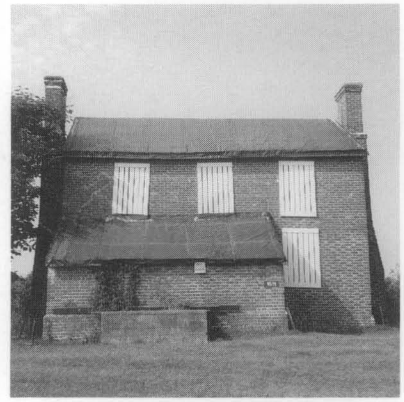
31 PRESERVATION BRIEFS



Mothballing Historic Buildings

Sharon C. Park, AIA

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Cultural Resources
Heritage Preservation Services

When all means of finding a productive use for a historic building have been exhausted or when funds are not currently available to put a deteriorating structure into a useable condition, it may be necessary to close up the building temporarily to protect it from the weather as well as to secure it from vandalism. This process, known as mothballing, can be a necessary and effective means of protecting the building while planning the property's future, or raising money for a preservation, rehabilitation or restoration project. If a vacant property has been declared unsafe by building officials, stabilization and mothballing may be the only way to protect it from demolition.

This Preservation Brief focuses on the steps needed to "de-activate" a property for an extended period of time. The project team will usually consist of an architect, historian, preservation specialist, sometimes a structural engineer, and a contractor. Mothballing should not be done without careful planning to ensure that needed physical repairs are made prior to securing the building. The steps discussed in this Brief can protect buildings for periods of up to ten years; long-term success will also depend on continued, although somewhat limited, monitoring and maintenance. For all but the simplest projects, hiring a team of preservation specialists is recommended to assess the specific needs of the structure and to develop an effective mothballing program.

A vacant historic building cannot survive indefinitely in a boarded-up condition, and so even marginal interim uses where there is regular activity and monitoring, such as a caretaker residence or non-flammable storage, are generally preferable to mothballing. In a few limited cases when the vacant building is in good condition and in a location where it can be watched and checked regularly, closing and locking the door, setting heat levels at just above freezing, and securing the windows may provide sufficient protection for a period of a few years. But if long-term mothballing is the only remaining option, it must be done properly (see fig. 1 & 2). This will require stabilization of the exterior, properly designed security protection, generally some form of interior ventilation - either through mechanical or natural air exchange systems - and continued maintenance and surveillance monitoring.

Figure 1. Proper mothballing treatment: This building has been successfully mothballed for 10 years because the roof and walls were repaired and structurally stabilized, ventilation louvers were added, and the property is maintained. Photo: Charles E. Fisher, NPS.

Comprehensive mothballing programs are generally expensive and may cost 10% or more of a modest rehabilitation budget. However, the money spent on well-planned protective measures will seem small when amortized over the life of the resource. Regardless of the location and condition of the property or the funding available, the following 9 steps are involved in properly mothballing a building:

Figure 2. Improper treatment: Boarding up without adequate ventilation, lack of maintenance, and neglect of this property have accelerated deterioration. Photo; NPS file.

Documentation

1. Document the architectural and historical significance of the building.

2. Prepare a condition assessment of the building.

Stabilization

3. Structurally stabilize the building, based on a professional condition assessment.

4. Exterminate or control pests, including termites and rodents.

5. Protect the exterior from moisture penetration.

Mothballing

6. Secure the building and its component features to reduce vandalism or break-ins.

7. Provide adequate ventilation to the interior.

8. Secure or modify utilities and mechanical systems.

9. Develop and implement a maintenance and monitoring plan for protection.

These steps will be discussed in sequence below. Documentation and stabilization are critical components of the process and should not be skipped over. Mothballing measures should not result in permanent damage, and so each treatment should be weighed in terms of its reversibility and its overall benefit.

Documentation

Documenting the historical significance and physical condition of the property will provide information necessary for setting priorities and allocating funds. The project team should be cautious when first entering the structure if it has been vacant or is deteriorated. It may be advisable to shore temporarily areas appearing to be structurally unsound until the condition of the structure can be fully assessed (see fig. 3). If pigeon or bat droppings, friable asbestos or other health hazards are present, precautions must be taken to wear the appropriate safety equipment when first inspecting the building. Consideration should be given to hiring a firm specializing in hazardous waste removal if these highly toxic elements are found in the building.

Documenting and recording the building. Documenting a building's history is important because evidence of its true age and architectural significance may not be readily evident. The owner should check with the State Historic Preservation Office or local preservation commission for assistance in researching the building. If the building has never been researched for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or other historic registers, then, at a minimum, the following should be determined:

- The overall historical significance of the property and dates of construction;
- the chronology of alterations or additions and their approximate dates; and,
- types of building materials, construction techniques, and any unusual detailing or regional variations of craftsmanship.

Old photographs can be helpful in identifying early or original features that might be hidden under modern materials. On a walk-through, the architect, historian, or preservation specialist should identify the architecturally significant elements of the building, both inside and out (see fig.4).

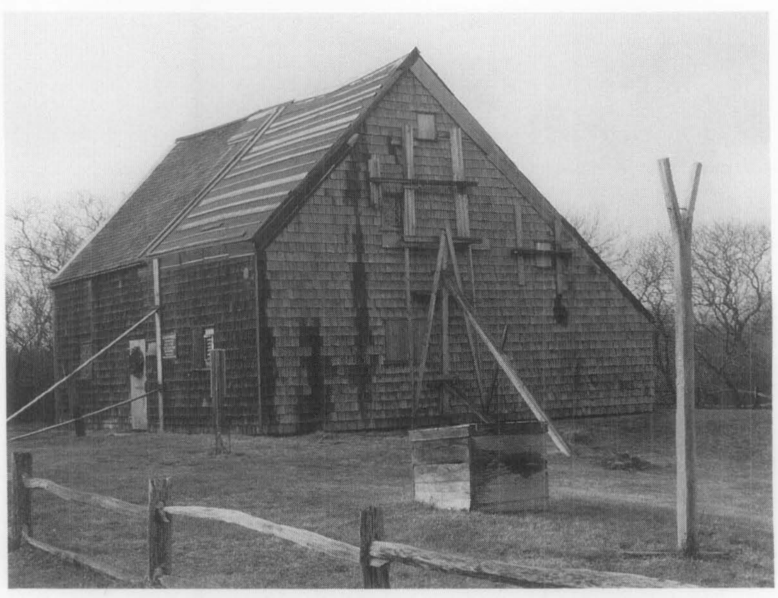


Figure 3. Buildings seriously damaged by storms or deterioration may need to be braced before architectural evaluations can be made. Jethro Coffin House. Photo: John Milner Architects.

Figure 4. Documenting the building's history, preparing schematic plans, and assessing the condition of the building will provide necessary information on which to set priorities for stabilization and repair prior to securing the building. Photo: Frederick Lindstrom, HABS.

By understanding the history of the resource, significant elements, even though deteriorated, may be spared the trash pile. For that reason alone, any materials removed from the building or site as part of the stabilization effort should be carefully scrutinized and, if appearing historic, should be photographed, tagged with a number, inventioried, and safely stored, preferably in the building, for later retrieval (see fig. 5).

A site plan and schematic building floor plans can be used to note important information for use when the building is eventually preserved, restored, or rehabilitated. Each room should be given a number and notations added to the plans regarding the removal of important features to storage or recording physical treatments undertaken as part of the stabilization or repair.

Because a mothballing project may extend over a long period of time, with many different people involved, clear records should be kept and a building file established. Copies of all important data, plans, photographs, and lists of consultants or contractors who have worked on the property should be added to the file as the job progresses.

Figure 5. Loose or detached elements should be identified, tagged and stored, preferably on site. Photo: NPS files.

Recording all actions taken on the building will be helpful in the future.

The project coordinator should keep the building file updated and give duplicate copies to the owner. A list of emergency numbers, including the number of the key holder, should be kept at the entrance to the building or on a security gate, in a transparent vinyl sleeve.

Preparing a condition assessment of the building. A condition assessment can provide the owner with an accurate overview of the current condition of the property. If the building is deteriorated or if there are significant interior architectural elements that will need special protection during the mothballing years, undertaking a condition assessment is highly recommended, but it need not be exhaustive.

A modified condition assessment, prepared by an architect or preservation specialist, and in some case a structural engineer, will help set priorities for repairs necessary to stabilize the property for both the short and long-term. It will evaluate the age and condition of the following major elements: foundations; structural systems; exterior materials; roofs and gutters; exterior porches and steps; interior finishes; staircases; plumbing, electrical, mechanical systems; special features such as chimneys; and site drainage.

To record existing conditions of the building and site, it will be necessary to clean debris from the building and to remove unwanted or overgrown vegetation to expose foundations. The interior should be emptied of its furnishing (unless provisions are made for mothballing these as well), all debris removed, and the interior swept with a broom. Building materials too deteriorated to repair, or which have come detached, such as moldings, balusters, and decorative plaster, and which can be used to guide later preservation work, should be tagged, labeled and saved.

Photographs or a videotape of the exterior and all interior spaces of the resource will provide an invaluable record of "as is" conditions. If a videotape is made, oral commentary can be provided on the significance of each space and architectural feature. If 35mm photographic prints or slides are made, they should be numbered, dated, and appropriately identified. Photographs should be cross-referenced with the room numbers on the schematic plans. A systematic method for photographing should be developed; for example, photograph each wall in a room and then take a corner shot to get floor and ceiling portions in the picture. Photograph any unusual details as well as examples of each window and door type.

