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Awnings Reduce Homeowners' Carbon Footprints

Adding awnings to a home saves on electricity and home cooling energy

ROSEVILLE, MINN. (March 7, 2008) – Reducing carbon footprints is a growing trend among eco-minded homeowners. However, according to statistics from the United Nations, every American is responsible for an average of 22 tons of carbon dioxide emissions every year, far above the world average of six tons per capita.

To closer resemble the world average, homeowners need to look for ways to cut their carbon emissions. Installing an awning is one simple upgrade homeowners can make to reduce their home cooling energy, contributing to an overall decrease in their carbon footprints.

"People don't have to make drastic changes to their homes in order to reduce their impact on the environment," said Michelle Sahlin, managing director of the Professional Awning Manufacturers Association (PAMA). "Awnings are an easy home upgrade that enhance the aesthetic quality of a home, while reducing carbon emissions caused by running air conditioners at full-blast."

In fact, awnings can reduce carbon dioxide emissions caused by home cooling by as much as 26 percent in Minneapolis or similar continental climates, according to a carbon emissions calculator on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Web site.

Adding window awnings to the mix can help ease the load on electricity usage for an air conditioner, which is important since electricity is one of the top producers of carbon emissions.

When combined with an air conditioner, awnings can reduce the amount of electricity needed to cool the home by preventing solar radiation from penetrating through windows. This is key because solar radiation through glass accounts for nearly 20 percent of the load on an air conditioner, according to the American Society of Heating and Air Conditioning Engineers.

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"The ability of awnings to block the sun's rays through windows can directly reduce the impact of global warming from greenhouse gas emissions," said John Carmody, director of the Center for Sustainable Building Research at the University of Minnesota. "Awnings are a proven means for reducing heat gain and air conditioning loads typically resulting in a reduced carbon footprint."

For additional information about the energy saving benefits of awnings, please visit www.awningstoday.com/rel/carbonfootprint.htm

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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