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CNN NEWSROOM

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SCHNEIDER (voice-over): Brenda Gallagher says her family was considering a move, but were caught in a weak housing market.

BRENDA GALLAGHER, DOING A GREEN RENOVATION: We noticed that a couple houses in the neighborhood didn't sell for quite as much as we thought they were worth. SCHNEIDER: Instead of selling their home they decided to fix the place up. She hired a contractor Matt Hoots to weather seal her doors and windows, and reinsulated the crawl space below her house.

GALLAGHER: This room was freezing cold and once the insulation went up, it was amazing how the air balanced out in the house.

SCHNEIDER: Matt specializes in earth friendly and energy efficient homes...

MATT HOOTS, ECO-FRIENDLY CONTRACTOR: This can be one of the more expensive items replaced when you could just modify the windows, use weather stripping to work with the existing windows.

SCHNEIDER: He also says if you want hardwood floors, consider switching to bamboo, cork or recycled wood.

HOOTS: You're not using new, fresh wood. And the second thing is this is not going to end up the landfill. Forty percent of the landfills are filled with waste debris from construction sites.

SCHNEIDER: With this week's "Modern Living," I'm Bonnie Schneider.