

Energy Efficient Shades



James Dulley
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If your home's windows aren't as efficient as you'd like, consider installing insulating window shades or curtains.

Inefficient windows are a significant area of energy loss in a home and can increase your monthly utility bills. Installing new, high-tech efficient windows is a cost effective improvement, but the investment is substantial.

Even with today's energy costs, it may take years, depending on the condition of your existing windows, to payback the cost of installing new ones.

Your old, inefficient windows may also indirectly increase your heating bills. When the indoor window glass surface gets cold, your warm body loses more radiant heat to it. This may make you feel chilly, even in a room that is reasonably warm. When you feel chilly, this often results in setting the furnace thermostat higher, which wastes even more energy. If you have a heat pump, this may also cause the backup electric resistance heat to come on, costing even more.

Installing insulated shades or curtains is an excellent method, especially since you're redecorating, to improve the efficiency of old windows and your wintertime comfort. Keep in mind though, the shades will not be nearly as effective in blocking the summer heat. For this purpose, some type of exterior shading that blocks the heat before it gets indoors is more effective.

The insulation value of typical single-pane windows is R-1 and of standard double-pane windows is R-2. The best and most efficient insulated window shades can increase this by more than R-6. Even if you have the most efficient new window glass, adding the shades can still double the insulation level. Good-quality window shades can also reduce the convection air currents near the window to keep cooler air from mixing with room air.

Obviously, the efficiency (R-value and air tightness) of the shades is important, but keep in mind they should also look good. If you install some unattractive, but efficient shades, you likely will not close them as often as you should for the greatest energy savings and comfort. I cannot tell you how many homes I have inspected only to find their efficient, insulated window shades are not closed.

Many companies offer insulated window shades that you can find at most home centers and on the Internet. When

selecting them, it is important to compare the insulation levels and how well the edges seal against the wall or window framing. Also check the ease of raising or sliding the shades open. If it is cumbersome to open, you will not use them as often as you should. The small mini-samples in the store may not give a true indication of how a full-sized one will operate, so use some judgment when selecting them.

A Roman shade design is very popular and efficient because it can be made to be quite thick, yet still open and close easily. You can make your own Roman shade from scratch, but it is better to get well-insulated ones in kit form. The best ones have four insulating layers including reflective Mylar and a vapor barrier in the center. The Mylar helps to block radiant heat loss. A magnetic edge strip is used so they seal very well against the wall to block chilly drafts from getting around the shade.

With these kits, cut the insulated multilayer Roman shade fabric to the proper size and sew on your own material cover to complement your room decor. If you are not good with a sewing machine, the kits also include special double-sided adhesive strips. Running a hot steam iron over the cover activates the adhesive on the strip to stick the cover to the insulating fabric. For large windows and patio doors, side-pull curtain kits are available with the same multilayer material and magnetic seals.

Cellular pleated shades can more than triple the insulation level of single-pane windows and they are very easy for anyone to open and close.

Cellular pleated shades can more than triple the insulation level of single-pane windows and they are very easy for anyone to open and close. These are ideal for contemporary decors because they almost disappear above the window when they are opened. The pleated shades with the highest R-value use double cells and slide in vertical edge tracks to block drafts. Shades which use a denser light-blocking fabric on the side near the window glass provide slightly higher insulation.

The following companies offer insulating shades and curtains: Country Curtains, (800) 937-1237, www.countrycurtains.com; Cozy Curtains, (800) 342-9955, www.cozycurtains.com; Smith and Noble, (800) 560-0027, www.smithandnoble.com; Symphony Shades, (877) 966-3678, www.cellularwindowshades.com; and Warm Company, (800) 234-9276, www.warmcompany.com.

Send inquiries to James Dulley, Cooperative Connections, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244

Honoring Co-op Leaders

Hagny, Rademacher to be inducted to S.D. Co-op Hall of Fame

Dennis Hagny

For a quarter of a century, Dennis Hagny served as manager of Northern Electric Cooperative in Bath, S.D. Under his leadership, he guided the cooperative in providing television alternatives for rural electric members with the creation of Northern Rural Cable TV Cooperative in 1988, the nation's first rural cooperative wireless cable TV system.

