

LET'S REMODEL

Contractor can install new windows in winter

Q: Can I have new windows installed in my home in the winter?

A: Yes, you can. Window installation is performed year round although some seasons are more preferable than others. You should get the same level of quality as if they were installed in the spring, summer, or fall. The problems in the winter are what you would expect such as heat loss from the home, proper caulking adhesion, contractor performance due to cold, etc., but none of these are insurmountable.

Heat loss is unavoidable, but is usually kept to a minimum by the installer and they may adjust their method of installation so as to close up the opening as quickly as possible. The time needed to remove an old window and insert a new window should be less than 10 minutes. This does not mean that is how long it takes to install the window, but how long the opening is left open. Typically the installer will prepare to remove the old window just short of taking it out. Then he will prepare the new window for inserting into the opening. Once both units are prepped, it is quick to remove and insert. He would then pack insulation around the window which would form a barrier against the cold. The installer then completes the installation as normal.

Generally speaking, proper caulking adhesion should not be a problem as long as a good grade of caulking or silicone is used and it is not extremely cold outside. The worst thing that could happen is that the caulking or silicone will not cure properly and may split or crack prematurely. This is an unlikely occurrence and if it does happen, it can be easily detected by a visual inspection a few days after the installation. It can be easily repaired by the installer by applying another layer of sealant over the original. Typically the sealant is the last thing to go on the outside of the window and completes the installation of that window.

While it may seem that the installer will quicken his installation to get out of the cold, he will still do the job to the best of his ability.

Most installers will be prepared for the conditions by wearing extra clothing. Some installers actually prefer working in the cold of winter rather than the heat of summer.

Some suggestions you may consider when having windows installed in winter:

Remove curtains, drapes, and furniture from in front of window openings prior to the installers arriving. If possible, close the doors to the rooms that the installers are working in to decrease heat loss. You can place a towel or rug at the base of the door to plug the gap. Lay down a throw rug near the entrance door the installers will be using when they come in and out of your home to allow them to shake the snow off their feet. Allow a place that is warm for the installers to rest during their breaks or



meal. A small display of consideration may go a long way toward motivating them to go above and beyond their normal levels of quality.

After installation is complete: Inspect every window for proper operation and installation from inside the home. Try the window. Open and close it. Move all sashes to insure they operate properly. Look at the trim around the window for a nice even fit. Look for gaps or loose pieces. Walk around outside of the home for a visual inspection. Look around the perimeter of each opening for a proper caulk seal. Make certain the trim around the window is secured to the opening so that there are no pieces that are hanging or loose. Look for scratches or dents that seem unusual. Look at the shrubs for damage or debris left over. If you see something you don't like or have questions about, talk to the installer. He wants you to be satisfied just as much as you want him to do a good job. He would appreciate the opportunity to take care of any problems right then and there.

If you have realized that you do not want to put up with your existing windows for another winter, do not delay your decision because of your concern for the cold. You can lose just as much cool air in the summertime as you do warm air in the winter. In the winter you may be able to do a better comparison between your old and new windows. You will see the results almost the same day the windows are installed. Having new windows put in your home can be a positive and rewarding experience regardless of the season.

If you have home improvement questions, call Gayle Walters at the Michigan Remodeling Association (MRA) at 810-335-3232 or send questions to "Let's Remodel," 2187 Orchard Lake Road, Suite 103, Sylvan Lake, MI 48320. Answers are provided by members of the MRA, a local chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI). Members include professional contractors, manufacturers, wholesalers and lenders representing all facets of residential and light commercial remodeling. Answers to remodeling questions are also heard with Murray Gula's Construction Talk on WEXL AM-1340 on Saturdays 1-2 p.m. For more information or a copy of our membership roster call 810-335-3232.

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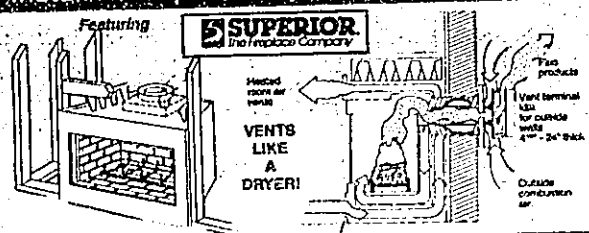
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