

Hot weather and hurricane warnings: Increase demand for solar control & security window films

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Warmer weather patterns and the onset of the 2009 hurricane season have increased demand for solar control (energy conservation) and security (glass retention) window films. "85% of the U.S. is trending warmer than last year...according to Weather Trends International, a Bethlehem, PA-based research group." ("Weather Trends Good for Solar Films"; Window Film Magazine; www.windowfilmmag.com/index.php; /archives/213; 6/10/09.) In an effort to educate the public, commerce secretary Gary Locke recently said, "Today, more than 35 million Americans live in regions most threatened by Atlantic hurricanes...Public awareness and public preparedness are the best defenses against a hurricane." ("NOAA Issues Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook, Encourages Preparedness"; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; www.noaanews.noaa.gov; /stories2009/20090521_atlantichurricane.html; May 21, 2009.)

Property owners and managers are reacting to the warming trend by improving their building's energy efficiency through the application of quality solar control window films. An application of insulating, Low-E window films conserves energy and reduces heat gain and loss through windows all year long - substantially reducing HVAC expense. Featuring Wavelength-Selective metals which block more of the solar spectrum than conventional metals, many Low-E window films manufactured by 3M Company can reduce air conditioning costs by blocking up to 73% of the sun's heat in warmer months. In colder months, they reduce heat loss by up to 30 percent. Their patented construction enables their metal coating to reflect more interior room heat back into the room. Comfort is thus improved by a reduction in temperature fluctuations and drafts.

If your building is already equipped with Low-E windows, 3M Window Films can still be applied to enhance their performance. A Low-E window can block up to 90% of UV radiation. After an installation of 3M Window Film, the same window will block more than 99% of the UV radiation that contributes to a building's heat gain and loss. Many 3M Window Films qualify for LEED credits and installations often pay for themselves within three years and sooner as energy costs continue to rise.

As this year's hurricane season is upon us, we are also seeing an increase in interest for security and glass retention window films. Facilities and business continuity managers are securing their properties in an effort to mitigate potential damage resulting from high winds and violent weather.

3M originally developed their security series of window films to address international concerns regarding terrorist activity including less publicized, yet highly destructive, vandalism. A low profile, high performance measure of security, 3M security window films are tough, shatter-resistant films that help hold glass together during severe weather, vandalism (including smash-and-grab crime) and explosions.

Compared to the expense of glass replacement, a security window film retrofit is an affordable

option for improved safety. Repercussions of NOT installing security window film can be costly. Revenue loss due to production stoppage and delayed return of employees, customers and occupants warrant the investment. Minimizing costs related to personal injuries and repairs to damaged property surely justify the purchase. An installation of safety window film increases the probability of a rapid return to business-as-usual.

American Window Film, Inc., a 3M Window Film authorized dealer and member of the Prestige Dealer Network, carries 3M Window Films for a variety of applications, including energy conservation, safety and security, privacy, glare reduction as well as designer and architectural film options. Additionally, 3M's low reflectivity Prestige Series films offer a high clarity, non-metallic window film option. Metals can corrode over time in moist conditions and can interfere with cell phone signals and Wi/Fi transmissions.

A \$25 billion diversified technology company and an ISO9002 certified facility, 3M Company received the "2008 Energy Star Partner of the Year Award for Sustained Excellence". Presented by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Department of Energy, the award is given to organizations for their outstanding accomplishments in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. The National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC) has certified a range of the 3M Window Films. NFRC certification provides affirmation that 3M's films meet rigid energy performance factors for windows.

Although warmer summers, colder winters, and potentially damaging storms are increasing demand, a commitment to install solar control and security window films should be a priority - changing weather patterns or not. The energy conservation and safety benefits gained from a quick, clean, quality window film installation that brings a rapid return on investment, should provide more than enough incentive to invest.

Peter Davey is president of American Window Film, Inc., a 3M Window Films authorized dealer, Prestige Dealer Network, Foxboro, Mass. and Atlanta.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540