For historic buildings, the great advantage of a condition assessment is that architectural features, both on the exterior as well as the interior, can be rated on a scale of their importance to the integrity and significance of the building. Those features of the highest priority should receive preference when repairs or protection measures are outlined as part of the mothballing process. Potential problems with protecting these features should be identified so that appropriate interim solutions can be selected. For example, if a building has always been heated and if murals, decorative plaster walls, or examples of patterned wall paper are identified as highly significant, then special care should be taken to regulate the interior climate and to monitor it adequately during the mothballing years. This might require retaining electrical service to provide minimal heat in winter, fan exhaust in summer, and humidity controls for the interior.

Stabilization

Stabilization as part of a mothballing project involves correcting deficiencies to slow down the deterioration of the building while it is vacant. Weakened structural members that might fail altogether in the forthcoming years must be braced or reinforced; insects and other pests removed and discouraged from returning; and the building protected from moisture damage both by weatherizing the exterior envelope and by handling water run-off on the site. Even if a modified use or caretaker services can eventually be found for the building, the following steps should be addressed.

Structurally stabilizing the building. While bracing may have been required to make the building temporarily safe for inspection, the condition assessment may reveal areas of hidden structural damage. Roofs, foundations, walls, interior framing, porches and dormers all have structural components that may need added reinforcement. Structural stabilization by a qualified contractor should be done under the direction of a structural engineer or a preservation specialist to ensure that the added weight of the reinforcement can be sustained by the building and that the new members do not harm historic finishes (see fig. 6). Any major vertical post added during the stabilization should be properly supported and, if necessary, taken to the ground and underpinned.

Figure 6. Interior bracing which will last the duration of the mothballing will protect weakened structural members. Jethro Coffin House. Photo: John Milner Architects.

If the building is in a northern climate, then the roof framing must be able to hold substantial snow loads. Bracing the roof at the ridge and mid-points should be considered if sagging is apparent. Likewise, interior framing around stair openings or under long ceiling spans should be investigated. Underpinning or bracing structural piers weakened by poor drainage patterns may be a good precaution as well. Damage caused by insects, moisture, or from other causes should be repaired or reinforced and, if possible, the source of the damage removed. If features such as porches and dormers are so severely deteriorated that they must be removed, they should be documented, photographed, and portions salvaged for storage prior to removal.

If the building is in a southern or humid climate and termites or other insects are a particular problem, the foundation and floor framing should be inspected to ensure that there are no major structural weaknesses. This can usually be done by observation from the crawl space or basement. For those structures where this is not possible, it may be advisable to lift selective floor boards to expose the floor framing. If there is evidence of pest damage, particularly termites, active colonies should be treated and the structural members reinforced or replaced, if necessary.

Controlling pests. Pests can be numerous and include squirrels, raccoons, bats, mice, rats, snakes, termites, moths, beetles, ants, bees and wasps, pigeons, and other birds. Termites, beetles, and carpenter ants destroy wood. Mice, too, gnaw wood as well as plaster, insulation, and electrical wires. Pigeon and bat droppings not only damage wood finishes but create a serious and sometimes deadly health hazard.

If the property is infested with animals or insects, it is important to get them out and to seal off their access to the building. If necessary, exterminate and remove any nests or hatching colonies. Chimney flues may be closed off with exterior grade plywood caps, properly ventilated, or protected with framed wire screens. Existing vents, grills, and louvers in attics and crawl spaces should be screened with bug mesh or heavy duty wire, depending on the type of pest being controlled. It may be advantageous to have damp or infected wood treated with insecticides (as permitted by each state) or preservatives, such as borate, to slow the rate of deterioration during the time that the building is not in use.

Securing the exterior envelope from moisture penetration. It is important to protect the exterior envelope from moisture penetration before securing the building. Leaks from deteriorated or damaged roofing, from around windows and doors, or through deteriorated materials, as well as ground moisture from improper site run-off or rising damp at foundations, can cause long-term damage to interior finishes and structural systems. Any serious deficiencies on the exterior, identified in the condition assessment, should be addressed.

To the greatest extent possible, these weatherization efforts should not harm historic materials. The project budget may not allow deteriorated features to be fully repaired or replaced in-kind. Non-historic or modern materials may be used to cover historic surfaces temporarily, but these treatments should not destroy valuable evidence necessary for future preservation work. Temporary modifications should be as visually compatible as possible with the historic building.

Roofs are often the most vulnerable elements on the building exterior and yet in some ways they are the easiest element to stabilize for the long term, if done correctly. "Quick fix" solutions, such as tar patches on slate roofs, should be avoided as they will generally fail within a year or so and may accelerate damage by trapping moisture. They are difficult to undo later when more permanent repairs are undertaken. Use of a tarpaulin over a leaking roof should be thought of only as a very temporary

Figure 7. Non-historic materials are appropriate for mothballing projects when they are used to protect historic evidence remaining for future preservation. This lightweight aluminum channel frame and roofing covers the historic wooden shingle roof. Galvanized mesh panels secure the window openings from intrusion by raccoons and other unwanted guests. Photo: Williamsport Preservation Training Center, NPS.

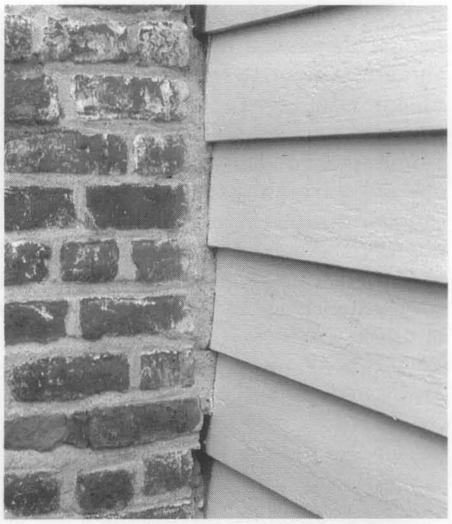


Figure 8. Appropriate mortar mixes should be used when masonry repairs are undertaken. In this case, a soft lime based mortar is used as an infill between the brick and wooden elements. When full repairs are made during the restoration phase, this soft mortar can easily be removed and missing bricks replaced.

emergency repair because it is often blown off by the wind in a subsequent storm.

If the existing historic roof needs moderate repairs to make it last an additional ten years, then these repairs should be undertaken as a first priority. Replacing cracked or missing shingles and tiles, securing loose flashing, and reanchoring gutters and downspouts can often be done by a local roofing contractor. If the roof is in poor condition, but the historic materials and configuration are important, a new temporary roof, such as a lightweight aluminum channel system over the existing, might be considered (see fig. 7). If the roofing is so deteriorated that it must be replaced and a lightweight aluminum system is not affordable, various inexpensive options might be considered. These include covering the existing deteriorated roof with galvanized corrugated metal roofing panels, or 90 lb. rolled roofing, or a rubberized membrane (refer back to cover photo). These alternatives should leave as much of the historic sheathing and roofing in place as evidence for later preservation treatments.

For masonry repairs, appropriate preservation approaches are essential. For example, if repointing deteriorated brick chimneys or walls is necessary to prevent serious moisture penetration while the building is mothballed, the mortar should match the historic mortar in composition, color, and tooling. The use of hard portland cement mortars or vapor-impermeable waterproof coatings are not appropriate solutions as they can cause extensive damage and are not reversible treatments (see fig. 8).

For wood siding that is deteriorated, repairs necessary to keep out moisture should be made; repainting is generally warranted. Cracks around windows and doors can be beneficial in providing ventilation to the interior and so should only be caulked if needed to keep out bugs and moisture. For very deteriorated wall surfaces on wooden frame structures, it may be necessary to sheathe in plywood panels, but care should be taken to minimize installation damage by planning the location of the nailing or screw patterns or by installing panels over a frame of battens (see fig. 9). Generally, however, it is better to repair deteriorated features than to cover them over.

Foundation damage may occur if water does not drain away from the building. Run-off from gutters and downspouts should be directed far away from the foundation wall by using long flexible extender pipes equal in length to twice the depth of the basement or crawl space. If underground drains are susceptible to clogging, it is recommended that the downspouts be disconnected from the drain boot and attached to flexible piping. If gutters and downspouts are in bad condition, replace them with inexpensive aluminum units.

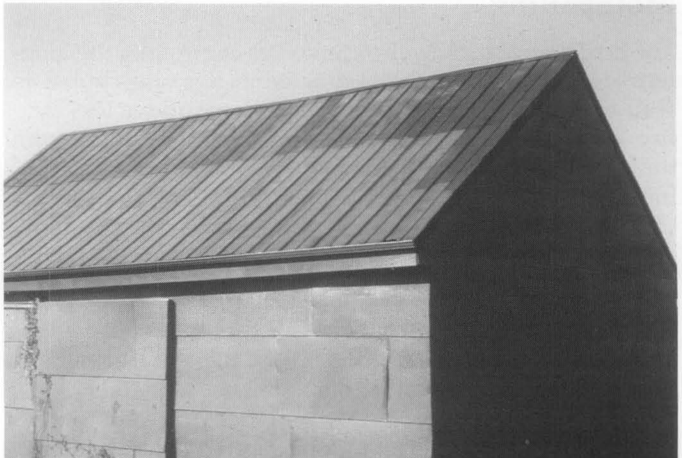


Figure 9. Severely deteriorated wooden siding on a farm building has been covered over with painted plywood panels as a temporary measure to eliminate moisture penetration to the interior. Foundation vents and loose floor boards allow air to circulate inside.

If there are no significant landscape or exposed archeological elements around the foundation, consideration should be given to regrading the site if there is a documented drainage problem (see fig. 10). If building up the grade, use a fiber mesh membrane to separate the new soil from the old and slope the new soil 6 to 8 feet (200 cm-266 cm) away from the foundation making sure not to cover up the dampcourse layer or come into contact with skirting boards. To keep vegetation under control, put down a layer of 6 mil black polyethylene sheeting or fiber mesh matting covered with a 2"-4" (5-10 cm.) of washed gravel. If the building suffers a serious rising damp problem, it may be advisable to eliminate the plastic sheeting to avoid trapping ground moisture against foundations.

