

Add-a-room

Add on a room the smart, thrifty way

About one million American families are expected to add rooms to their homes this year at a cost in excess of \$2 billion.

Adding a room costs \$2,400 on the average. If you are one of those million considering such a project, remember that it will probably cost a good deal more to have the work done by a professional. On the other hand, a do-it-yourselfer can shave quite a bit from the average price — in the cost of labor alone.

Whichever route you choose, plan the project carefully. The Western Wood Products Association suggests you consider Mod 24 construction techniques, whether you plan to hire a contractor or to do the work yourself.

"Spacing" needed

Mod 24 calls for spacing the 2 x 4 floor joists, wall studs and roof trusses that comprise the wood framing at 24 inches on center instead of the time-honored 16 inches. With Mod 24, less labor, time and lumber are used. But the framing is entirely adequate in strength.

Another point to consider is the grade of framing lumber that will be used. Since the framing is going to be inside the walls where no one can see it, appearance isn't a factor. Look into the possibility

of using less expensive 2 x 4s of western wood that will still produce structurally sound framing acceptable to the FHA and VA when used in accordance with the FHA's Minimum Property Standards.

Cutting costs

The Mod 24 system has other cost-cutting advantages. When windows are designed to fit the modules of the system, use of jack studs and cripples is reduced. To facilitate insulating, the industry has devised 24-inch wide insulation butts that fit snugly between the framing members. Or if you use blown-in insulation, there are less cavities to fill.

Whether you decide to do-it-yourself or hire a contractor, using the various grades of western framing lumber in conjunction with Mod 24 will assure you of a room addition that is well built at a lower cost.

WALL OF FABRIC

A new idea in decorating is to use fabrics on the walls. On the market recently is a sturdy cloth, in many designs, that can be used as a wall covering, as well as for upholstery, for a beautifully coordinated room design.

RG&E consumer news

Installing a new heating system? Consider the heat pump. It's the most efficient system in use today.

You'll be glad you discovered the heat pump. It's more efficient than any other electric heating system, and gives you the added benefit of cooling your home in the summer. In principle, it is an air conditioner that works both ways: heat is extracted from the outside air and transferred into your home in winter, and removed from your home to the outdoors in summer.

The great advantage of a properly sized and installed heat pump lies in its outstanding ratio between heat output and the equivalent heat (or electric) input. Since the heat pump makes use of heat in outside air from indirect solar energy as well as electricity, it can supply heat equal to two times the energy used over a year's time. In other words, for every penny of electricity spent for operation, you could receive 2¢ worth of heat in return. The extra 1¢ of heat is taken from the outside air. In comparison, electric resistance heat alone gives a 1 to 1 (or 1¢ to 1¢) ratio; fossil fuel heating systems have an overall seasonal performance rating of .6 heat output to 1.0 energy input.

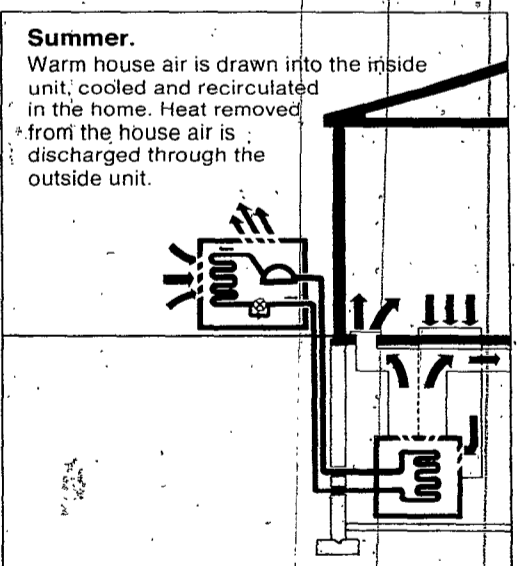
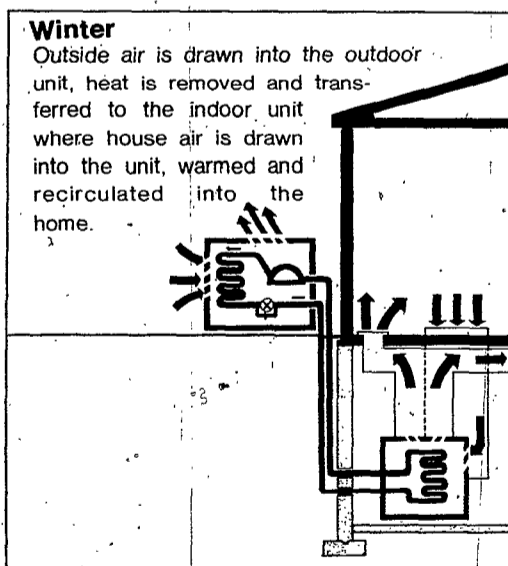
You are probably wondering how heat can be extracted from cold winter air. It's hard to believe, but there is always heat present in air, even in the coldest arctic air. As long as temperatures can be recorded, even far below zero, it is possible to take this heat from the air. Transfer of the heat to inside your home in winter via a heat pump is similar to the operation of your refrigerator. The refrigerant system in a refrigerator cools the interior by removing heat, and that heat is discharged outside into the kitchen air. The heat pump also contains a refrigerant, colder than outside air, which transfers heat absorbed outdoors into your home. In summer, the flow of the refrigerant is reversed and your home is air conditioned as heat in the indoor air is transferred outside.

approximately 30°F. However, a properly designed heat pump for our area should continue operation at temperatures below zero, with supplemental resistance heat, to obtain maximum energy savings.

Second, there is a defrost system for removing moisture which collects and freezes on the outdoor coil during the heating cycle. To melt frost buildup, the system is reversed to a cooling cycle which heats the coil. The supplemental heat is needed at this time to counteract the cooling effect of the cycle change. In addition, the resistance heaters can be used to supply all the heat required if the refrigeration part of the system should fail.

The heat pump is most efficient in a properly insulated home. Recommended insulation standards are now R-30 (R-resistance value) in ceilings and R-11 in side walls. This is equivalent to approximately 10 inches of most types of insulation in the ceiling and 3 1/2 inches in the side walls. It is also important to properly insulate the basement walls either on the outside during construction or inside after construction. If the basement is to be used as a storage area, the total R value for basement wall insulation should be 5. If the basement is to be used as a finished living area, the insulation value should be R-11.

The initial cost of installing a heat pump system in your home may be slightly higher than that for conventional combination central heating and cooling systems. However, operating cost savings will help to off-set the higher first cost. In fact, the additional cost of the heat pump could pay for itself in as little as three years through its effective performance. And you also have the convenience of setting one thermostat to maintain a desired temperature range all year long, with the proper automatic controls.



The heat pump also uses supplementary electric resistance heating elements during the heating cycle for two reasons. First, they supply extra heat when the unit is operating at temperatures below the balance point of the system, the lowest temperature at which the heat pump alone can handle the heating load. This is an outdoor temperature of

At a time when energy conservation is so crucial, the heat pump is an especially valuable investment. A representative from RG&E's Residential Department will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Call 546-2700, extension 2751, today — begin saving energy and money soon with a heat pump heating and cooling system.



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