

Doug Rye Says  
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### **Energy Commandment No. 3: “Thou shalt cool it”**

I wish I had the power to command no more ice storms. But, of course, I don't. Well, I say, springtime, yes, ice storms, no. I am aware that many of our readers have been affected by the January ice storm. In fact, the Ice Storm of 2009 was the worst that I have ever seen. When this happened, it just made me really aware of how much we depend on this wonderful product we call electricity.

Let me take this opportunity to say to every single person who worked so many hours to restore electric distribution systems that originally took many years to build --thank you, thank you , thank you.

But, as always, life goes on and it is still important that you make your home more energy efficient, especially with summer on the way. In just a few weeks, the temperature will start rising and attics will become much hotter. Well, I say, “cool it.” The worst-case scenario for home energy efficiency is to have a roof without shade, inadequate attic insulation and ductwork in the attic. The attic could easily be 140 degrees on a hot summer day. How would you like to sit in that attic and try to make homemade ice cream? Most likely you would keel over before the ice cream was ready. Now you understand why it is better not to place any part of your cooling system in the attic. For years I have been teaching this but most still install the cooling system in the worst possible environment.

So, let's look at a solution. If you will install a radiant barrier on both the roof rafters and the west or southwest gable end of the attic, you can reduce the 140-degree temperature by about 30 degrees. From a cooling cost standpoint, this is huge. The attic is 30 degrees cooler, the insulation is 30 degrees cooler and the ductwork is 30 degrees cooler. Basically, this radiant barrier is a strong, reinforced aluminum foil and should be installed on the bottom of the rafters. It comes in 1,000-square-foot rolls. Check with your local home center for availability or call me at 501-653-7931 and I will help you. For new construction, the radiant barrier can simply be a part of the roof decking.

I look forward to writing this column every month. And I think that you can tell my heart is in it. Many of you have told me at my seminars, on my radio show and at my office, that you have implemented my suggestions and that they work. Actually, I never even think about them not working because they always do. They always have a payback and once again, they are good investments.

About a week ago, my wife and I were in our favorite sandwich shop to order a toasted turkey sandwich. A family of four was in line ahead of us. The wife just kept looking at us and finally she just blurted out, “Are you Doug Rye?” To which I replied, “Does that

scoundrel owe you money, too?” She grabbed her husband’s arm and said, “Honey, Doug Rye is here, right behind us.” I have to admit that I like it when this happens. He shook my hand and told me that he was so glad that a subcontractor suggested that he order the Doug Rye New House video before they started construction. He and his wife watched the video every night for several nights to be sure that their house was built correctly. Actually, his words were, “We did it and it worked.” He then thanked me. Isn’t that great? I was able to help another family, just like I help you with these columns. Now, I was hoping he would offer to buy me a sandwich with the money he saved. Oh well ... I guess I better “cool it.”

*Doug Rye, a licensed architect living in Saline County and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show, works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To order Doug’s video or ask energy efficiency-related questions,, call Doug at 1-501-653-7931. More energy-efficiency tips, as well as Doug’s columns, can also be found at [www.ecark.org](http://www.ecark.org)*