Figure 10. Regrading around the Booker Tenement at Colonial Williamsburg has protected the masonary foundation wall from excessive damp. This building has been successfully mothballed for over 10 years. Note the attic and basement vents, the temporary stairs, and the informative sign interpreting the history of this building.

Mothballing

The actual mothballing effort involves controlling the long-term deterioration of the building while it is unoccupied as well as finding methods to protect it from sudden loss by fire or vandalism. This requires securing the building from unwanted entry, providing adequate ventilation to the interior, and shutting down or modifying existing utilities. Once the building is de-activated or secured, the long-term success will depend on periodic maintenance and surveillance monitoring.

Securing the building from vandals, break-ins, and natural disasters. Securing the building from sudden loss is a critical aspect of mothballing. Because historic buildings are irreplaceable, it is vital that vulnerable entry points are sealed. If the building is located where fire and security service is available then it is highly recommeded that some form of monitoring or alarm devices be used.

To protect decorative features, such as mantels, lighting fixtures, copper downspouts, iron roof cresting, or stained glass windows from theft or vandalism, it may be advisable to temporarily remove them to a more secure location if they cannot be adequately protected within the structure.

Mothballed buildings are usually boarded up, particularly on the first floor and basement, to protect fragile glass windows from breaking and to reinforce entry points (see fig. 11). Infill materials for closing door and window openings include plywood, corrugated panels, metal grates, chain fencing, metal grills, and cinder or cement blocks (see fig. 12). The method of installation should not result in the destruction of the opening and all associated sash, doors, and frames should be protected or stored for future reuse.

Figure 11. Urban buildings often need additional protection from unwanted entry and graffiti. This commercial building uses painted plywood panels to cover expansive glass storefronts and chain link fencing is applied on top of the panels. The upper windows on the street sides have been covered and painted to resemble 19th century sash. Photo: Thomas Jester, NPS.

Generally exterior doors are reinforced and provided with strong locks, but if weak historic doors would be damaged or disfigured by adding reinforcement or new locks, they may be removed temporarily and replaced with secure modern doors (see fig. 13). Alternatively, security gates in a new metal frame can be installed within existing door openings, much like a storm door, leaving the historic door in place. If plywood panels are installed over door openings, they should be screwed in place, as opposed to nailed, to avoid crowbar damage each time the panel is removed. This also reduces pounding vibrations from hammers and eliminates new nail holes each time the panel is replaced.

For windows, the most common security feature is the closure of the openings; this may be achieved with wooden or pre-formed panels or, as needed, with metal sheets or concrete blocks. Plywood panels, properly installed to protect wooden frames and properly ventilated, are the preferred treatment from a preservation standpoint.

There are a number of ways to set insert plywood panels into windows openings to avoid damage to frame and sash (see fig. 14). One common method is to bring the upper and lower sash of a double hung unit to the mid-point of the opening and then to install pre-cut plywood panels using long carriage bolts anchored into horizontal wooden bracing, or strong backs, on the inside face of the window. Another means is to build new wooden blocking frames set into deeply recessed openings, for example in an industrial mill or warehouse, and then to affix the plywood panel to the blocking frame. If sash must be removed prior to installing panels, they should be labeled and stored safely within the building.

Plywood panels are usually 1/2"-3/4" (1.25-1.875 cm.) thick and made of exterior grade stock, such as CDX, or marine grade plywood. They should be painted to protect them from delamination and to provide a neater appearance. These panels may be painted to resemble operable windows or treated decoratively (see fig. 15). With extra attention to detail, the plywood panels can be

Figure 12. First floor openings have been filled with cinderblocks and doors, window sash and frames have been removed for safe keeping. Note the security light over the windows and the use of a security metal door with heavy duty locks. Photo: H. Ward Jandl, NPS.

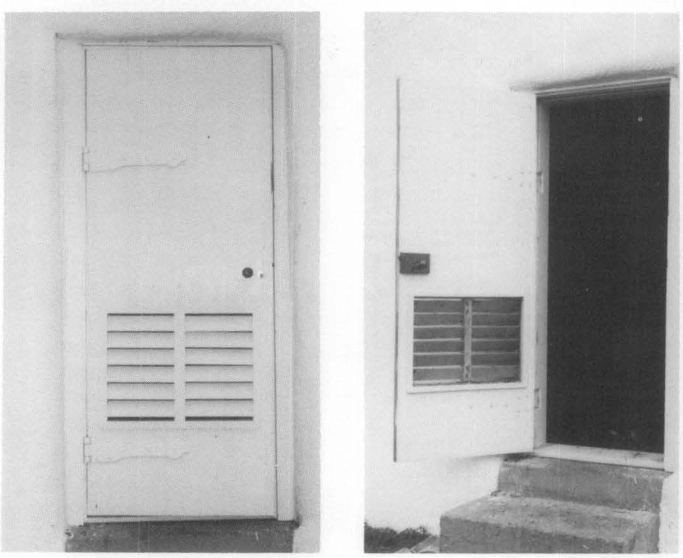


Figure 13. If historic doors would be damaged by adding extra locks, they should be removed and stored and new security doors added. At this lighthouse, the historic door has been replaced with a new door (seen both inside and outside) with an inset vent and new deadbolt locks. The heavy historic hinges have not been damaged. Photo: Williamsport Preservation Training Center, NPS.

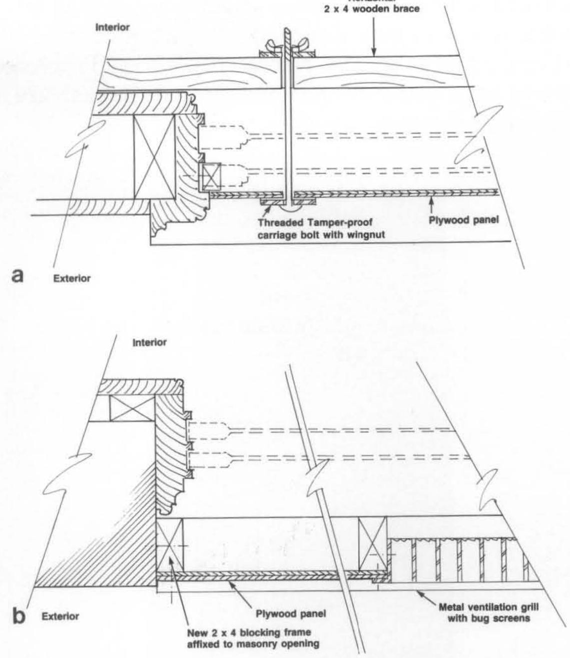


Figure 14. A: Plan detail showing plywood security panel anchored with carriage bolts through to the inside horizontal bracing, or strong backs. B: Plan detail showing section of plywood window panel attached to a new pressure treated wood frame set within the masonry opening. Ventilation should be included whenever possible or necessary.

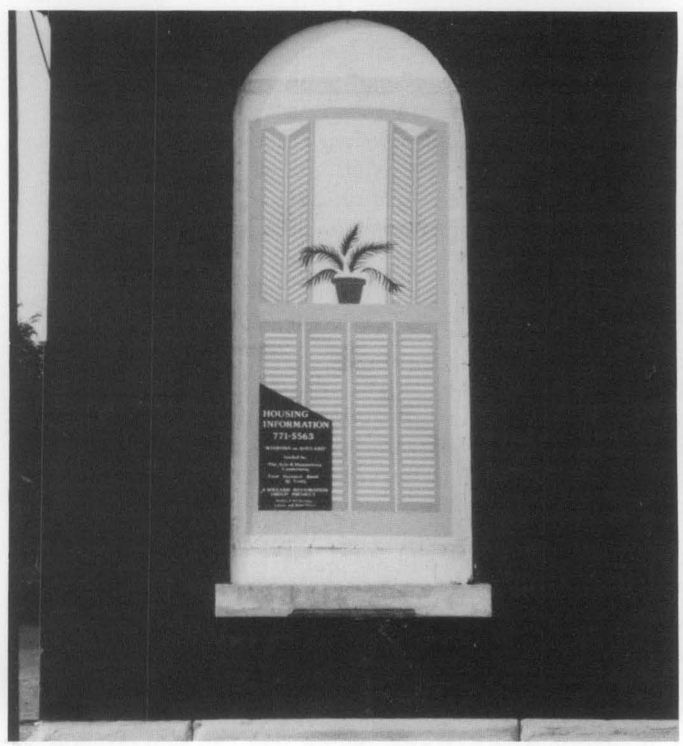


Figure 15. Painting trompe l'oeil scenes on plywood panels is a neighborhood friendly device. In addition, the small sign at the bottom left corner gives information for contacting the organization responsible for the care of the mothballed building. Photo: Lee H. Nelson, FAIA.

trimmed out with muntin strips to give a shadow line simulating multi-lite windows. This level of detail is a good indication that the building is protected and valued by the owner and the community.

If the building has shutters, simply close the shutters and secure them from the interior (see fig. 16). If the building had shutters historically, but they are missing, it may be appropriate to install new shutters, even in a modern material, and secure them in the closed position. Louvered shutters will help with interior ventilation if the sash are propped open behind the shutters.

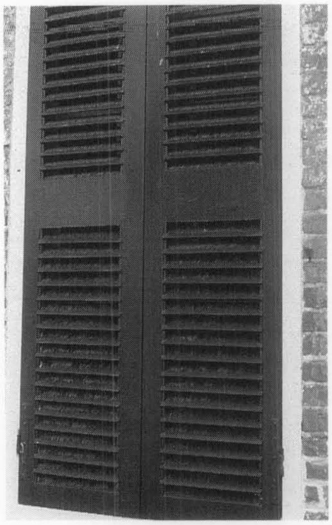


Figure 16. Historic louvered shutters make excellent security closures with passive ventilation.

