there is no water being used in the house, there is a water leak somewhere.

Leaks can waste large amounts of water, often going undetected for long periods of time. Toilets are a common source of leaks and unlike faucets, showerheads and appliances; they have the potential to cost you over \$1,000 a year.

### Testing for toilet leaks

To test your toilet for leaks, put some food colouring in the holding tank and wait about 15-30 minutes. If, without flushing, the colour shows up in the bowl, you've got a leak that could cost you hundreds of dollars.

### Common types of toilet leaks

The two most common leaks occur at the flapper valve or the fill valve. Flappers wear out and begin to leak. Many toilets have unique or proprietary flappers. It is important to ensure that the proper replacement flapper is installed – otherwise the flush volume or flush performance may be compromised or worse. Where possible, use the replacement flapper recommended by the manufacturer. To get the right flapper, consult [www.toiletflapper.org](http://www.toiletflapper.org), and then bring your old one along to the store to ensure you get the right one.

There are two types of fill valves; the old style is a ballcock (a large spherical float on a steel rod). Most toilets made in the last decade come equipped with Pilot Valve fill valves. They have become the industry standard because they maintain the correct water level thus reducing leaks. Pilot valves should replace ballcocks because they are more reliable and fit most makes of toilets.

### In-tank toilet cleaners

Avoid using chlorine-based in-tank toilet bowl cleaners as they can damage tank components (especially flapper valves) over time leading to costly leaks. If you must use an in-tank cleaner, be sure the product states that it won't damage toilet components or harm the environment.

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**Saving water and energy and reducing wastage is not only a more thoughtful lifestyle, it reduces expenses freeing up dollars to spend on those things that really matter. If you think about it, you wouldn't take money from your wallet and flush it down the drain, yet many of us do that every day when we waste water and energy.**

**We're literally spending money unnecessarily.**

## Colophon

The Fusion landscaping guide for homeowners is a project of the Durham Region Works Department's Water Efficient Durham initiative.

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Sustainable renovation of a Craftsman home – cover and pages 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12

'Hidden' energy efficient technologies – such as geothermal wells, solar and photovoltaic panels, low-E glass, and soy-based spray-in-place insulation – add economic and sustainability values.

Kitchen: Motawi tiles on island are hand-made, wood for cabinets is locally sourced and all appliances are wired to an unseen battery bank and photovoltaic panels.

Bathroom: high efficiency 'period' plumbing fixtures and solar-powered hot water supply.

Measured Architecture, [www.measured.ca](http://www.measured.ca)

Sustainably built modern home – inside front cover and back cover

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**Fusion interiors marry individual style with eco-friendly design  
to create beautiful, comfortable homes.**

**Living more in harmony with nature never looked or felt so good.**



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