

## Selling a house in 2007? New Home Information Packs must include an energy efficiency assessment

New legislation is due to be enforced from early 2007 if the UK Government keeps to its schedule of introducing house sellers "home information packs".

According to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: "The current home buying and selling process is slow, wasteful, stressful and causes far too much delay and failure. Home information packs are due to be introduced throughout England and Wales from the beginning of 2007 to tackle these problems. They will make the home buying and selling process more transparent, more certain, consumer friendly and faster." And according to the ODPM the average cost of the home information pack will cost the house seller circa £635.00 to produce but this is not an 'additional cost' since this money was spent before of survey reports etc. As part of the home information pack something new has crept in that was not formerly part of the house selling process. Each domestic freehold property or domestic leasehold property with more than 21 years of the lease to run that is put up for sale in 2007 must include an energy efficiency statement. Details on who exactly will carry out this energy efficiency audit are a little vague as the Government intends to license "home inspectors" by a certification program. Home inspectors will presumably be competent to assess the property for energy efficiency which presupposes that there will be some kind of standard that the property is assessed against. Building regulations are not retro active so this could be a back door method to put pressure onto sellers into upgrading the energy efficiency of their property. Installing better insulation, more thermally efficient appliances and so on will be required if the property is assessed as below the "modern energy efficiency standards". Properties build before April 2006 will all likely fail the revised building regulations for energy efficiency as new regulations from that date will be introduced moving the goal posts significantly for insulation levels. So, virtually every UK property if assessed in 2007 will fail the energy audit if based upon the building regulations in force at that time. The pressure on the seller will be to ensure that they only get ticks against the energy efficiency audit. For most sellers this will typically mean upgrading the insulation levels within the property. If the home fails the audit one of the best ways to beat the energy efficiency statement is to retro fit polyurethane foam to a pitched roof. Surprisingly, most houses do not have pitched roof insulation. This is ironic because this is the number one source of heat loss. Spray applied polyurethane foam is the best commercially available insulation enjoying a 2 to 8 times better insulation factor per depth over any other home insulation products. Also, polyurethane spray foam seals and draft proofs and eliminates condensation too. For most homes it can be fitted in a day and will last the life of the property proving to be an excellent investment, saving energy, saving money, providing a more comfortable home and will help save the planet for your grand children.