

It's possible to "beef up" your R-value simply by adding on to existing insulation; just be sure not to compress the old layer. Insulation works much like a down comforter; it's as much the air pockets as the material itself that holds in the heat.

If you decide to install new insulation yourself, you will likely be working with rolls. Wear protective long-sleeved clothing, plus a hat, goggles, gloves and respirator. Leave space around bare stove pipes, electrical fixtures, motors or recessed light fixtures to prevent fire. It's especially dangerous to pack insulation onto electrical nob and tube wiring (found in houses built before 1940).

If you hire a contractor, your insulation can be rolled or blown in. Be sure to get several estimates and always ask for the same R-value, to compare apples to apples. A contractor will even completely remove old insulation and install all new, although that costs more.

Forty years ago, fiberglass was commonly used for attic insulation; now recycled cellulose fiber made from newsprint is available. Cellulose insulation is non-toxic, a borate treatment makes it fireproof, and rodents won't nest in it (as they will in fiberglass).

Pacific Gas and Electric offers a 15-cent per square foot energy rebate to residential customers on some insulation upgrades through Dec. 31. Go to www.pge.com/rebates for details. The DOE website <http://www.ornl.gov/~roofs/Zip/ZipHome.html> offers insulation guidelines by zip code (although the Lamorinda area zip codes entered default to Napa, Calif.). A full fact sheet is available online at http://www.ornl.gov/sci/roofs+walls/insulation/ins_01.html.



Check on electrical wires

Coming Soon in the Orinda Country Club

Open 3/18, 2-6.



Sunset Views* Level Yard * Desirable Location

This classic ranch style home nestles into a level setting on top of a knoll and offers views of the Berkeley Hills. The traditional floor plan allows for wonderful indoor/outdoor living, an entertainer's delight! There are 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, hardwood floors, a formal dining area, an oversized living room with walls of glass and a country kitchen. There are also two outbuildings currently used as offices for the artistic owner. The backyard is private and peaceful with a delightful patio, lawn, paths, and gardens. The master bedroom has French doors to the oversized side yard complete with patio and garden. For more information please contact April Matthews at 925-200-0773 or email aprilmat@comcast.net.

It's April in Lamorinda For Real Estate

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ISA arborists Darren and Lew Edwards

Why Not to Top

Shade trees should **never** be topped. The regrowth of a topped tree is structurally unsound. Topping required by utility right-of-way pruning is bluntly obvious and sets an unfortunate community standard followed by others. Instead of topping, use crown *cleaning*, *thinning*, and/or *proper reduction* methods, set by the ISA.

So don't wait until it's too late, call your local ISA certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you with your pruning questions.

Advance Tree Service

Your Authority on Trees and Landscape.



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