



*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **HOME ENERGY RETROFIT STUDY COMPLETED WITH ECOTRUST CANADA**

*Study Finds Retrofitting Can Result in Annual Energy Savings of Between  
\$1000 - \$2000*

**PRINCE RUPERT, SEPTEMBER 12th, 2023** – Last night, Council received a presentation of Ecotrust Canada’s final report on the feasibility of a home energy retrofit program in Prince Rupert. The study found that converting your home from natural gas to a heat pump system alongside some simple insulation upgrades can save you between \$1,000 - \$2,000 annually in energy bills, and is the equivalent of taking 2 cars off the road per household.

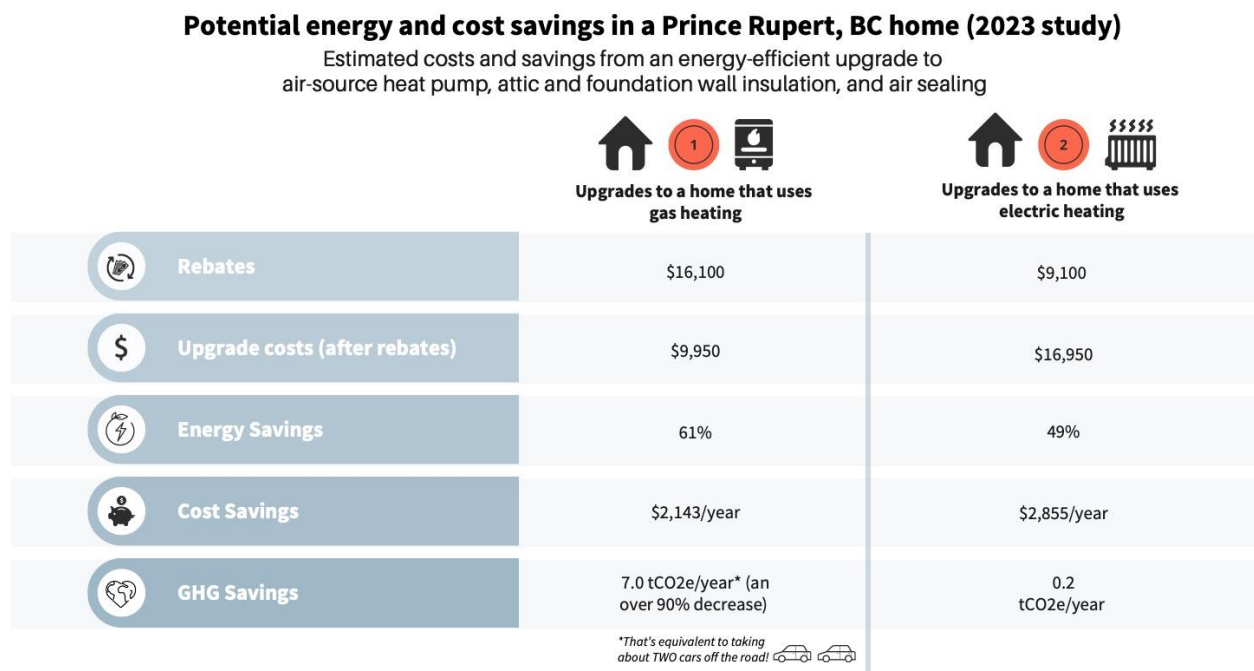
“We’re excited about the opportunities for home energy retrofits in Prince Rupert, and appreciate the work that our partners at Ecotrust Canada have done on this project,” said Mayor Herb Pond. “Retrofits have been shown not only to benefit the environment, but also the pocketbooks of our residents.”

“Prince Rupert residents have a unique and compelling opportunity to reduce their energy bills by completing energy efficiency retrofits. We are grateful to partner with the City of Prince Rupert in developing a program that will make cost-saving retrofits accessible to even more residents,” said Graham Anderson, Director of Community Energy at Ecotrust Canada.

The study, which began in 2022 and included public engagement and surveying, was funded through a grant from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. It looks at respective annual energy cost savings if homeowners completed air sealing,

switched to heat pumps, installed insulation, and upgraded windows and doors. Costs for all upgrades were the same depending on your initial heat source, except in the case of heat pumps. To install a heat pump for an existing natural gas-heated home is less expensive with available rebates than an existing electricity-heated home; however the longer term cost savings on electricity bills for existing electricity-heated homes is higher over the long term. In both cases, though, cost savings are considerable for heat pump installation, specifically – with the time it takes to recover the cost of upgrading being 4 years for existing electricity users, and 3 years for natural gas users. Of course, actual results differ by home and depend on a variety of factors. The study based their work on ‘home archetypes’ that included typical homes that you would encounter in Prince Rupert – with detailed analysis for each home type available in the full report.

The graph below illustrates the different upgrades and associated average costs/savings of making the changes for an average Prince Rupert home.



The study also heard from residents, businesses, and community organizations about some of the barriers that people face when it comes to these types of renovations, and examined possible solutions, including loan options. Information gaps, costs, and contractor-related challenges were the top concerns. Ecotrust Canada is working on establishing a community-wide program that would provide additional support to homeowners seeking energy assessments and information on

rebates. This type of externally-driven program was recommended by the Feasibility study to help overcome some of the challenges faced by households.

**Are you interested in learning more about the potential to upgrade your energy efficiency?** An additional outcome of the report was the recommendation that the City work to address gaps in public awareness about available rebates and other programs. To answer that suggestion, the City has developed a page on our website that provides Frequently Asked Questions regarding retrofits, as well as a list of available funding and grant resources, and access to the full study results and recommendations. In addition, this information will be sent to local realtors and provided to our Customer Service staff. For more information, head to: <https://www.princerupert.ca/building-development/home-energy-retrofits>.

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