"The greenest buildings are ones that are already built"

Online Resources

Efficiency Vermont Home Energy Assessments and Incentives:

Efficiency Vermont Website

Historic Window Resources:

The Preservation Trust of Vermont Website

Comprehensive Guide

Environmental Protection Agency and National Trust for Historic Preservation "Energy Advice for Owners of Historic and Older Homes"

A list of contractors and a more comprehensive guide can be found under the Historic Preservation Commission tab on the Montpelier City website

Historic Buildings

A Guide to Energy Efficiency

Can Historic Homes be Energy Efficient?

Historic building construction methods and materials often maximized natural sources of heat, light and ventilation to respond to local climatic conditions. The key to a successful rehabilitation project is to identify and preserve existing historical features and energy-efficient systems in your historic building.

Step One: The Energy Audit

An energy audit evaluates your home's current energy use and identifies insufficiencies in the building envelope and mechanical systems for measures of heat loss and for areas of air infiltration.
Once results are measured, you can select the most cost-effective projects. Ask the energy auditor to provide an **energy improvement plan** that establishes priorities and alternatives. Seek solutions that save the most energy using the least destructive, invasive, and costly means.

Vermont Energy Audit Resources:

1. Efficiency Vermont Home Energy Assessments
2. Home Performance with ENERGY STAR: an incentive-based program to improve insulation and air sealing, plus heating and ventilation systems, to ensure safety and health.

FAQ: Why should I restore my historic windows?

1. Historic windows can usually be repaired while most new windows cannot be repaired, or even recycled, and may wind up in landfills.

2. Wooden historic windows are constructed of hardier materials, such as old growth timber, that are more weather resilient than newly constructed windows.

3. Energy leaks in old windows are often due to poor maintenance. Before replacement, ensure windows are properly sealed and caulked to prevent energy loss.

4. When historic windows are properly restored and a good storm window is added, their energy savings are comparative to insulated glass windows.

Bang for Buck: Air Infiltration

Reducing air leakage (infiltration and exfiltration) should be the first priority of a preservation retrofit plan. Leakage of air into a building can account for **5 to 40 percent of space-conditioning costs**, which can be one of the largest operational costs for buildings.

What else can I do?

Shading Devices: Awnings and deciduous trees provide shade in summer and reduce energy needs

Efficient Appliances: Select Energy STAR appliances.

Efficient Systems: Ensure efficiency of electrical and mechanical systems (heating, air conditioning) and replace your water heater.

Install Insulation in cost effective places to reduce heat loss.

Modify User Behavior: Install programmable thermostats, close off rooms not in use, make use of natural light, switch to LEDs, use insulated shades, think outside the box.