There is some benefit from keeping windows unboarded if security is not a problem. The building will appear to be occupied, and the natural air leakage around the windows will assist in ventilating the interior. The presence of natural light will also help when periodic inspections are made. Rigid polycarbonate clear storm glazing panels may be placed on the window exterior to protect against glass breakage. Because the sun's ultraviolet rays can cause fading of floor finishes and wall surfaces, filtering pull shades or inexpensive curtains may be options for reducing this type of deterioration for significant interiors. Some acrylic sheeting comes with built-in ultraviolet filters.

Securing the building from catastrophic destruction from fire, lightning, or arson will require additional security devices. Lightning rods properly grounded should be a first consideration if the building is in an area susceptible to lightning storms. A high security fence should also be installed if the property cannot be monitored closely. These interventions do not require a power source for operation. Since many buildings will not maintain electrical power, there are some devices available using battery packs, such as intrusion alarms, security lighting, and smoke detectors which through audible horn alarms can alert nearby neighbors. These battery packs must be replaced every 3 months to 2 years, depending on type and usage. In combination with a cellular phone, they can also provide some level of direct communication with police and fire departments.

If at all possible, new temporary electric service should be provided to the building (see fig. 17). Generally a telephone line is needed as well. A hard wired security system for intrusion and a combination rate-of-rise and smoke detector can send an immediate signal for help directly to the fire department and security service. Depending on whether or not heat will be maintained in the building, the security system should be designed accordingly. Some systems cannot work below 32°F (0°C). Exterior lighting set on a timer, photo electric sensor, or a motion/infra-red detection device provides additional security.

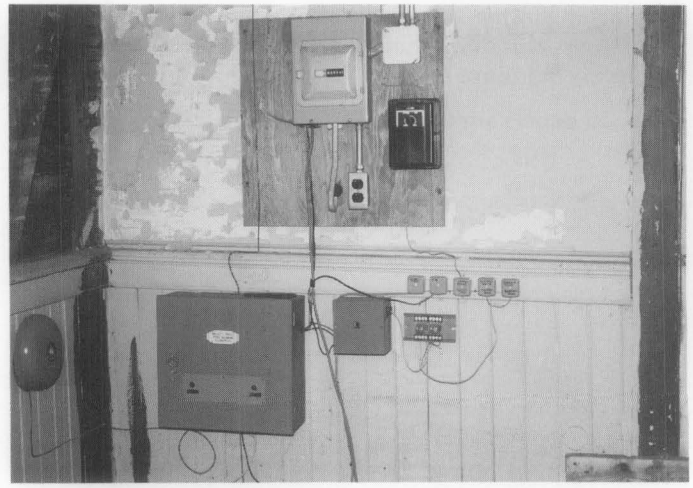


Figure 17. Security systems are very important for mothballed buildings if they are located where fire and security services are available. A temporary electric service with battery back-up has been installed in this building. Intrusion alarms and ionization smoke/fire detectors are wired directly to the nearby security service.

Providing adequate ventilation to the interior. Once the exterior has been made weathertight and secure, it is essential to provide adequate air exchange throughout the building. Without adequate air exchange, humidity may rise to unsafe levels, and mold, rot, and insect infestation are likely to thrive (see fig. 18). The needs of each historic resource must be individually evaluated because there are so many variables that affect the performance of each interior space once the building has been secured. A

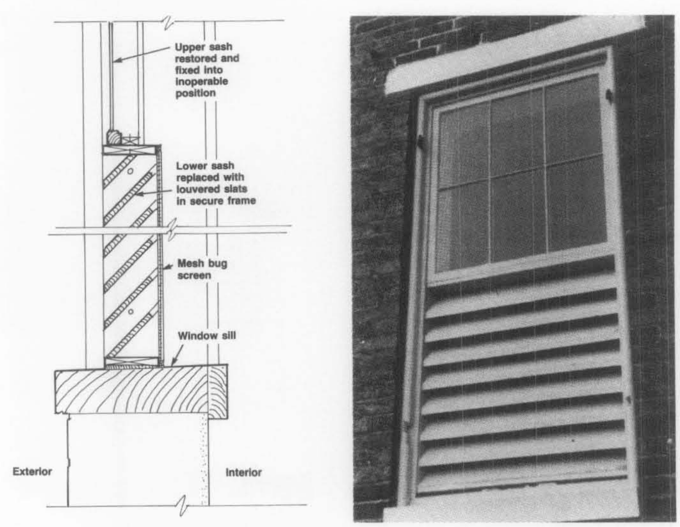


Figure 18. Heavy duty wooden slated louvers were custom fabricated to replace the deteriorated lower sash. The upper sash were rebuilt to retain the historic appearance and to allow light into this vacant historic building. Refer back to Fig. 1 for a view of the building. Photo: Charles E. Fisher, NPS. Drawing by Thomas Vitanza.

mechanical engineer or a specialist in interior climates should be consulted, particularly for buildings with intact and significant interiors. In some circumstances, providing heat during the winter, even at a minimal 45° F (7°C), and utilizing forced-fan ventilation in summer will be recommended and will require retaining electrical service. For masonry buildings it is often helpful to keep the interior temperature above the spring dew point to avoid damaging condensation. In most buildings it is the need for summer ventilation that outweighs the winter requirements.

Many old buildings are inherently leaky due to loose-fitting windows and floorboards and the lack of insulation. The level of air exchange needed for each building, however, will vary according to geographic location, the building's construction, and its general size and configuration.

There are four critical climate zones when looking at the type and amount of interior ventilation needed for a closed up building: hot and dry (southwestern states); cold and damp (Pacific northwest and northeastern states); temperate and humid (Mid-Atlantic states, coastal areas); and hot and humid (southern states and the tropics). (See fig. 19 for a chart outlining guidance on ventilation.)

Once closed up, a building interior will still be affected by the temperature and humidity of the exterior. Without proper ventilation, moisture from condensation may occur and cause damage by wetting plaster, peeling paint, staining woodwork, warping floors, and in some cases even causing freeze thaw damage to plaster. If moist conditions persist in a property, structural damage can result from rot or returning insects attracted to moist conditions. Poorly mothballed masonry buildings, particularly in damp and humid zones have been so damaged on the interior with just one year of unventilated closure that none of the interior finishes were salvageable when the buildings were rehabilitated.

The absolute minimum air exchange for most mothballed buildings consists of one to four air exchanges every hour; one or two air exchanges per hour in winter and often twice that amount in summer. Even this minimal exchange may foster mold and mildew in damp climates, and so monitoring the property during the stabilization period and after the building has been secured will provide useful information on the effectiveness of the ventilation solution.

There is no exact science for how much ventilation should be provided for each building. There are, however, some general rules of thumb. Buildings, such as adobe structures, located in hot and arid climates may need no additional ventilation if they have been well weatherized and no moisture is penetrating the interior. Also frame buildings with natural cracks and fissures for air infiltration may have a natural air exchange rate of 3 or 4 per hour, and so in arid as well as temperate climates may need no additional ventilation once secured. The most difficult

VENTILATION GUIDANCE CHART

CLIMATE	AIR EXCHANGES		VENTILATION				
Temperature and Humidity	Winter air exchange per hour	Summer air exchange per hour	Frame Buildings passive louvering % of openings louvered		Masonry Buildings passive louvering % of openings louvered		Masonry Buildings fan combination one fan + % louvered
			winter	summer	winter	summer	summer
hot and dry Southwestern areas	less than 1	less than 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
cold and damp Northeastern & Pacific northwestern areas	1	2-3	5%	10%	10%	30%	20%
temperate/humid Mid-Atlantic & coastal areas	2	3-4	10%	20%	20%	40%	30%
hot and humid Southern states & tropical areas	3	4 or more	20%	30%	40% or more	80%	40% or more

Figure 19. This is a general guide for the amount of louvering which might be expected for a medium size residential structure with an average amount of windows, attic, and crawl space ventilation. There is currently research being done on effective air exchanges, but each project should be evaluated individually. It will be noticed from the chart that summer louvering requirements can be reduced with the use of an exhaust fan. Masonry buildings need more ventilation than frame buidings. Chart prepared by Sharon C. Park, AIA and Ernest A. Conrad, PE.

buildings to adequately ventilate without resorting to extensive louvering and/or mechanical exhaust fan systems are masonry buildings in humid climates. Even with basement and attic vent grills, a masonry building many not have more than one air exchange an hour. This is generally unacceptable for summer conditions. For these buildings, almost every window opening will need to be fitted out with some type of passive, louvered ventilation.

Depending on the size, plan configuration, and ceiling heights of a building, it is often necessary to have louvered opening equivalent to 5%-10% of the square footage of each floor. For example, in a humid climate, a typical 20'x30' (6.1m x 9.1m) brick residence with 600 sq. ft.(55.5 sq.m) of floor space and a typical number of windows, may need 30-60 sq. ft.(2.75sq.m-5.5 sq. m) of louvered openings per floor. With each window measuring 3'x5'(.9m x 1.5 m) or 15 sq. ft. (1.3 sq.m), the equivalent of 2 to 4 windows per floor may need full window louvers.

Small pre-formed louvers set into a plywood panel or small slit-type registers at the base of inset panels generally cannot provide enough ventilation in most moist climates to offset condensation, but this approach is certainly better than no louvers at all. Louvers should be located to give cross ventilation, interior doors should be fixed ajar at least 4" (10cm) to allow air to circulate, and hatches to the attic should be left open.

