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Carbon Tax Fuels Debate by Glen Perry

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With the governmentâ€™s controversial law on pollution almost upon us, the general public are increasingly concerned about the rising costs of living. The Clean Energy Act will come into force on 1st July this year and reports confirm that annual household wages will be cut $470 by 2018, due to the high price of the Australian Carbon Tax. Add this to the increased cost of electricity and the future looks anything but economical. So how can this be combated?

As consumers, if we do take the painstaking step of going down the path of building a new home, we tend to want an abode that will accommodate our needs well into the future. More often than not, we tend to ensure we will have ample space and all of the inclusions weâ€™re ever likely to need. Not only does this cost more to build today but weâ€™re now faced with the likelihood that we can expect it to cost substantially more to live in day-to-day well into the future.

With a growing number of new house builders in Victoria, developments are being built with energy efficiency in mind. The Green Building Council of Australia (BGCA) introduced minimum star rating requirements for new homes across Australia in 2003 meaning that not only must house builders think about style, but also innovations in lighting, insulation and design to give an environmental edge.

For example, many of the new home builders in Melbourne will aim to achieve a 6 star energy rating through using compact fluorescent down lights throughout the home, double glaze windows plus upgrade insulation and solar-boosted instantaneous hot water systems. Details as fine as orientation of the new house is also looked at â€“ where windows are placed, shading in relation to the sun and local breezes and generally how well the home suits the local climate. Having not only an environmentally positive effect an energy efficient home also improves its market value by around 3-5% per cent per star.

Although energy efficiency has been in the news for a number of years now, many of us have barely given it a passing thought. Yet with the imminent arrival of the new carbon tax, it is set to play a big factor for new-home builders in Australia and should be a significant consideration in your purchase of a new home. In the long run, it could save you thousands of dollars.

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