

Log Home Eco-Friendly Restoration Project



Log homes can be very warm, comfortable and energy efficient. However, after hundreds of log home inspections we have found a few traits common to log homes that can make it a challenge to maintain and remain energy efficient. Over time, you may notice your home is not as warm as it used to be and the logs don't look the same.

One of the exciting aspects of our business is purchasing log homes that are well built but have been neglected over the years. Providing the home with an eco friendly makeover and making energy efficient changes are not only good for the planet but also provide an economic, health and esthetic benefit. Many times we have seen distressed log home properties sold for the value of the land while the new owners demolish the existing structure and rebuild. Many trees were used to build these log homes and there is tremendous satisfaction in saving and restoring them back to their like new condition.

Our latest project was restoring a 1978 log home on the New Milford/Washington town line. This home sat vacant for many months while potential buyers walked away due to the obvious disrepair. We looked beyond the decayed logs, worn finish, gaps between the log courses, the dated and dark interior and inefficient heating system. What we saw was a quality built log structure on 3 serene acres located in a desirable area waiting to be restored and enjoyed by the next family to call home.

The log restoration included corn cob blasting, which is one of the eco-friendly ways to effectively remove the existing finish. Any log decay was repaired or replaced with new logs. Then a non-toxic borate treatment was applied to help prevent insects and decay. The logs are now in like new condition. To seal the home preventing air, insect and water infiltration, all log seams, doors and windows were caulked or chinked. This process involves installing backer rod into the seams, then caulking with a bead of Sashco's Log Jam Chinking. This is a high quality acrylic latex caulk specifically designed for log homes and has elasticity which allows the caulk to move with the logs as they expand and contract. The logs were then coated with a three coat system using high quality, eco friendly products by Sashco. The first two pigmented coats of High Sierra were applied, followed by a clear top coat to protect the pigmented coats. To further protect the logs a new roof and gutter system was added as well as flashing to the doors and windows.

The heating system consisted of electric baseboard heat and two propane wall units. This inefficient system was removed and replaced with an energy efficient two stage heat pump with air conditioning. This Bryant Hybrid Evolution System uses a two stage heat pump with propane gas as a backup at temperatures below 20F. In summer the heat pump acts in reverse to provide economic air conditioning. In comparing the electrical costs from December 2007 prior to the system being installed to December 2008 the amount of energy savings was astounding. Connecticut Light and Power documents show a 500% reduction in electrical costs.

The interior was gutted and redesigned. Changes such as removing several non-load bearing interior walls and adding a dormer with window has created an open floor plan allowing more natural light into the home. The new kitchen was equipped with stainless steel Energy Star appliances. New interior drywall, ceramic floors, updated plumbing and electric, wood stove, updated bathrooms, refinished hardwood floors and security system adds comfort, convenience and safety.

There is nothing more rewarding than transforming a neglected log property into a beautiful, structurally sound, energy efficient log home.

At Log Options our objective is to provide log homeowners with information and guidance in the care and maintenance of their log home by providing Consultations, Log Inspections and Referrals. For more details, articles and information on log home maintenance, please visit www.logoptions.com

Tom Tydeman, owner of Log Options, LLC, currently has a BS in Business Administration and has successfully completed the Sashco's Zero Failures Course, Log Home Associates Log Inspection Course and the International Associates of Certified Home Inspectors Log Home Inspection Course