In 1998, Hagny was the founding CEO of Northern Valley Communications, a company formed with James Valley Telecommunications of Groton, S.D., to provide dial-up Internet access to residents of northeast South Dakota.

When NVC became solely-owned by JVT in 2001, Northern Electric retained the rights to WOWnet wireless Internet service. Now operated as Northern Wireless, the company offers high-speed, broadband Internet and DSL signals to more than 1,000 customers in Brown and Spink counties. In 2005, the cooperative began using the WOWnet technology to read the usage meters at the

Robert Rademacher

Robert Rademacher, longtime manager of Dakota Energy Cooperative in Huron, S.D., still remembers the day that electricity arrived at his father's farm near Scotland, S.D. Thanks to the REA, his family could now eat supper under the glow of a light bulb and listen to the Lone Ranger on the radio. That experience of rural electrification and insight into the benefits electricity brings to rural families was a driving force in his nearly 40-year career with South Dakota electric cooperatives.

Rademacher began his electric cooperative career in 1968 as an electrification adviser at Rosebud Electric Cooperative. In 1969, he became the member services director for South Dakota Rural Electric Association. In 1972, he became member services director at Beadle Electric Cooperative in Huron and became manager of the cooperative in 1983.

Rademacher played a pivotal role in leading the first consolidation of rural electric systems in South Dakota. In 1995, Rademacher helped guide the consolidation of the

cooperative's 15 electric delivery substations

Hagny also served as the president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Standing Committee on Telecommunications. In addition to his work for cooperatives, he was active in numerous community endeavors. He currently serves as chairman of the Avera Health Board of Directors and is a past chairman of the Avera St. Luke's Board.

A native of Gettysburg, S.D., Hagny started his cooperative career in 1965 as office manager of Plymouth Electric Cooperative in Lemars, Iowa. In 1974 he came the general manager of Farmers Electric Cooperative in Greenfield, Iowa, and became CEO/general manager of Northern Electric in 1981, retiring in 2005.

He and his wife, Mary, live in Aberdeen.

former Beadle Electric Cooperative in Huron, S.D., and Ree Electric Cooperative in Miller, S.D., into Dakota Energy Cooperative with offices in Huron and Miller. Through the unification, the combined organization was able to expand and improve services while gaining efficiencies and lowering costs for member-owners in Hand, Hyde and Beadle counties. The consolidation served as a template for 10 other South Dakota rural electric systems that have consolidated or merged since then.

Under Rademacher's leadership, the cooperative has overcome two disastrous ice storms that destroyed large portions of its electric system in 1995 and again in 2005.

Rademacher was named the South Dakota Electric Council's Man of the Year in 2004.

Rademacher and his wife, Jean, live in Huron.



Dennis Hagny



Bob Rademacher

About the Hall of Fame

South Dakota's cooperatives will honor two men with more than 75 years of dedicated service to the cooperative movement.

Dennis Hagny of Aberdeen and Robert Rademacher of Huron will be inducted into the South Dakota Cooperative Hall of Fame on Thursday, Oct. 5.

With their inductions, they will bring the Cooperative Hall of Fame to 45 inductees.

Induction into the South Dakota Cooperative Hall of Fame is the highest honor that the cooperative community bestows on those men and women whose endeavors in the cause of the cooperative form of enterprises have been genuinely heroic.

The South Dakota Cooperative Hall of Fame provides recognition for a person contributing in especially significant ways to the enhancement of the cooperative idea, its broader acceptance or to the substantial advancement of cooperative enterprise in any of its various forms.

Tickets Available

For tickets to the Co-op Month Banquet and Co-op Hall of Fame Induction, contact the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives in Huron at 605-352-9492. The banquet will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 5 at the Holiday Inn in Mitchell.

The featured speakers are Linda Salmonson of East River Electric Power Cooperative and Jim Beddow of the Rural Learning Center discussing rural development successes.