Monitoring devices which can record internal temperature and humidity levels can be invaluable in determining if the internal climate is remaining stable. These units can be powered by portable battery packs or can be wired into electric service with data downloaded into laptop computers periodically (see fig. 20). This can also give long-term information throughout the mothballing years. If it is determined that there are inadequate air exchanges to keep interior moisture levels under control, additional passive ventilation can be increased, or, if there is electric service, mechanical exhaust fans can be installed. One fan in a small to medium sized building can reduce the amount of louvering substantially.

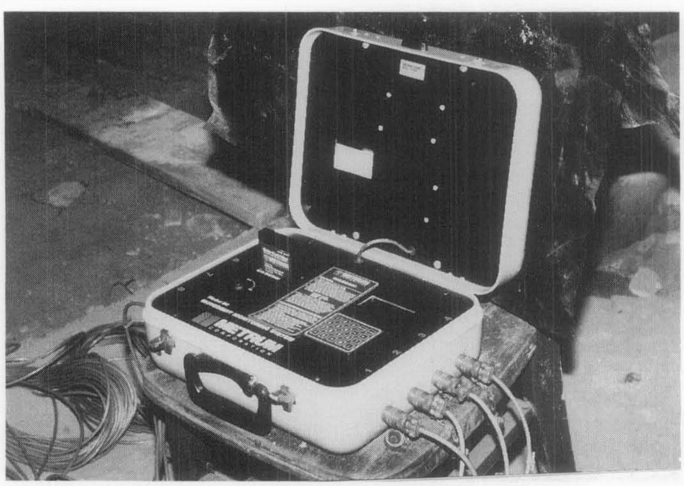


Figure 20. Portable monitors used to record temperature and humidity conditions in historic buildings during mothballing can help identify ventilation needs. This data can be downloaded directly into a lap top computer on site. These monitors are especially helpful over the long term for buildings with significant historic interiors or which are remaining furnished. If interiors are remaining damp or humid, additional ventilation should be added or the source of moisture controlled.

If electric fans are used, study the environmental conditions of each property and determine if the fans should be controlled by thermostats or automatic timers. Humidistats, designed for enclosed climate control systems, generally are difficult to adapt for open mothballing conditions. How the system will draw in or exhaust air is also important. It may be determined that it is best to bring dry air in from the attic or upper levels and force it out through lower basement windows (see fig. 21). If the basement is damp, it may be best to zone it from the rest of the building and exhaust its air separately. Additionally, less humid day air is preferred over damper night air, and this can be controlled with a timer switch mounted to the fan.

The type of ventilation should not undermine the security of the building. The most secure installations use custom-made grills well anchored to the window frame, often set in plywood security panels. Some vents are formed using heavy millwork louvers set into existing window openings (refer back to fig.18). For buildings where security is not a primary issue, where the interior is modest, and where there has been no heat for a long time, it may be possible to use lightweight galvanized metal grills in the window openings (refer back to fig.7). A cost effective grill can be made from the expanded metal mesh lath used by plasterers and installed so that the mesh fins shed rainwater to the exterior.

Securing mechanical systems and utilities. At the outset, it is important to determine which utilities and services, such as electrical or telephone lines, are kept and which are cut off. As long as these services will not constitute a fire

Figure 21. This electric thermostat/humidistat mounted in the attic vent controls a modified ducted air/fan system. The unit uses temporary exposed sheet metal ducts to pull air through the building and exhaust it out of the basement. For over ten years this fan system in combination with 18" x 18" preformed louvers in selective windows has kept the interior dry and with good air exchanges.

hazard, it is advisable to retain those which will help protect the property. Since the electrical needs will be limited in a vacant building, it is best to install a new temporary electric line and panel (100 amp) so that all the wiring is new and exposed. This will be much safer for the building, and allows easy access for reading the meter (see fig. 22).

Most heating systems are shut down in long term mothballing. For furnaces fueled by oil, there are two choices for dealing with the tank. Either it must be filled to the top with oil to eliminate condensation or it should be drained. If it remains empty for more than a year, it will likely rust and not be reusable. Most tanks are drained if a newer type of system is envisioned when the building is put back into service. Gas systems with open flames should be turned off unless there is regular maintenance and frequent surveillance of the property. Gas lines are shut off by the utility company.

If a hot water radiator system is retained for low levels of heat, it generally must be modified to be a self-contained system and the water supply is capped at the meter. This recirculating system protects the property from extensive damage from burst pipes. Water is replaced with a water/glycol mix and the reserve tank must also be filled with this mixture. This keeps the modified system from freezing, if there is a power failure. If water service is cut off, pipes should be drained. Sewerage systems will require special care as sewer gas is explosive. Either the traps must be filled with glycol or the sewer line should be capped off at the building line.

Figure 22. All systems except temporary electric have been shut off at this residence which has been mothballed over 20 years. An electric meter and 100 amp panel box have been set on a plywood panel at the front of the building. It is used for interior lighting and various alarm systems. The building, however, is showing signs of moisture problems with efflourescent stains on the masonry indicating the need for gutter maintenance and additional ventilation for the interior. The vegetation on the walls, although picturesque, traps moisture and is damaging to the masonry. Photo: H. Ward Jandl, NPS.

Developing a maintenance and monitoring plan. While every effort may have been made to stabilize the property and to slow the deterioration of materials, natural disasters, storms, undetected leaks, and unwanted intrusion can still occur. A regular schedule for surveillance, maintenance, and monitoring should be established: (See fig. 23 for maintenance chart).

MAINTENANCE CHART

periodic
- ❑ regular drive by surveillance
- ❑ check attic during storms if possible

monthly walk arounds
- ❑ check entrances
- ❑ check window panes for breakage
- ❑ mowing as required
- ❑ check for graffiti or vandalism

enter every 3 months to air out
- ❑ check for musty air
- ❑ check for moisture damage
- ❑ check battery packs and monitoring equipment
- ❑ check light bulbs
- ❑ check for evidence of pest intrusion

every 6 months; spring and fall
- ❑ site clean-up; pruning and trimming
- ❑ gutter and downspout check
- ❑ check crawlspace for pests
- ❑ clean out storm drains

every 12 months
- ❑ maintenance contract inspections for equipment/utilities
- ❑ check roof for loose or missing shingles
- ❑ termite and pest inspection/treatment
- ❑ exterior materials spot repair and touch up painting
- ❑ remove bird droppings or other stains from exterior
- ❑ check and update building file

Figure 23. Maintenance Chart. Many of the tasks on the maintenance chart can be done by volunteer help or service contracts. Regular visits to the site will help detect intrusion, storm damage, or poor water drainage.

The fire and police departments should be notified that the property will be vacant. A walk-through visit to familiarize these officials with the building's location, construction materials, and overall plan may be invaluable if they are called on in the future.

The optimum schedule for surveillance visits to the property will depend on the location of the property and the number of people who can assist with these activities. The more frequent the visits to check the property, the sooner that water leaks or break-ins will be noticed. Also, the more frequently the building is entered, the better the air exchange. By keeping the site clear and the building in good repair, the community will know that the building has not been abandoned (see fig. 24). The involvement of neighbors and community groups in caring for the property can ensure its protection from a variety of catastrophic circumstances.

The owner may utilize volunteers and service companies to undertake the work outlined in the maintenance chart. Service companies on a maintenance contract can provide yard, maintenance, and inspection services, and their reports or itemized bills reflecting work undertaken should be added to update the building file.

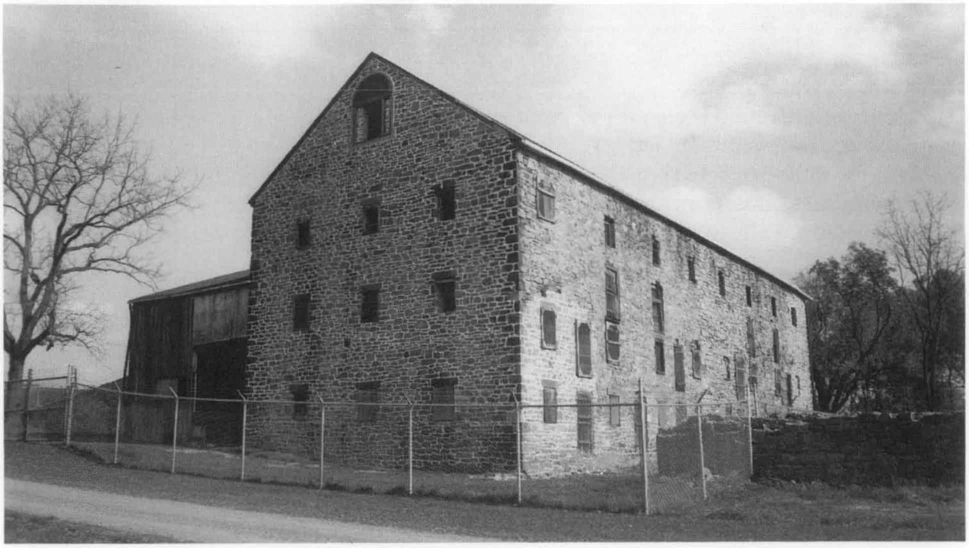


Figure 24. Once mothballed, a property must still be monitored and maintained. The openings in this historic barn has been modified with a combination of wood louvers and metal mesh panels which require little maintenance. The grounds are regularly mowed, even inside the chain link security fence. Photo: Williamsport Preservation Training Center, NPS.

Components of a Mothballing Project

Document: Brearley House, New Jersey; 2½ story center hall plan house contains a high degree of integrity of circa 1761 materials and significant early 19th century additions. Deterioration was attributable to leaking roof, unstable masonry at gables and chimneys, deteriorating attic windows, poor site drainage, and partially detached gutters. Mothballing efforts are required for approximately 7-10 years.

Stabilize: Remove bat droppings from attic using great caution. Secure historic chimneys and gable ends with plywood panels. Do not take historic chimneys down. Reroof with asphalt shingles and reattach or add new gutters and downspouts. Add extenders to downspouts. Add bug screens to any ventilation areas. Add soil around foundation and slope to gain positive drain; do not excavate as this will disturb archeological evidence.

