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Changing the way the world builds. People. Ideas. Integrity.

April 13, 2010 Issue # 23

Dear Jeffrey,

In the 1970's we learned that houses can *never* be built too tight - but they *can be* and *often are* under ventilated. The consequences of ignoring this fact negate any potential energy savings. The Canadian motto became: build **tight**, ventilate **right**.

This lesson still stands: A systems integration approach to energy-efficient design makes for durable, sustainable homes and buildings. Please read Dr. Joe's feature article "We Need to do it Different This Time" below.

Not to be forgotten are millions of existing homes in line for energy-efficient repairs, renovations and retrofits. In fact, that is the main focus of our 2010 seminars. The schedule is up and you will be happy to note the new course title: "Three R's: Repairs, Renovations, and Retrofits." See the note below the article for links to register.

To view a list of past newsletters, click [here](#) for our archives.

Happy reading!



Jeff Melvin
Editor, buildingscience.com e-news

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Featured Article by Joe Lstiburek, Ph.D., P.Eng., Fellow ASHRAE

We Need to do it Different This Time

Building Science Insight No. 035

Stop me if you heard this before. It was anything but easy when we tried this the last time. Not because it was hard, but because we didn't know what we were doing.

It is amazing to me that most folks no longer remember the 1973 Oil Crisis. In October of that year Egypt

and Syria attacked Israel on Yom Kippur. The Soviet Union got into the act by supplying replacement weapons and supplies to the Arabs. The United States responded by supplying replacement weapons and supplies to Israel. The Arab nations then responded with an embargo on oil exports to the United States.

You youngsters can imagine what that did to the price of oil. What made things worse was that we were also in the middle of a stock market crash. It took a decade to recover, and then we were whacked again in 1979 when oil shot through the roof with the fall of the Shah and the Iranian Revolution. The only good news at the time was that by then Prudhoe Bay and the North Sea had come online so that the second shock was not as bad. Bad is a relative term here as interest rates were at 20 percent at the time and the construction industry tanked.

You would think that we would have all learned something from the experience. All that I can say is that it was an interesting time that proceeded to get even more interesting. A young physicist by the name of Amory Lovins wrote a seminal piece for the journal *Foreign Affairs*, in October, 1976 called "Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken." It sent policy shock waves through the establishment. Until then no one had considered energy conservation as a serious strategy.

It soon became a very serious strategy in Canada very quickly. We began to insulate every roof in the country and replace oil furnaces with gas furnaces like there was no tomorrow. The hangover from all this activity hit in the early 80's. Rot and mold joined bad music as the signature symbols for that decade. What happened? How could anyone screw up energy conservation? It was supposed to be easy, a piece of cake, a lead pipe cinch. In retrospect, the obvious happened. [article continues]

To read the entire feature article and find a downloadable PDF version, click [here](#) to visit our web page.



Moldy and Decaying Attic - Notice the frost on the nails penetrating the roof sheathing. Moisture ends up on the coldest surfaces first. The sheathing is taking a beating, but the top chords of the roof trusses are doing fine because they are just a little bit warmer.

2010 Building Science Seminars

The Three R's: Repairs, Renovations and Retrofits

In this two-day seminar, Joseph Lstiburek and John Straube will begin with the fundamentals of building science and then explain the application to common repairs, renovations, and retrofits for existing buildings. [Register here...](#)

Jul 7-8	Westford, MA
Jul 14-15	Seattle, WA
Oct 20-21	Vancouver, BC
Nov 3-4	Toronto, ON
Nov 17-18	Chicago, IL

Photo courtesy of The Green Roundtable/NEXUS

We hope the wait was worth it. We have revamped our Building Science Fundamentals Course to focus on the millions of existing homes in line for energy-efficient repairs, renovations and retrofits. The new seminar is entitled: "The Three R's: Repairs, Renovations, and Retrofits" and will appear in the following cities:

[Westford, MA](#)

[Seattle, WA](#)

[Vancouver, British Columbia](#)

[Toronto, Ontario](#)

[Chicago, IL](#)

The complete agenda for the seminar will follow. Registrants will be happy to know that continuing education credits for this 16 hour course are pending.

In addition, we will offer our traditional Building Science Expert's Session in December:

[Westford, MA](#)

Why You Should Come to Our Seminars

- You want to be a Green (retrofitter, builder, architect, engineer, consultant, building code official, facility manager, building product manufacturer, government official) and you want to do Green right. After sixteen hours of classroom-style discussion with world-class building scientists you will be convinced that you are on the right track.
- You want to get our eyes on a picture of your building problem or a napkin diagram of your design or you want to have a simple 5-minute conversation with us about applying (insert article from our website here) to your particular building or design problem. Our seminars give you this kind of opportunity for one-on-one input from Dr. Joe and Dr. John.
- You want the best value for your organization's professional development and continuing education funds.

Come and network with the rest of the growing building science community. Register for one of our seminars now!

Sign Up For This Newsletter!

About BSC

Building Science Corporation is a Boston, MA and Waterloo, Ontario based architecture and building science consulting firm with clients throughout North America.

Building Science Corporation specializes in building technology consulting. Our focus is preventing and resolving problems related to building design, construction and operation.

We are internationally recognized for our expertise in moisture dynamics, indoor air quality, and forensic (building failure) investigations. We are also on the leading edge of the design of sustainable communities and buildings.

We believe in promoting energy efficiency and environmental responsibility within the constraints of marketable and affordable building technology.

Read More About Us: www.buildingscience.com



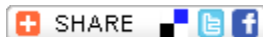
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