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HOUSE WISE

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CFL's to the rescue!

It's Time for a Roadtrip

It is officially fall today, the beginning of a new season which brings to an end the official vacation season of 2008. I hope you found some time to get away this summer to just enjoy life. However, if in reading this you are down hearted because, alas, you did not get a chance to get away this summer, then I have just the thing for a last minute vacation fling. Yes, it does involve saving energy on your house.

Many of our readers are extremely interested in all things green and energy efficient. Many readers have expressed to me that they just don't know where to start greening up their own home because the technology is just so overwhelming and it's not like their next door neighbors are doing any of this stuff, so how do they decide which technologies will work for them or in their neighborhood? This, of course, is where I would say "Call me, I'll be right over". There are actually a great number of houses in and

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 It's Time for a Roadtrip
- 1 Dan's Desk

Please see *ROADTRIP* on page 2

Dan's Desk

By Dan Guinn



I have recently had a lot of people asking me about tankless hot water heaters. I have installed several of these systems over the years. My experience has been that a tankless water heater can cost as much as twice as much as a standard water heater but about half the cost of a high efficiency gas water heater. If those were the only facts to ponder when it comes to making a decision on what water heater to install, the decision would be easy. However, there is the issue of the labor.

Please see *Dan's Desk* on page 3

From *ROADTRIP* page 1

around you that do have these technologies in use in their homes and they are probably willing to have you come by and take a look so they can brag about all the money they are saving on a monthly basis. The problem is locating them.

So if you are interested in seeing what other people are doing and getting the low down on the precise amount of money they are saving, mark Oct 4th and 5th on your calendar, it's time for a road trip. The Virginia Solar Council is sponsoring the 18th annual Tour of Solar Homes and Buildings in the DC Metropolitan area. Some of the homes have solar, some have geothermal, some have soy based insulation, some have grey water systems. You name it; you can see it on this tour. All the houses are different and will be attended by the homeowner's who live there. They are looking forward to having you in their homes asking every question you can think of. What an amazing opportunity this is to gather information to help you with your future home renovations.

Did I mention that the tour was free? Simply go to <http://www.solartour.org/> and you can see some of the homes on the tour. One guy even builds EV cars and will have some for you to look at when you come by. Scroll down to the button which says download pdf file and that will bring up the directory of all the homes. It's a large file and will print something that is about 45 pages long. Peruse the info and pick and choose the houses that you are interested in. Some are available on Saturday only and the others are available on Sunday only.

There are so many that it would be impossible to do them all, so pick an area, get on mapquest and make a day of it. Maybe we will run into each other there. There is a solar tour for the Hampton Roads area, but they got a late start this year and were unable to pull it together. Maybe next year. For now, it's road trip time.

Not CFL's Again?

Tired of hearing me harp on Compact Fluorescent light bulbs yet? Risking driving you crazy with CFL info, I want to introduce you to a new CFL that has recently become available. The new bulbs are called Cold Cathode Fluorescent Lamps or CCFL's. These bulbs not only look a little different, they are a huge leap forward in technology. These bulbs are dimmable, instant on, contain less Mercury and last for up to 25,000 which is twice the life span of your average CFL. I found a source for getting these bulbs for under \$20 at <http://www.betterbulb.com/products.html#ccfl> and scroll down to the Basic AX-19. This site is also a good source for LED lights and has several for outdoor purposes which is a great way to light up your yard without spending a fortune on electricity.

Contact Elizabeth and Dan Guinn at info@danguinnhomes.com for the free report, "Top Ten Best Ideas to Reduce Utility Bills and Spend the Savings on What You Really Want!" Just send me an email requesting a copy and I will speed one out to you!

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please email us at info@danguinnhomes.com and type cancel subscription in the subject line.



From *Dan's Desk* page 1

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Taking you from Dreams to
 Reality
 Psalms 127:1a

Assuming that your house has the correctly sized gas supply line, the high efficiency tank would only be a few hundred dollars more to install. The tankless water heater can be as much as four times as much as a standard water heater to install because the piping generally needs to be reconfigured and there are power requirements not to mention the venting requirements. So how do you decide if a tankless hot water heater is for you?

One of the reasons for installing a tankless system is to provide you with an endless supply of hot water. If you have a big family and demand has become an issue, the surest way to make sure that no one ends up taking a cold shower is to install a tankless system. As long as there is gas, there is hot water.

The reason I like these systems is because of their efficiency. They are on average 22-30% more efficient or even more in some circumstances. Part of determining if you need a tankless system is to examine your usage. If you are a large family using a lot of water, your savings will not be as large. Smaller families or just one or two people in a house will experience higher savings. This is because the way the tankless system saves money is by not constantly maintaining a large quantity of heated water for use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The tankless only uses gas when you need hot water. This means if your overall demand for water is low then your savings will be higher. On the lower end of the spectrum you could expect to save \$80 per year. As the kids move out and your usage goes down your savings will go up. With the expected rise in gas prices the saving will also rise.

Installing a tankless hot water heater is one of those areas where it doesn't pay to do the work yourself. The warranties only apply if the system is installed by a licensed and trained professional. Don't forget when making energy efficient changes to your home to save the receipts and claim them on your taxes which will save you even more money.

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