Mothball: Install security fence around the property. Secure doors and windows with plywood panels (½" exterior grade). Install preformed metal grills in basement and attic openings. Add surface mounted wiring for ionization smoke and fire detection with direct wire to police and fire departments. Shut off heat and drain pipes. Add window exhaust fan set on a thermostatic control. Provide for periodic monitoring and maintenance of the property.

Figure 25. Above is a summary of the tasks that were necessary in order to protect this significant property while restoration funds are raised. Photographs: Michael Mills; Ford Farewell Mills Gatsch Architects.

a. A view showing the exterior of the house in its mothballed condition.

b. Plywood panels stabilize the chimneys. Note the gable vents.

c. The exhaust fan has tamper-proof housing.

MOTHBALLING CHECKLIST

Mothballing Checklist In reviewing mothballing plans, the following checklist may help to ensure that work items are not inadvertently omitted.	Yes	No	Date of action or comment.
Moisture • Is the roof watertight? • Do the gutters retain their proper pitch and are they clean? • Are downspout joints intact? • Are drains unobstructed? • Are windows and doors and their frames in good condition? • Are masonry walls in good condition to seal out moisture? • Is wood siding in good condition? • Is site properly graded for water run-off? • Is vegetation cleared from around the building foundation to avoid trapping moisture?			
Pests • Have nests/pests been removed from the building's interior and eaves? • Are adequate screens in place to guard against pests? • Has the building been inspected and treated for termites, carpenter ants, and rodents? • If toxic droppings from bats and pigeons are present, has a special company been brought in for its disposal?			
Housekeeping • Have the following been removed from the interior: trash, hazardous materials such as inflammable liquids, poisons, and paints and canned goods that could freeze and burst? • Is the interior broom-clean? • Have furnishings been removed to a safe location? • If furnishings are remaining in the building, are they properly protected from dust, pests, ultraviolet light, and other potentially harmful problems? • Have significant architectural elements that have become detached from the building been labeled and stored in a safe place? • Is there a building file?			
Security • Have fire and police departments been notified that the building will be mothballed? • Are smoke and fire detectors in working order? • Are the exterior doors and windows securely fastened? • Are plans in place to monitor the building on a regular basis? • Are the keys to the building in a secure but accessible location? • Are the grounds being kept from becoming overgrown?			
Utilities • Have utility companies disconnected/shut off or fully inspected water, gas, and electric lines? • If the building will not remain heated, have water pipes been drained and glycol added? • If the electricity is to be left on, is the wiring in safe condition?			
Ventilation • Have steps been taken to ensure proper ventilation of the building? • Have interior doors been left open for ventilation purposes? • Has the secured building been checked within the last 3 months for interior dampness or excessive humidity?			

Figure 26.. MOTHBALL CHECKLIST. This checklist will give the building owner or manager a handy reference guide to items that should be addressed when mothballing a historic building. Prepared by H. Ward Jandl, NPS.

Conclusion

Providing temporary protection and stabilization for vacant historic buildings can arrest deterioration and buy the owner valuable time to raise money for preservation or to find a compatible use for the property. A well planned mothballing project involves documenting the history and condition of the building, stabilizing the structure to slow down its deterioration, and finally mothballing the structure to secure it (See fig. 25). The three highest priorities for the building while it is mothballed are 1) to protect the building from sudden loss, 2) to weatherize and maintain the property to stop moisture penetration, and 3) to control the humidity levels inside once the building has been secured. See Mothballing Checklist Figure 26.

While issues regarding mothballing may seem simple, the variables and intricacies of possible solutions make the decision-making process very important. Each building must be individually evaluated prior to mothballing. In addition, a variety of professional services as well as volunteer assistance are needed for careful planning and repair, sensitively designed protection measures, follow-up security surveillance, and cyclical maintenance (see fig. 27).

In planning for the future of the building, complete and systematic records must be kept and generous funds allocated for mothballing. This will ensure that the historic property will be in stable condition for its eventual preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration.

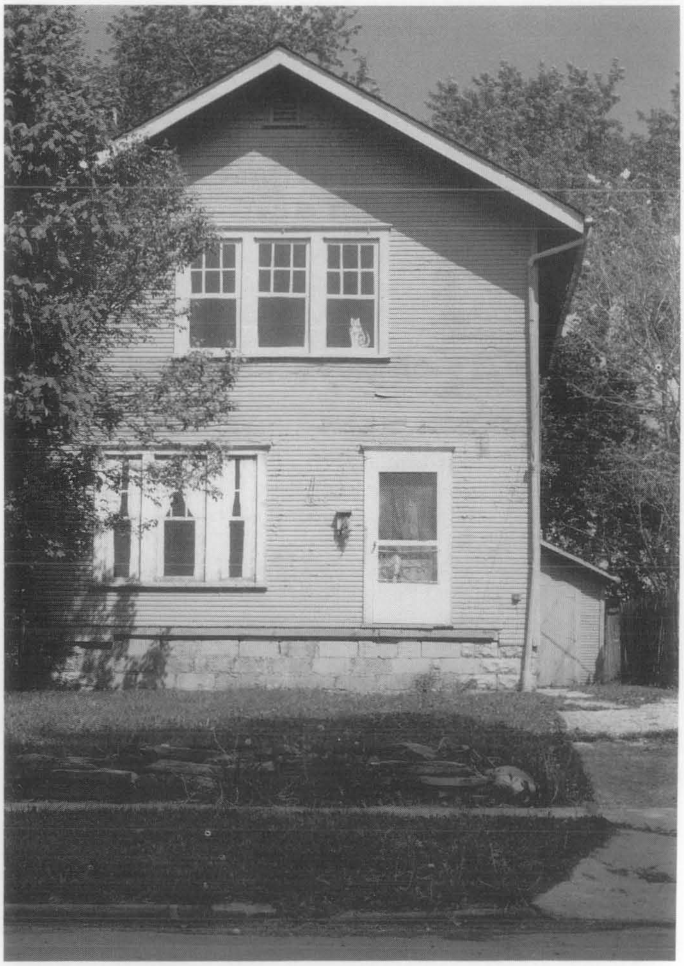


Figure 27. This residential building blends into its neighborhood even though all the windows have been covered over and the front steps are missing. The grounds are maintained and the special attention to decoratively painting the window panels shows that the property is being well cared for until it can be rehabilitated. Photo: Ohio Historical Society.

Acknowledgements

This publication has been prepared pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop and make available information concerning historic properties. Comments on the usefulness of this publication may be directed to H. Ward Jandl, Deputy Chief, Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127. This publication is not copyrighted and can be reproduced without penalty. Normal procedures for credit to the author and the National Park Service are appreciated.

The author, Sharon C. Park, Senior Historical Architect, Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following individuals in the preparation and review of this publication. H. Ward Jandl served as the technical editor and assisted with producing this Preservation Brief. In addition the following persons have provided invaluable information and illustrations: Ernest A. Conrad, PE; Doug Hicks, NPS Williamsport Preservation Training Center; Thomas C. Taylor, Colonial Williamsburg; Karen Gordon, Seattle Urban Conservation Office; Kevin B. Stoops, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation; Michael Mills, AIA; Christine Henry, architect, Mary Beth Hirsch, Ohio Historical Society. Thanks also to Preservation Assistance Division staff members Michael J. Auer, Anne E. Grimmer, Kay D. Weeks, Timothy A. Buehner, and Jean Travers, and to the numerous staff members of the NPS Regional offices who submitted comments.

All photographs and drawings are by the author unless otherwise noted.

Cover photograph: Mothballing of this historic house involved a new membrane roof covering over the historic roof and slatted window covers for security and ventilation. Photo: Williamsport Preservation Training Center, NPS.

ISSN: 0885-7016
September 1993

Further Reading

Cotton, J. Randall. "Mothballing Buildings." *The Old House Journal.* July/August, 1993.

Fisher, Charles E. and Thomas A. Vitanza. "Temporary Window Vents in Unoccupied Historic Buildings." Preservation Tech Note (Windows, No. 10). Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1985.

Frazier Associates. "Mothballing Historic Buildings." Preserving Prince William, 2. County of Prince William, VA, 1990.

Michell, Eleanor. *Emergency Repairs for Historic Buildings.* London: Butterworth Architecture, 1988.

"Mothballing Vacant Buildings," *An Anti-Arson Kit for Preservation and Neighborhood Action.* Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1982.

Nelson, Lee H. *Preservation Briefs 17. Architectural character-Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character.* Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1988.

Solon, Thomas E. "Security Panels for the Foster-Armstrong House." *Association for Preservation Technology Bulletin.* Vol XVI no. 3 & 4, 1984. (note the design of the panels, but be aware that additional louvering may be needed on other projects).

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

National Register of Historic Places Fact Sheet

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of properties recognized for their significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. The National Register Program was established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. National Register properties include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects. They can be significant to a local community, a state, an Indian tribe, or the nation as a whole.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) is the Commonwealth's official history agency. The PHMC's Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP) maintains the Commonwealth's inventory of historic properties and prehistoric sites and manages the National Register of Historic Places in Pennsylvania.

National Register properties are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. These criteria recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have contributed to the history and heritage of the United States and are designed to help state and local governments, federal agencies, and others identify important historic and archeological properties worthy of preservation and of consideration in planning and development decisions. Listing in the National Register, however, does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage, or dispose of property. It often changes the way communities perceive their historic resources and gives credibility to efforts to preserve these resources as irreplaceable parts of our communities.

Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

1. recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or local community;
2. eligibility for federal tax incentives for income-producing buildings;
3. state and federal preservation grants for planning and rehabilitation of buildings owned by not-for-profit organizations and local governments;
4. consideration in the planning for state and federal projects or projects that are assisted by state or federal agencies.

