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HOUSE WISE

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Dan Guinn Homes, P.O. Box 2261, Yorktown, VA 23692 757-438-8624
www.danguinhomes.com info@danguinhomes.com



It's Super Washer!

By Elizabeth Guinn

There are so many choices to make when building or remodeling a new home, that sometimes we don't take the time to fully understand what is available. Of course when making your appliance selections, the very first thing to do is look for the Energy Star label. If the appliance doesn't have one, move on. The Energy Star rating is so important when selecting an appliance because there can be a huge differences in how much energy the appliance consumes.

Our appliances make up a large portion of our energy bills and depending on how old they are and how well maintained they are, they can be huge energy hogs. It's important to not only look for the Energy Star label, but to look for the appliances that far exceed the Energy Star requirements.

LG manufactures a lot of household appliances and when I checked their website, they claim that all of their appliances exceed the Energy Star requirements by at least 39%! That makes

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"The condensation that occurs causes damage!"

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Dan's Desk – Harnessing the Wind

By Dan Guinn

I have to admit that wind power generation has been something I have been fascinated with for some time. I live near water that fronts on the Chesapeake Bay, and wind is something that I have at least a little of almost everyday of the year. However, two things have scared me away from wind generation over the years. The first are those wind generation maps that show that the only places near here with enough wind to turn a generator are on top of the highest mountains in West Virginia. The average wind turbine takes an awful lot of wind to get the

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LG a front runner in my book!

LG has always been an innovator not only in energy usage, but also when it comes to cutting edge technology. When searching out a washing machine for a client of mine that wanted a washer and a dryer in a tight space we came across the LG WM3431. This washing machine is a standard sized unit that is front loading, which is a plus not only because front loading washers do a better job of cleaning your clothes but they tend to use a lot less water to get the job done.

This particular model has 9 wash cycles, 5 rinse temperatures and a 19 hour delay start time. None of which my current washing machine has. One of the wash cycles is a sanitary cycle, I'm guessing that's not one of the low energy cycles.

The machine is also rated as a low decibel machine meaning it is quieter than most. That is saying a lot because one of the spin cycles boasts that it spins at 1400 RPM. Which brings me to the most interesting quality of this washing machine - it is also a dryer. Yes, no additional dryer is required. You simply throw the clothes in dirty and pull them out clean - and dry. I can't tell you how many times I had to stay up at night to wait for the wash cycle to be done so I could put someone's soccer uniform in the dryer so it would be ready first thing in the morning.

The other amazing part about it is that the drying portion of this machine does not require gas, a vent, or any special high voltage plugs. No, I'm not kidding, no vent. The clothes are so dry by the end of the spin cycle that they only need a little light fluffing and they are dry, done, wow.

I have yet to get my hands on one of these, but apparently they have been around for some time in Europe. If you were ever stationed over there, you probably ran into one of them. They take a little longer to get through the whole cycle and you only have one machine going at a time instead of two so you can't do as much in as quick a time. I still like the idea of less equipment taking up less of my floor space. The idea of one appliance doing double duty is highly attractive to me.

We have always stressed that houses don't have to keep getting bigger and bigger, just build what's necessary and make rooms serve more than one purpose to keep the size down. This washer certainly fits the bill.

Elizabeth Guinn
Publisher
Editor in Chief
GC, Inc.

Subscription Services
info@danguinnhomes.com
757-438-8624

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thing to start turning. Breaking the initial friction barrier is a biggie.

The second thing that has always kept me at a distance, is the price. The prices that I have consistently run into are in the \$20,000 range. I like wind generation, just not \$20,000 worth!

This is why I was so excited when I came across an ad for PacWind. The company is out of, of course, California. They specialize in what they call "vertical axis wind turbines." So put away all those mental pictures you have of the giant wind mills in Denmark, the fearsome foes of Don Quixote, or those three bladed power generation giants from out west. These are compact little things with a big punch. Because they are vertical, they look more like the devices with the cups on them that tell you how fast the wind is blowing instead of the standard wind turbine. PacWind refers to the part that spins around as the cage. For their entry level model, The Seahawk, the cage is about 48" tall by 30" diameter and sits on top of a pole (which of course is extra and will run you about \$1,800 depending).

One of the major downfalls of the older bladed models is the whole nasty issue of what happens when birds attempt to fly through them - I'll save you the details. Because the PacWind models are all cages, the birds don't attempt to fly into them because birds perceive them as solid structures.

Another amazing feature of the PacWind models is their cut-in speed. The cut-in speed is critical because this is the amount of wind that must be present to get the generator started. Several of the PacWind models have cut-in speeds of 6 or 7 miles per hour with no cut out speed.

The Seahawk is 500 Watt rated, which won't run your entire house, but it would be a great source of backup power and would help reduce your power bills on a regular basis. The turbines/cages can also be stacked on one pole since they are vertical, and you can have more than one. PacWind makes several larger models. The website has a neat article about how Jay Leno is installing one, the Delta II model, on his garage, so he can generate 10 KW and begin to green up his garage. Check it out at <http://www.pacwind.net/index.html#sea>.

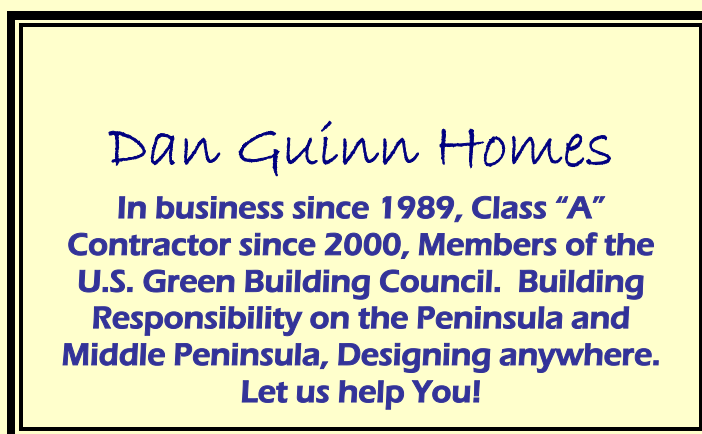
I know what you're thinking - you're loving it already, right? Well, wait, here's the best part: the Seahawk can be purchased for a mere \$2,995! For a wind generator, that is amazing! They have other models for just a little more that perform even better. It's worth taking a look. Remember that poles are extra and you will have to do the installation yourself. If you decide to invest in one, give me a call, I'd be glad to help you get one installed - for a price, that is. Oh, come on, a guy's gotta eat!



Check us out in this past weekend's issue of The Daily Press. Give us some feedback, we'd love to hear what you think.

http://www.dailypress.com/features/dp-gl_green_0805aug05,0,4728869.story

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Taking you from Dreams to Reality
Psalms 127:1a