

Doug Rye *says ...*



Tinting: Not just for your car windows

Well, the summer of 2010 has gone on record as one of the hottest ever in our state. Just like many of you, we received the highest electric bill that we have ever received. Every month I try to teach you ways to keep your utility bills as low as possible. Remember that most energy efficiency tips are attempts to lower the heating and cooling costs of the house. As I am always looking for ways to help you do just that, I had the opportunity this summer to find another affordable tool for your energy efficiency arsenal. It is window tinting. I actually looked at window tinting years ago but I didn't like the fact that it seemed to have to be silver, gold, or really dark to work very well. Both of our automobiles have tinted glass and I knew that they were more comfortable and better on the eyes than most of the rental cars that I had used where the glass was not tinted.

This past spring I was conducting a seminar for Ozarks Electric Cooperative in Fayetteville. After the meeting a fellow asked me why I didn't tell folks about the benefits of window tinting. I told him that I really didn't know that much about that subject and that I had doubts about window tinting meeting all the claims that I had heard. He gave me a nice package of material from 3M, a well-known company. I told him that I would read the material. I did so and was impressed with the claims but I remained cautious, as experience has taught me that many claims are just sales pitches. But I thought, 3M is a large and well respected company, the warranty looks great, and if it performs anywhere near as good as it claims, I want to give it a try. So I called a dear friend who performs energy audits on a daily basis and asked him to find a house that might benefit by installing window tinting. He called me after just a few days to tell me that he had found the perfect house. It was a 2,000-square-foot brick veneer house with eight-foot ceilings and about an equal number of windows on all sides of the house. The windows were single-hung aluminum with double-glazing and in good condition. The lady of the house said she couldn't use the dining room on the really hot days because of the extreme

heat coming through the west windows, and that she couldn't enjoy her morning view of the mountains because of the heat through the east windows.

Let's make the rest of the story short. I called the company and asked if they would do one house to prove that their product works as claimed. They said "yes." I called the family and asked permission to tint their windows. They said "yes." We met the crew at the house to measure the windows. It was 100 degrees at noon. The house thermostat was set on 75 degrees but the house stayed at 80 degrees. We met the next day to install tinting. It was 102 degrees at noon. Tinting was installed on all windows. The temperature where the sun was hitting the carpet went down about 10 degrees. The house temperature went down about 5 degrees, which is huge on a hot summer day. The claim was that the tinting would reject 56 percent of the total solar energy, 97 percent of the infrared rays, and 99 percent of the UV rays, which practically eliminates fading. You could not tell by looking that there was tinting and there was much less glare. I believe that it passed the test. The house was more comfortable and, as the lady of the house said, "I got my room and view back." If your windows are still in good condition, this may be an affordable energy solution for you.

Another success story with 3M tinting recently took place during the 2010 Energy Efficiency Makeover sponsored by the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. The home of Bill and Mary Quilhot of Gassville won the grand prize and as part of the energy efficiency makeover, the couple's prized picture window, which provides a view of their beautifully landscaped yard and nearby woods, was tinted. An infrared thermal imaging camera showed that the tinting reduced the heat gain inside the house by 15 percent. (See the article on the makeover on page 10.)

I hope this gives you yet another energy efficiency option for your home. And, as always, you may call me for more information at 501-653-7931.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!