The National Register Process in Pennsylvania

In Pennsylvania, properties are nominated to the National Register by the Bureau for Historic Preservation. BHP's role in this process is review and advisory in nature. BHP reviews submitted nominations to determine whether they meet the criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places; conducts site visits to proposed historic districts; reviews adequacy of documentation; and assures that the procedures and standards of the National Register program are met. The steps in the National Register process are as follows:

1. **Historic Resource Survey Form** (HRSF): BHP receives descriptive and historical information on buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts on the HRSF.
2. **Eligibility**: Completed HRSF are reviewed by a committee of BHP staff (using National Register criteria) to determine if properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
3. **Nomination**: If eligible, the owner may proceed with formally nominating the property to the National Register using the National Park Service registration form.
4. **State Review Board**: Completed nominations are submitted to the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board. The Board generally meets the first Tuesdays in February, June, and October. The Board reviews the nomination, designating whether or not it meets the criteria for evaluation and its level of significance prior to its submittal to the National Park Service.
5. **National Park Service**: Approves nominations that are sent to it for listing in the National Register.

National Register Criteria

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. These criteria require that a property be old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and that it still look much the same way as it was in the past. In addition, the property must:

A. be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
B. be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
C. embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D. have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

Typically, cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties less than 50 years old are not considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they meet special criteria.

The National Register Does…

1. honor a historic property by recognizing its important to its local community, state, or the nation;
2. encourage the preservation of historic properties by documenting their significance;
3. list properties only if they meet the National Register criteria for evaluation;
4. facilitate the review of federally funded, licensed, or permitted projects to determine their effects on historic properties;
5. provide an opportunity to consult with government agencies to mitigate projects that will adversely affect historic properties;
6. provide information about historic resources for planning purposes;
7. offer federal tax benefits to owners of income-producing (depreciable) historic properties if they rehabilitate their properties according to preservation standards.

The National Register Does Not…

1. provide a marker or plaque for registered properties (property owners may obtain markers or plaques at their own expense);
2. restrict the rights of property owners;
3. require that properties be maintained, repaired, or restored;
4. prevent a resource's destruction by federal, state, local, or private development;
5. guarantee that grant funds will be available for projects;
6. require property owners to follow preservation standards on their properties unless they wish to quality for tax benefits;
7. require property owners to allow public access to their property;
8. automatically invoke local historic district zoning or landmark designation;
9. list individual properties if the owner objects, or list a historic district if the majority of property owners objects.

Refer to the National Park Service website at http://www.nps.gov/history/NR/faq.htm for more information about the National Register program.

National Register listing does not place obligations on private property owners, nor does it place restrictions on the use, treatment, or disposition of private property. National Register listing does not lead to public acquisition of property, nor does it require public access to property.

Saving Windows, Saving Money:

Evaluating the Energy Performance of Window Retrofit and Replacement

A REPORT BY:

National Trust *for* Historic Preservation
Preservation Green Lab

FUNDED BY:

NCPTT
National Center for Preservation Technology and Training

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

CASCADIA
GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

ECOTOPE
Consulting
Research
Design

RESEARCH PROJECT TEAM

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION (NTHP) / PRESERVATION GREEN LAB

Patrice Frey, Director of Sustainability, NTHP
Rebecca Harris, Field Officer, NTHP
Mark Huppert, Technical Director, Preservation Green Lab

CASCADIA GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

Katie Spataro, Research Director
Jason F. McLennan, CEO

ECOTOPE

Jonathan Heller, Principal
Morgan Heater, Engineer / Modeler

Special thanks to Byrd Wood, Content Manager, National Trust for Historic Preservation, for her review of this document and to Lynn Bingham, President/ Owner, Phoenix Window Restoration, Inc., Van Calvez, Owner, Windovative Designs LLC, Janell Hampton, Owner, Quality Custom Blinds, Dave Martin, President, Allied Window, Inc., Bob Patton, Owner, Metro Tint, Marshall Runkel, Partner, Green Home by EcoTech, and Patty Spencer, President, Fresh Air Sash Cord Repair, Inc., for volunteering their time and expertise to perform cost estimating. Thank you also to Jean Carroon, Principal, Goody Clancy, and Barbara Erwine, Independent Consultant, for their helpful technical review of the study.

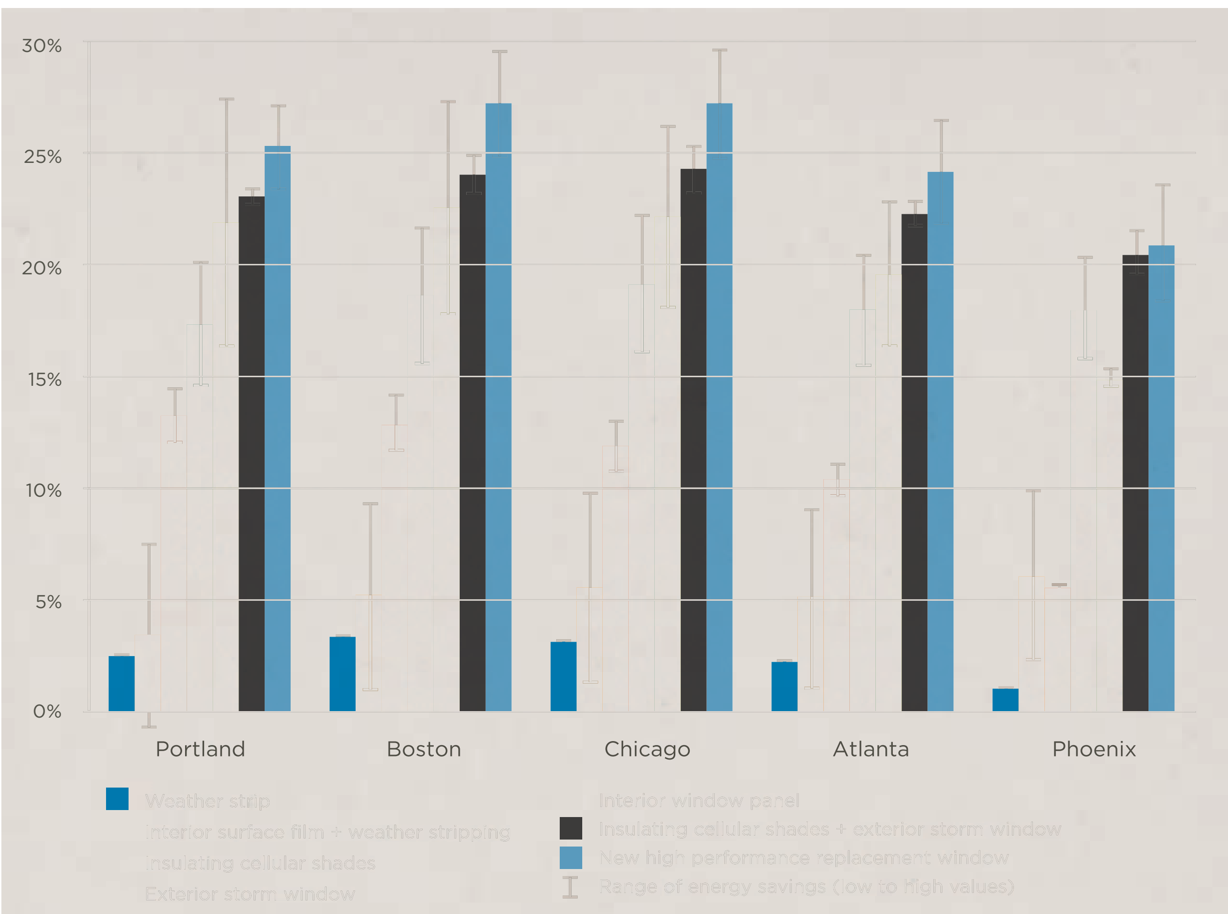
This publication was developed under a grant from the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, a unit of the National Park Service. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Park Service or the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homeowners and design professionals seeking to upgrade the performance and efficiency of existing windows are faced with many choices—from simple, low cost, do-it-yourself solutions such as window films and weather stripping to replacing older windows with new ones that require investments costing tens of thousands of dollars. Often these decisions are made without a clear understanding of the range of options available, an evaluation of the ability of these options to provide energy and cost savings, or proper consideration for the historic character of the existing windows.

This study builds on previous research and examines multiple window improvement options, comparing the relative energy, carbon, and cost savings of various choices across multiple climate regions. *Results of this analysis demonstrate that a number of existing window retrofit strategies come very close to the energy performance of high-performance replacement windows at a fraction of the cost.*

Annual Percent Energy Savings For Various Window Upgrade Options



Note: Percentage savings are not intended to predict actual savings. Instead, the results are meant to be used to evaluate the relative performance of measures where other more cost-effective energy saving strategies have been implemented first.

KEY FINDINGS

RETROFIT MEASURES CAN ACHIEVE PERFORMANCE RESULTS COMPARABLE TO NEW REPLACEMENT WINDOWS.

