

# Do it right with doors

Homeowners often think that their use of exterior doors is their only line of defense in the battle to save energy dollars. The principle involved is the same as the use of an oven. Every time the door is opened energy is lost. Short of a science fiction transporter, there is no way during inclement weather that a door can be opened without the loss of energy. So, homeowners are right when they conclude that the less time involved in opening and closing an exterior door the better, when running indoor energy systems.

But, the homeowner's first line of defense with any exterior door product comes with the home's initial design and later with correct installation and finishing of all the exterior doors. "Doing it right" at the outset will maximize the door's energy performance as well as its life expectancy.

There are four basic exterior door products on the market—wood, metal, molded wood fiber, and fiberglass—in a wide range of styles and designs. From single doors to elaborate entry systems.

As different as these products may seem, they have more in common than most homeowners would think. Correct installation is the key to maximizing energy efficiency and correct finishing and maintenance are the key to extending the "life" of the product.

## Energy Control At The Design Phase

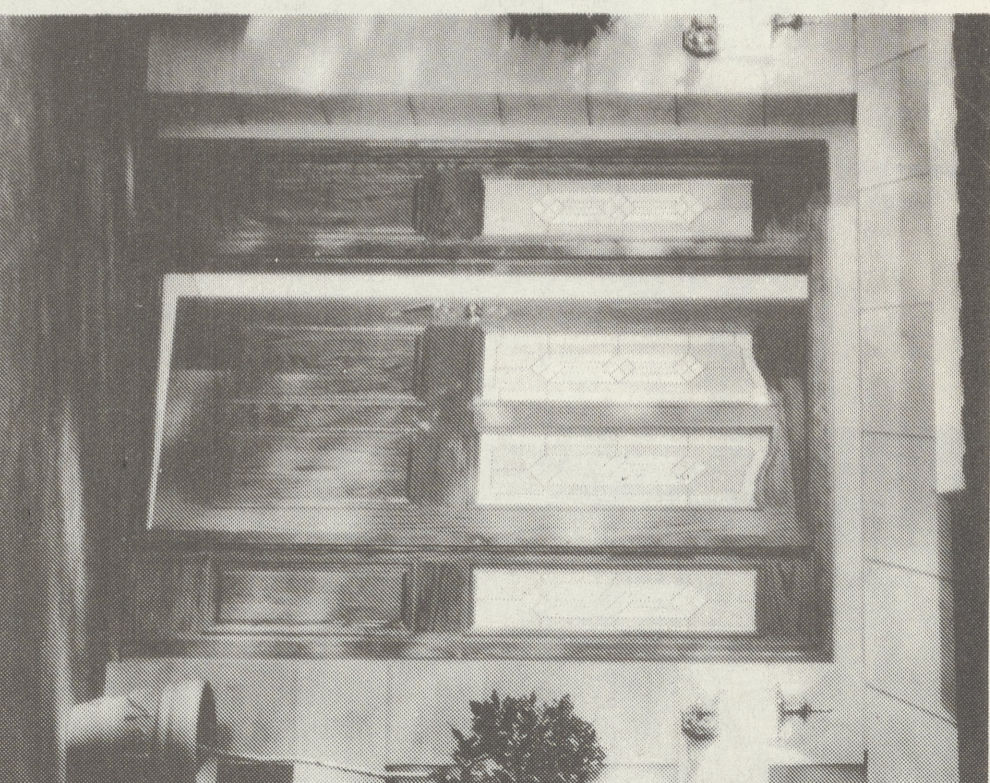
Energy control begins at the design phase in which entrances to homes are placed in the protective presence of a porch or overhang and key entrances are placed away from prevailing "bad weather winds."

**Installation**  
For the most part, air tends to travel around an object rather than through it—a process called "air infiltration." Air infiltration is controlled best at the time of installation.

This simply means that all points where the door frame meets the framework of the house should be caulked and sealed with high quality products. Further caulking is recommended with all exterior moldings.

Then, once the door and its frame are in place, a quality weatherstripping system must be installed. A quality bottom sweep must also be installed for the same reason.

The door itself could be made of the



A protective overhang is recommended to prolong the finish on exterior doors and to minimize the amount of moisture tracked into the house.

most fantastic insulating material ever devised, but the energy efficiency will be severely lessened if the door's frame remains uncaulked or an inadequate weatherstripping system has been installed carelessly.

The control of air infiltration at the time of installation is the key.

**Finishing and Maintenance**  
While many doors are pre-primed, most need finishing according to manufacturer recommendations. Following those recommendations will keep warranties in effect. Door warranties typically range from 1-5 years.

