



your home buying checklist

What should you consider?

What amenities do you look for when shopping for a new home — hardwood floors, crown molding, a fireplace or granite countertops?

Natural gas is showing up more frequently near the top of homebuyers' wish lists and, as a result, more builders are including natural gas as a standard new home feature.

More than 70 percent of single-family homes completed in the U.S. in 2002 featured natural gas heat, according to the American Gas Association. Natural gas heat is warmer than heat from other fuel sources. It heats homes quickly and requires less maintenance.

For home heating, water heating, cooking and clothes drying, natural gas beats other fuel sources in performance, value and convenience. A natural gas heating system makes your home warmer and cozier than other systems, and it's faster. Shower after shower, you'll stay in hot water with natural gas, even when the power is out. For cooking, natural gas offers more precise temperature control so your favorite dishes come out perfectly every time. Like a little extra time around the house? Clothes drying is a breeze with natural gas... you'll be pleasantly surprised at the time you save.

Homeowners can also enjoy natural gas for outdoor grilling and lighting as well as for indoor warmth and comfort with gas logs.


With the decision of energy source checked off your list, other factors to consider include:

1) Existing or new. Previously owned homes can be less expensive than new homes, but due to new technology, new homes are cheaper to operate and maintain.

2) Operating costs. On average home maintenance costs are one percent of the purchase price of the home per year. The total cost of owning appliances include the initial purchase price, repairs and maintenance, and operating costs.

3) Resale value. Schools, location and the perceived value of home amenities such as outdoor entertainment space, laundry room and closet space are priorities to many new homeowners. Keep in mind that natural gas homes have a four percent higher resale value, according to the National Association of Home Builders.

Moving is all about making good decisions for you and your family. For additional resources, log on to the National Association of Home Builders at www.nahb.org or the

National Association of Realtors at www.realtor.org/rocms.nsf. You can also check out the Department of Housing and Urban Development's "100 Questions and Answers about Buying a New Home" at www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/buying/buyhm.cfm. 

Be an energy sleuth

- **Check out the efficiency of new appliances before you buy!** For a comprehensive list of appliances and products, go to www.eere.energy.gov/femp/technologies/eeproducts.cfm.
- Save energy and money. **Calculate home energy use and estimate savings through suggested energy-efficiency improvements** through the Home Energy Saver Web site www.homeenergysaver.lbl.gov/hes/about.html.
- **Improve the energy performance of a home or residential building.** Save money and resources with energy-saving strategies at Energy Star Toolbox at www.energystar.gov/homeimprovement.