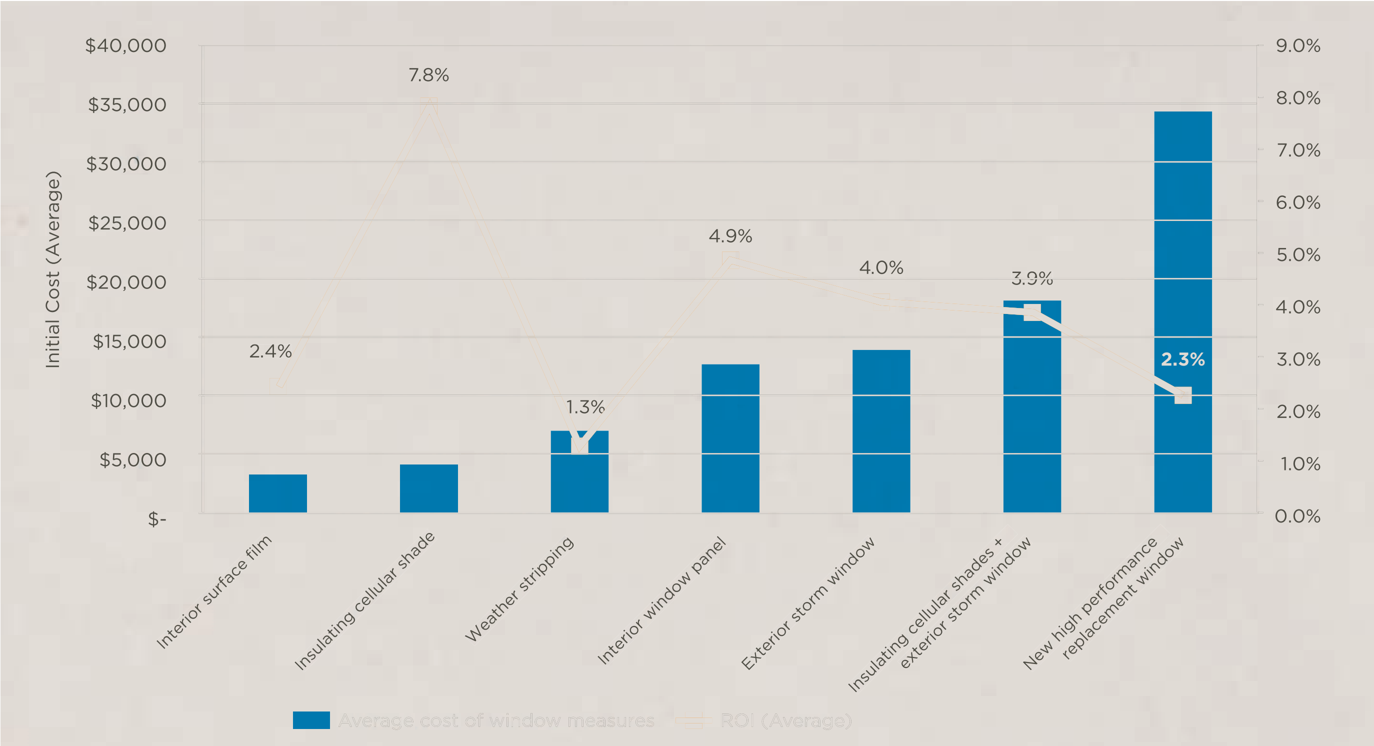
There are readily-available retrofit measures that can achieve energy savings within the range of savings expected from new, high performance replacement windows. This challenges the common assumption that replacement windows alone provide the greatest benefit to homeowners.

The figure on the previous page shows that for all cities, at least one and often two of the selected measures can achieve energy savings within the range of savings expected from new, high performance replacement windows. Specifically, interior window panels, exterior storm windows combined with cellular blinds, and in some cases even exterior storm windows alone fall within the range of performance for replacement windows.

ALMOST EVERY RETROFIT OPTION OFFERS A BETTER RETURN ON INVESTMENT THAN REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

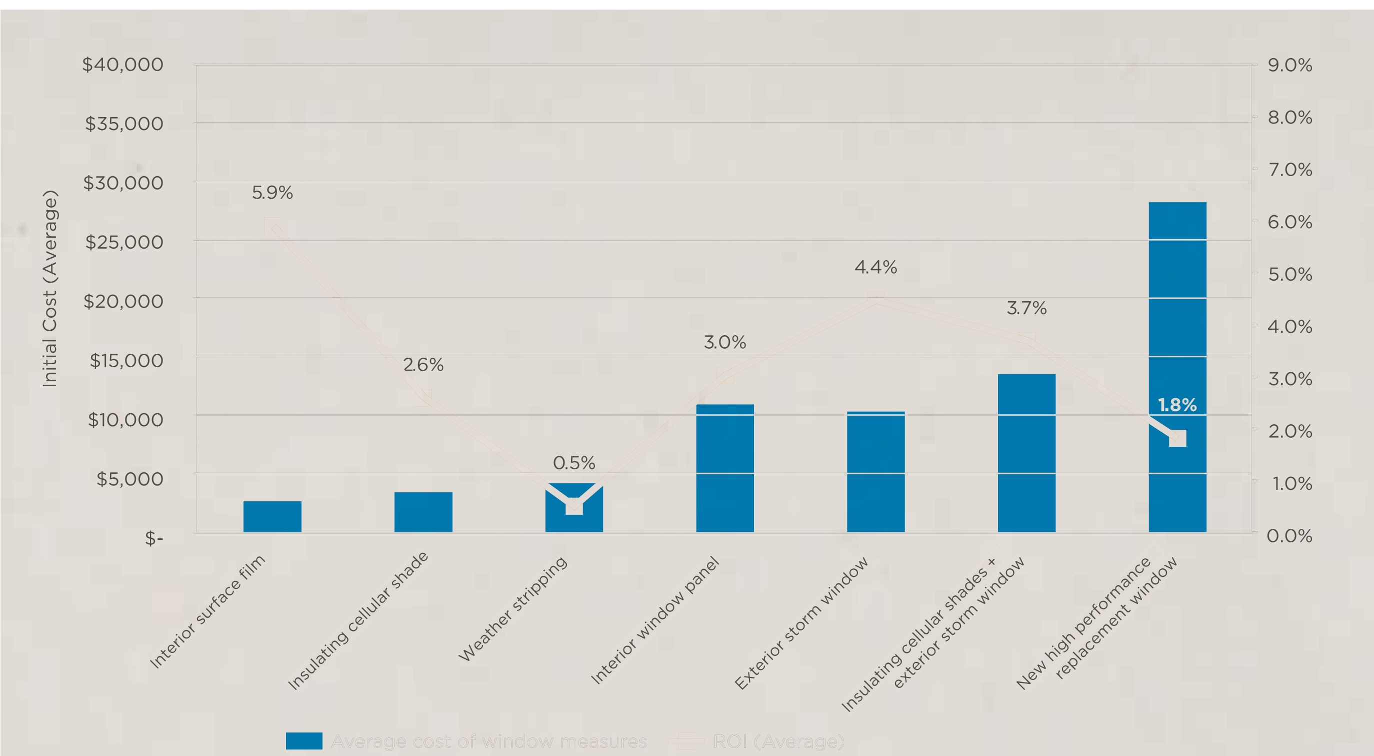
Energy savings alone should not influence decisions to upgrade windows without consideration of initial investment. For all climates, the cost analysis shows that new, high performance windows are by far the most costly measure, averaging approximately $30,000 for materials, installation, and general construction commonly required for an existing home. In cold climates, all other retrofit measures, with the exception of weather stripping and heat reducing surface films, offer a higher average return on investment when compared to new, efficient replacement windows. In hot climates, all of the study retrofit measures offer a better average return on investment than new windows, with the exception of weather stripping.

Financial Comparison of Various Window Upgrade Options for Boston



Due to high utility costs and high heating and cooling loads, window upgrade options in Boston generally produced the highest return on investment of any of the regions studied. Simple financial analysis such as Return on Investment (ROI) provides a decision making framework to allow informed choices between options for a given location.

Financial Comparison of Various Window Upgrade Options for Phoenix



STUDY OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

In recent years, awareness around energy use and its financial and environmental impacts have placed buildings in the spotlight. Residential buildings alone are responsible for approximately 20 percent of total U.S. energy use and carbon dioxide emissions. The vast majority of these buildings are single-family homes where heating and cooling represent the largest use of energy. Windows are one important aspect of how heat loss (and gain) affects a home's operational efficiency and cumulatively represent over $17 billion in annual U.S. household expenditures on heating and cooling.

In this study, computer simulation is used to model energy use in a typical, prototype home both before and after window improvements. Several commercially available window improvement options were analyzed ranging from simple, low cost applications to more expensive options representing the highest energy performance on the market.

The study analyzed energy, cost, and carbon savings for seven selected measures: weather stripping existing windows; interior window panels; exterior storm windows; insulating cellular shades; a combination of exterior storm windows and insulating cellular shades; interior-applied surface films; and new, high performance replacement windows.

Variations in climate and regional energy grids were addressed by evaluating the home's performance in five U.S. cities—Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, Phoenix, and Portland. A thorough cost analysis allowed for the comparison of average return on investment for each window option in each of the cities.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Findings from this study demonstrate that upgrading windows (specifically older, single-pane models) with high performance enhancements can result in substantial energy savings across a variety of climate zones. Selecting options that retain and retrofit existing windows are the most cost effective way to achieve these energy savings and to lower a home's carbon footprint. Due to the cost and complexity of upgrading windows, however, these options are not likely to be the first intervention that homeowners undertake. For many older homes, non-window-related interventions—including air sealing, adding insulation, and upgrading heating and cooling systems—offer easier and lower cost solutions to reducing energy bills.

In addition to providing insights into the energy performance and investment costs of window options, the study's findings reinforce several additional benefits in choosing to retrofit existing windows rather than replace them. Retrofits extend the life of existing windows, avoid production of new materials, and reduce waste. Additionally, wood windows are often a character defining feature of older homes, and conserving them helps to preserve the historic integrity of a home. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and *The Secretary of the Interior's Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* offer guidance on how best to approach the preservation of windows in historically designated homes, or homes that may be eligible for listing.

Selecting the most appropriate measure for upgrading windows requires a detailed understanding of climate and energy costs in addition to window performance and installation costs. This study provides a valuable analysis of these variables that can be used to help inform the decision to improve the energy performance of and reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from older and historic single-family homes.