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Homeowners nearly unanimous on need to reduce their environmental impact, yet few doing 'a lot' to reduce greenhouse gases

Energy bills more likely to spur environmental action than desire to save planet for future generations

Toronto, ON (August 27, 2008) - Overwhelmingly Canadian homeowners (95%) agree it's important to reduce their impact on the environment, yet only 16% acknowledge doing 'a lot' to help reduce greenhouse gases by improving energy efficiency at home, according to a new survey by Ipsos Reid for Icnene®.

When it comes to spurring environmental action, homeowners are more likely to be motivated to reduce energy use and greenhouse gases by rising energy costs (82%), than by a desire to save the planet for future generations (76%) or by news about climate change (66%).

The survey also found a little more than one in ten (14%) homeowners are willing to spend more money to make their homes more environmentally friendly, without guarantees of making back their investment.

"It's clear that Canadian homeowners are conscious of their potential impact on the environment," says Sean Simpson, Research Manager for Ipsos Reid, "yet financial issues are still more likely, than straight concern for the environment, to get them to act on climate change."

Adjusting thermostat, driving less

The survey found most (86%) homeowners either have or will be taking at least some steps to reduce their environmental impact at home due to rising energy costs:

- More than 8 in 10 homeowners have or will be turning the thermostat down/up by three degrees Celsius or more
- More than 8 in 10 homeowners have or will be reducing their automobile use
- Three quarters of Canadians have or will be turning off the furnace or air conditioner (for some period of time)
- More than two-thirds (68%) have or will be investing in energy efficient upgrades worth \$1,000 or more, such as adding insulation

Reducing costs, greenhouse gases

Tom Kraeutler, home improvement journalist, radio host and Home Improvement Editor for AOL, says homeowners are opting to take simple steps to reduce energy use and costs, but by investing more they could realize a far greater financial return and significantly reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impact.

"Installing an insulation/air barrier system, for example, could enable an average family of four, living in a home heated with Natural Gas, to cut their energy use and costs by up to 50% and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 4,000 pounds per year," says Kraeutler.

- More -

Canadians appear to be more environmentally conscious than Americans

Results of an identical Icnene/Ipsos Reid poll with 1,000 U.S. homeowners allow for some interesting comparisons with Canadians:

- Canadians (16%) are more likely than Americans (11%) to agree they have done 'a lot' to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by increasing their energy efficiency at home
- Canadians (48%) are more likely than Americans (38%) to give themselves a 'great' rating (seven or higher on a scale of one to nine) when asked to rate the actions/behaviours of their family in terms of how environmentally-friendly they are in the home
- Canadians (66%) are more likely than Americans (52%) to agree that news about climate change has caused them to become more energy efficient at home

Atlantic Canadians, women score high marks for environmental action

According to the survey, women are more likely than men, and Atlantic Canadians are far more likely than Albertans to be environmentally conscious and active:

- Atlantic Canadians (90%) are the most likely and Albertans (68%) the least likely to agree that a desire to be more energy conscious and environmentally responsible has caused them to become more energy efficient and to reduce their environmental impact at home
- Women (63%) are much more likely than men (48%) to 'completely agree' that it's important for them to reduce their impact on the environment whenever possible; women (40%) are more likely than men (34%) to agree that they are deeply concerned about rising energy costs and are taking a number of significant steps to reduce energy consumption at home
- Albertans (46%) are most likely and Ontarians (24%) least likely to agree that they have done 'a little' or 'nothing at all' to help reduce greenhouse gases by improving energy efficiency at home

About the survey

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted from July 5 to July 9, 2008. This online survey of 1,035 Canadian homeowners was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.

Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

About Icnene

Icnene Inc. is the leading manufacturer of soft foam insulation products that are designed to help create Healthier, Quieter, More Energy Efficient[®] homes. For more information about Icnene, visit www.icnene.com.

- 30 -

For more information on the survey or on how homeowners can help reduce their production of greenhouse gases, by reducing their energy consumption at home, please contact:

Peter Boyce (ext. 231) or Erin Stewart (ext. 265)
Harbinger
(416) 960-5100