



BESTWAY INSULATION

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Insulating Colorado's Governor's Mansion (*Governor's Residence at Boettcher Mansion*)

In 2008, Colorado's Governor's Mansion went through the second phase of energy efficiency & renewable energy retrofits; initiated by the Greening Government projects. Through Bestway Insulation's dedication to insulation performance, and training of Home Performance with Energy Star; Bestway Insulation was chosen to insulate the governor's mansion. The goal was to reduce energy loss from insulation.

The centennial birthday of the Governor's Mansion was to happen that year. But first, a green retrofit was to take place. Four times prior, the mansion was insulated. There was uncertainty to whether anything else could be done with the mansion.

But as we soon found out, there was a large amount of change possible. Rather than traditional blow in insulation that most companies do, this Victorian style home required quite a lot of techniques to tighten it up and increase it's effective R-value. Dense packed insulation in walls and ceilings helped limit a large amount of leakage.

There was such a high amount of air loss, blower door readings could barely be taken we were told from the mansion. Why was there so much air loss from a home that has been lived in for about 100 years?

When the team at Bestway Insulation entered, a small area of the building was discovered to be not insulated. The areas previously uninsulated were behind hidden previously closed off attic and wall areas behind dormers. Many of the opportunities that this mansion had are similar to opportunities average homes have to tighten up and re-insulate. There was much work to do; the family was cold in the wintertime and exceedingly warm in the summer.

Insulation can be used in several ways to reduce air leakage and hence, this is where the problem lays; Insulation has traditionally been measured by R-value and not with air leakage. We found walls (knee walls) with no air barrier and a few areas that no sheet rock was on the ceilings in storage areas. But there were other large holes; an elevator and dumb waiter shaft and four other large holes were open in various parts of the building.

Rather than just insulating well, we also installed foam air sealing in the attic. In-between wood plank boards, around bathroom fans and above large cracks, we put foam in those areas to seal the leaks from getting out.

After a two-week insulation job, Bestway Insulation completed the work in this very large Victorian style home. Debbie, our owner noticed that there were no more blankets on the couch to keep the Ritters warm. This home was submitted to be reviewed for LEED EB ("Green" Existing Building) certified building.

Story by James Weingardt