



MEDIA RELEASE

For publishing from 29 May 2014

THE NGEWANA FAMILY FINDS GREEN WAYS TO BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

Electric heaters switched off as 'My Green Home' switches on to wood pellets and warm woolies.

The family that is changing their home to help change the world is using both the oldest and newest technology to stay warm – without being hit by the usual winter electricity cost shock.

In the past, they relied on a squadron of electric heaters as well as a gas rollabout that used about 11 bottles of LPG per year. An open fireplace burning anthracite sent more heat up the chimney than into the house.

This year, as part of the My Green Home initiative, they've learned a better way. They've sealed gaps around windows and doors with weatherstripping tape to stop cold air from coming in and blocked heat from escaping through the ceiling with rolls of Saint-Gobain Isover insulation. And they have started insulating their own bodies better, layering their clothing, and snuggling with warm winter bedding from Woolworths.

The open fireplace in the lounge was replaced by a Calore closed-combustion fireplace that burns biomass pellets made of sawdust and scrap wood, which is a renewable source of energy. Popular in the northern hemisphere, pellet heaters are a recent arrival in South Africa. The style-conscious mother of the family, Bulelwa, loves the gleaming crimson pellet heater and calls it her "red Ferrari". Their electric heaters haven't even been used this winter yet. As part of their green home makeover, they're also preparing for a more comfortable summer, with heat-reflective paint from Breathecoat on the roof to keep the inside cooler.

This coming week's theme at My Green Home is heating *and* cooling – but the focus now is on heating to address current winter needs. The website, www.mygreenhome.org.za, offers no-cost, low-cost and invest-to-save advice on keeping a comfortable climate indoors without spoiling the climate for the rest of the earth. There are even tricks for employing devices usually used for summer cooling in order to stay warm in winter. In a video 'webisode', viewers can follow the Ngewana family's winter strategies, watch their son Lutho finding cold draughts with an incense stick, and see the new 'carbon neutral' fireplace in action.

My Green Home is led by the Green Building Council South Africa, with main co-funding from the German government through the South African-German Energy Programme (SAGEN). It's also supported by the 49M campaign, Karebo Systems and the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI).

Those who participate stand a chance to win weekly green prizes, including the grand prize: their own 'green home makeover'. Anyone who submits a 'selfie' photo with their best winter-warming strategy using no electricity to the website or via Twitter (@mygreenhomesa) by 12h00 on Monday 9th June is eligible for this week's prizes in a random draw, as well as the grand prize in early August.

Heating and cooling solutions have been sponsored by Calore (<http://calore.co.za/>), Saint-Gobain Isover (<http://www.isover.co.za/>), Breathecoat (<http://www.breathecoatfs.co.za/>), Woolworths (<http://www.woolworths.co.za/>) and the City of Cape Town electricity saving campaign (<http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/electricitysaving/Pages/default.aspx>).

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