Homeowners are wise to remember that a door has six surfaces that need finishing—the front and back, the two sides, as well as the top and bottom edges.

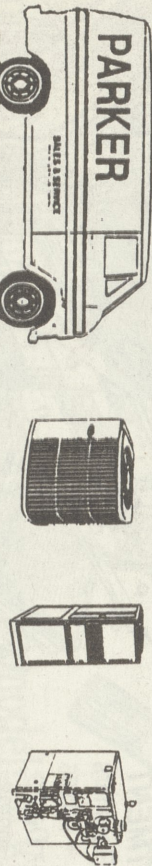
Finishing should be completed after the door and frame are installed and before the weatherstripping and bottom sweep are put into place.

Any fresh cuts made into the door for trimming or for installing hardware must also be sealed.

**Long Life And Good Performance**  
Any exterior door on today's market that is made by a quality manufacturer will perform well when installed and finished according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

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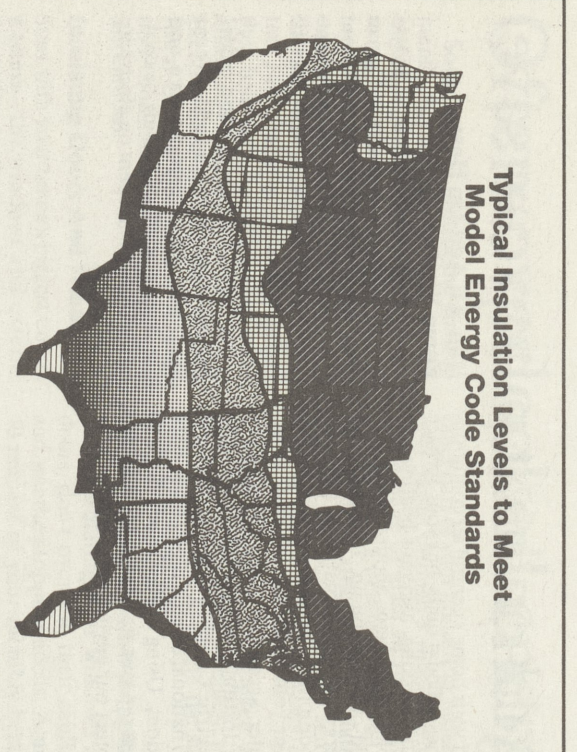
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Manville brand recommends these levels of insulation for new construction to comply with the 1992 Model Energy Code published by the Council of American Building Officials (CABO). For insulation combinations can be used to comply. This recommendation assumes some construction details, including limited areas of efficient doors and windows in a typical house.

## New manual touts solar power use in PA

There is a great misconception that solar-based energy systems are not feasible in Northeast Pennsylvania. To address this issue, the Pennsylvania Energy Office (PEO) has compiled an 83-page manual which spotlights various successful solar energy projects throughout the State. This publication, according to officials of the Northeast Pennsylvania Energy Center, a branch of the PEO located in Pitsston, is available locally and is available free of charge.

Titled the "Pennsylvania Solar Manual," it offers a detailed look into the inner workings of different types of solar energy systems, including the fundamentals of solar energy, solar space heating, solar hot water, solar cooling, and solar electricity. In addition, case examples of fully operational solar systems located in Pennsylvania homes, businesses, multi-unit complexes, utility companies, government buildings, and others are addressed. Each of these case examples includes a brief background of the project designers, and how to get more information if needed.

One of the many authors of the manual is Joseph Butrinski, A.I.A., and professor at Penn State University's Hazleton Campus. Mr. Butrinski operates an architectural practice in Hazleton, and has worked professionally with firms in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Washington as well as Pennsylvania. In Northeast Pennsylvania alone, Mr. Butrinski has designed many solar structures which have met and even ex-

## Protect electronics from power surges

Bip! In a fraction of a second, your large electronics investment fades into oblivion, along with the picture on your big-screen TV. You've been hit by a power surge!

Unfortunately, such a scenario is not as infrequent as you might think. Sophisticated microprocessors in today's expensive consumer electronics and appliances need a stable power supply. A jolt of increased voltage and current, known as a power surge, can suddenly annihilate or seriously damage vital components in your faithful PC, TV or VCR. Power surges also have an affinity for searching out and destroying your other favorite equipment and work savers, including stereos, video games, telephone answering machines, fax machines, copiers, workshop tools and more.

But don't despair. There's an easy "Surge protectors are the best way for consumers to safeguard valuable electronic equipment from power surges," says Mike Einstein of Interstate Inc., a manufacturer of home protection and control products.

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