

The Ways to Warmer Windows

4CORE serves Southwest Colorado as the leading resource for the effective and efficient use of energy to promote and sustain vibrant local communities.

The U.S. Dept. of Energy estimates that during the summer up to 60% of a home's cooling energy is lost through its windows and during the winter up to 25% of a home's heating energy is lost through its windows. Here are a few ways to reduce that energy loss:

Seal and caulk

Pros - This is the most cost-effective way to reduce air leaking through windows. Foam stripping or caulk can be purchased for little money.

Cons - Applying foam stripping or caulk can be messy, and sometimes tricky (see our previous newsletters for videos on "how to"). Also, caulking and sealing doesn't always prevent drafts that are caused by air cooling, condensing, and sinking down along the window pane and walls.

Plastic

Pros - This is a quick, inexpensive way to reduce air flow and downdrafts from windows.

Cons - Thin plastic material can easily be damaged, and needs to be removed in summer months if you want any fresh air coming into your house. The adhesive can also rip off paint when removed if it is applied a painted surface.

Insulating film

Pros - Applying film can help retain heat as well as block glare and ultraviolet rays to reduce fading of interior furnishings. It can be kept on windows year-round to reduce heat gain in the summer months.

Cons - Must be cut and applied correctly, and can be more costly than the methods mentioned above.

Window coverings

Pros - Thick drapes and honey comb or insulative blinds help keep warm air in and reduce drafts from windows. They are also more aesthetically pleasing than using plastic and can compliment to the room's decor.

Cons - Drapes and blinds must be pulled to let in light or heat during the day time. They can also be more costly than methods mentioned above.

Storm Windows

Pros - Storm windows are a good solution if double-pane replacement windows are too expensive. They provide an additional layer of insulation to existing single-pane windows.

Con - These windows are usually removed each summer and replaced with screens and then installed again in cold months, which creates additional maintenance in fall and spring.

Window Replacement

Pros - Window technology has come a long way in the last few years, and their insulative value has been increased by the use of materials such as vinyl and even argon gas between the panes. Often times if a home is insulated and air sealed well, replacing windows is the best way to reduce energy loss.

Cons - This is probably the most expensive way to improve your windows, but if they are in bad shape, this can be the only way to go!

For more information:

visit www.fourcore.org, email info@fourcore.org, or call 970-259-1916

