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National Record Temperatures Cause Homeowners to Pursue Additional Ways to Stay Cool

Air conditioning and awnings are a good long-term solution for staying cool

ROSEVILLE, MINN. (July 6, 2007) – Today national temperatures are expected to reach record highs – causing homeowners to find alternate, cost-effective ways to beat the heat. Air conditioning may be a quick solution, but adding an awning to the equation enhances the long-term effects. Often referred to as old-fashioned, awnings are now rebuilding curb appeal while providing significant energy savings benefits.

“Most people think that the best way to avoid the heat is to turn up the air conditioner and hope that they don’t pay too much later,” said Howard Goldstein, past chairman of the Professional Awning Manufacturers Association (PAMA). “In actuality, there are eco-friendly ways to help cool a home while saving money on energy costs.”

In fact, a recent study conducted in Minneapolis, Boston, Seattle, Albuquerque, Phoenix, St. Louis and Sacramento found that window awnings can reduce cooling costs by as much as 26 percent in warm climates and 33 percent in cool climates. The study, commissioned by PAMA and conducted by the Center for Sustainable Building Research at the University of Minnesota, determined that awnings are a viable means of reducing air conditioner usage in the home.

Outdoor shade products, such as awnings, prevent solar radiation from penetrating through windows. This is important because the sun’s rays through glass are responsible for nearly 20 percent of the load on an air conditioner, according to a study by the American Society of Heating and Air Conditioning Engineers. The decrease in solar radiation penetration provided by awnings can save homeowners more than \$100 annually on electrical costs, depending on the region the home is in.

While many homes have air conditioning, there are still many that do not. When located above windows and patio doors, awnings can provide benefits to people living without air conditioning by reducing inside temperatures by as much as 8 to 15 degrees. The benefit of shaded windows on a home without air conditioning extends beyond a more comfortable living environment; it also reduces the possibility of heat exhaustion caused by hot, humid temperatures.

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“The addition of awnings to a home is valuable beyond benefiting the individual homeowner,” said Michelle Sahlin, managing director of PAMA. “When multiple homeowners reduce their need for energy, there is less demand from energy suppliers at times of peak usage.”

The cost of cranking the air conditioning is not only reflected in steep electrical bills, but also in the possibility of causing citywide power outages due to a spike in electricity consumption. Finding a balance between air conditioner usage and other methods of cooling the home, such as adding awnings to windows, can help prevent this inconvenience.

For more information about the energy study or to find an awning manufacturer near you, please visit www.awningstoday.com

About IFAI

The Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI) is a not-for-profit trade association with more than 2,000 member companies representing the international specialty fabrics marketplace. Member companies range in size from one-person shops to multinational corporations. Members' products span the entire spectrum of the specialty fabrics industry, from fiber and fabric suppliers to manufacturers of end products, equipment and hardware.

About PAMA

The Professional Awning Manufacturers Association (PAMA), a division of the Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI), is the only international trade association committed to the awning industry. PAMA membership is open to companies who are current members of IFAI and manufacture or sell awnings, as well as those who supply goods/services to the awning industry.

PAMA maintains two Web sites – www.awninginfo.com, which focuses on association members and commercial awning use, and www.awningstoday.com, which educates consumers about awnings and awning benefits.

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