

Consumer Awareness Information

The Manitoba Geothermal Energy Alliance (MGEA) would like to offer the following tips to consumers that may be considering the installation of geothermal in their homes:

Before Hiring a Contractor:

- Ask friends, relatives, work colleagues and neighbours for names of contractors they recommend
- Ask the contractor if they are a member of the MGEA
 - The MGEA requires all accredited installers to sign a Code of Ethics, have valid manufacturer certified training, valid trade qualification certificates (IGSHPA, CGC, or MGEA accepted equivalent), a valid fusion certificate, and a valid heat loss/heat gain certificate (ASHRAE, Manual J, or equivalent). Visit our website, www.mgea.ca, for list of accredited installers in Manitoba.
- Ask the accredited installer if they obtain MGEA Permits for geothermal jobs
 - The MGEA requires all accredited installers to take out a permit for all geothermal installations prior to the job beginning. You can ensure your geothermal contractor has taken out a permit for your geothermal system by contacting the MGEA office; for additional information visit, www.mgea.ca/consumer-permit-awareness.
- Ask contractors for references and check them
- Do not hire a contractor who is unwilling to provide references from past customers
- Get more than one estimate or proposal
- Ask the contractor if they carry liability insurance
- Get details of warranties or guarantees
- Get a statement indicating the contractor will instruct the homeowner on the operation and maintenance of equipment
- Ask for copies of (as-built) drawings

Decision to Hire a Contractor:

- Ask the contractor to prepare a contract based on their estimate/proposal
- Read the contract carefully
- Do not sign an incomplete contract
- Read the fine print
- Make sure any changes to the work or standard conditions in the contract are initialled by both parties
- Ensure that all items covered in the estimate/proposal are included in the contract

Important Notice

Geothermal heating and cooling home owners are urged to check their hydro bills to see if they are charged PST at a rate of 1.4% as opposed to 7%.

A Winnipeg business owner received a credit of more than \$1,700 from Manitoba Hydro after she found out she had been paying too much PST on her hydro bills.

Manitoba Hydro said the corporation typically detect customers who use electric heat by their usage pattern. However the 1.4 per cent PST that Hydro charge is for non-heating electrical consumption.

If you are being billed for 7% PST on geothermal or non-heating electrical you may contact Manitoba Hydro to ask for a rebate.