

R and U values

Meaningless with windows

R and U values are given as an indication of a material's ability to retard or conduct the flow of heat... so they're valuable in helping the buyer know how effective the material will be in conserving energy.

But when it comes to windows, they don't mean anything, because they're seldom based on common criteria.

Some windows are rated for conductive U values... a measure of how fast or slow heat travels directly through the glass and frame materials used in the window. Others show the conductive U value for the glass only.

In addition to conductive U values, windows, unlike a single-component product such as mineral wool ceiling insulation, have an infiltration U value. This is a measure of heat flow through the cracks between the several component parts. For some windows, this is given. For others, it is not.

Yet other windows are rated with a composite U value, which is the total of the combined conductive and infiltration U values.

Yet another factor about windows which isn't a factor in materials like batt insulation, is the size of the window tested for the U or R values.

If the window has double insulating glass, the U value of the glass alone is as low as 0.56. But the frame may have a U value as high as 1.00. These two factors must be considered in combination to determine the conductive U value of the window.

If the window tested is small, the frame represents a larger percent of the total window area than it does in a very large window. So even if two windows give U values representing both infiltration and conduction, you can't compare their energy efficiency unless you know whether both windows tested were the same size.

One way to use U or R values to compare different windows is to have complete, independent test laboratory reports for both windows. You must check to see that all criteria, including conditions of the test itself (static or dynamic air pressure, etc.) are identical.

Unless you are an architect involved in a project requiring 600 windows, it's unlikely that you can get test reports which are comparable.

So what do you do? If you want to make your windows energy efficient, you are going to have to know the different ways windows waste energy, so you can identify what product you need.

If you have relatively good, air-tight windows, you probably need storm windows.

If your prime window is deteriorated, but you have good storm windows, you need a new prime window.

If you have worn-out windows and no storms, you need a "thermalized" replacement window.

Once you can identify your window energy problem and know the remedy, you have to be knowledgeable about the different degrees of quality in the different competitive products available for your need.

"The Window Book," written by Fred M. Schmidt and published by Season-all Industries after five years of window energy research, identifies the ways windows waste energy, spells out the "right" solution to each problem and defines the characteristics of good storm windows, replacement windows and "thermalized" replacement windows.

According to Mr. Schmidt, "There is an absence of good, easy to understand informa-

tion about windows and energy. And home and building owners are confused. 'The Window Book' is an attempt to give the consumer the basic information needed to invest in window energy conservation wisely."

He concludes, "There should be some hope that the

buyer will, in fact, achieve the energy conservation he or she is paying to achieve."

The 136-page, illustrated "Window Book" is available by sending \$2 to the publisher, Season-all Industries, Department MS, Consumer Publications, Indiana, PA 15701.

Tool box

Every home should have a tool chest, and a few basic items to fill it. You never know when an emergency might occur, and it's best to be prepared beforehand.

particular environment demands.


Be careful with your tools, cleaning them thoroughly after each use, and making sure they are perfectly dry before replacing them, in order to prevent rusting.

Therefore, make sure to have, in a spot where it can be reached with ease, a box containing the following: hammer, pliers, screwdrivers (small, medium and large), a selection of various sized nails and screws, some wall anchors, strong tape, a pair of scissors, glue, wrench, a pencil, ruler, tape measure and of course, anything your


Every year I live I am more convinced that the waste of life lies in the love we have not given, the powers we have not used, the selfish prudence that will risk nothing, and which, shirking pain, misses happiness as well.

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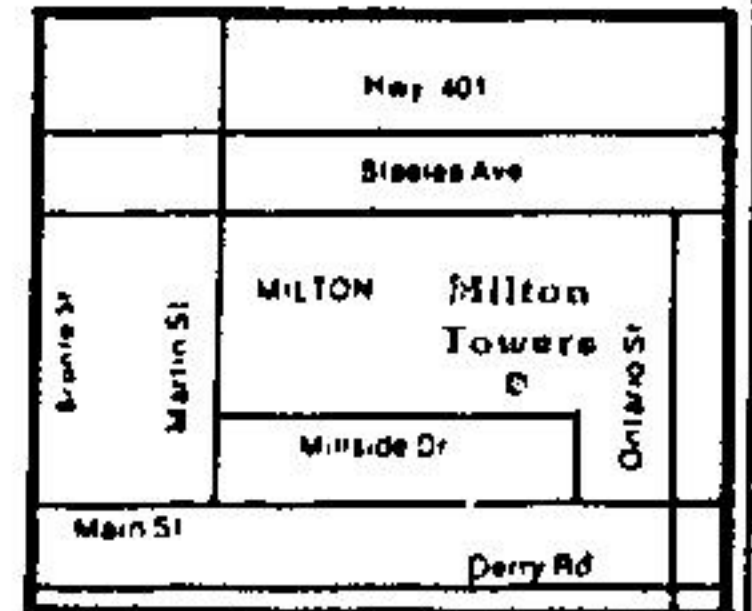
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