



Power Ventilation for a Cooler Home

By Rick Bunzel, Mountain View Property Inspections

As you look at ways to cool your home and reduce your air conditioning costs one area to consider is your attic. Most people have already taken the step to insulate their attic and this does help in the summer. However this insulation only provides a barrier between the living space and actually traps the heat. As a home inspector, I can personally attest to seeing attic temperatures in the 120-130 degree range and on a hot day can actually get to 150 degrees in a poorly ventilated space.

One solution is to ventilate the attic space. Attic fans create a positive air-flow through your attic. In the summer the outside air is almost always 10-20 degrees cooler than the attic temperature and this ventilation will have an immediate effect on the cooling of the home.

There are two common types of attic fans: Gable mounted which are installed on the existing side vents near the peak of the attic and roof mounted fans which normally mounted up on the roof about two feet down from the peak. These are equipped with thermostats, and only run when the temperature exceeds a preset level. Attic fans use less than 300 Watts, and offer these important advantages:

1. Lowers upstairs room temperatures by 10°.
2. Lengthens roof life by keeping shingles cooler.
3. Saves up to 30% on air-conditioning costs.

The exact savings obtained depends on several factors like: the color of your roof, if the home is shaded, the amount of insulation you have, and the efficiency of your cooling system. In last Sunday's Times Call advertisements, a home improvement store was selling gable mounted attic fans for \$40-\$50.00. With low costs like this the payback on this investment will in one or two seasons. Some features to look for are a permanently lubricated motor, which insures quiet, maintenance-free operation. A heavy screen is required to stop pests. All metal construction is preferred as plastic fans do not hold up as well and over time will crack. A quality thermostat is also essential to save from climbing up into the attic for resetting.

A few simple steps with an attic fan can help save your energy dollars and keep your home cooler during our hot Colorado summers.

Rick Bunzel is the Principle Inspector at Mountain View Property Inspections. If you would like to know more about the systems within your home go to **WWW.MVPinspection.com** If you have questions or comments, Rick Bunzel can be contacted at Mountain View Property Inspections @ 303-443-9063 or MVPInspection@attbi.com