

PRESS RELEASE

Out with the old, in with the new

19 February 2015, Johannesburg: Did you know that up to 30% of a house's heat loss and gain can occur through its windows and doors? Dylan Miller from leading windows and doors manufacturer, Swartland, explains how you can make the right choice when it comes to fenestration, not only lowering your home's heating, cooling and lighting bills, but helping to save the environment as well.

Benefits of energy efficient fenestration

Windows and doors are a big investment as they form the backbone of any building structure, but many existing homes have the misfortune of having old inefficient ones installed. "It's important, now more than ever, to consider the energy performance of your windows and doors so that you can maximise your home's energy efficiency," says Dylan.

He has observed how homeowners nowadays no longer only consider the style and aesthetics of their windows and doors, but also how well insulated they are, and there's good reason for it, as there are multiple immediate and longer-term benefits, such as:

- Lower electricity bills associated with heating, cooling and lighting.
- A reduced carbon footprint as a result.
- A more temperate home with less draught.
- An improvement in sound reduction.

But energy efficient windows and doors are not merely a "nice to have" – they're a legal requirement as well. All new builds have to comply with the SANS 10400-XA National Building Regulations. This includes windows and doors, which are required to be compliant with the SANS 613 and 204 (Fenestration Products) Mechanical Performance Criteria. Says Dylan: "If they do not meet these standards, the property will be deemed illegal, and the homeowner will be required to replace the non-compliant elements, or else they will not be able to resell their property as a compliant dwelling."

According to Dylan, Swartland is at the forefront of fenestration energy performance improvements in South Africa. "Swartland's double-glazed windows are some of the most energy efficient, offering the best insulation qualities currently on the local market. And we have the SAFIERA (South African Fenestration and Insulation Energy Rating Association) test results to confirm this," points out Dylan.

In addition, Swartland's Ready-2-Fit range of windows are tested for deflection, structural strength, water-resistance, air-tightness, operating forces, and best-in-market energy efficiency, thus ensuring that these windows and doors are compliant with the latest building regulations. "The range is made from imported hardwood, and is sealed with top German manufactured water-based sealant, Maxicare, to ensure minimum maintenance

and long lasting beauty,” points out Dylan, who believes that new energy-efficient windows eventually pay for themselves.

What to look for

Here are some simple thing to look out for when choosing windows and doors that let in natural light without compromising on energy efficiency:

- **Choose a reputable brand:** “Choose quality fenestration from a reputable manufacturer with a long-standing history,” says Dylan, pointing out how Swartland has earned a first-rate reputation from decades of supplying high quality products, giving customers peace of mind.
- **All fenestration and doors must be compliant:** Only purchase products that are compliant with the SANS 613 and 204 (Fenestration Products) Mechanical Performance Criteria. Swartland's Ready-2-Fit range of wooden windows and doors are compliant with the National Building Regulations and have been tested for deflection, structural strength, water-resistance, air-tightness, operating forces, and the best possible energy efficiency.
- **Seal them before damage sets in:** Swartland’s Ready-2-Fit range is professionally pre-sealed and pre-glazed before leaving the factory, ensuring that the windows and doors are adequately protected against exposure to the elements.
- **Professional instillation is key:** Ensure that your windows and doors are installed by a reputable company and according to the manufacturers specifications. Says Dylan: “Even the most advanced fenestration products won't perform effectively if they’re not installed properly.”
- **Check out the guarantee:** Ensure you receive a manufacturer’s guarantee on the items you purchase. For example, Swartland offers a 10-year manufacturer’s guarantee on its Cape Culture range of windows.

Dylan concludes that windows and doors are a sizeable investment, and an important consideration when building or renovating: “Whilst it may cost you a bit more to comply with the current National Building Regulations, it will save you in the long run, creating a home that’s more cost-effective and comfortable for years to come, and that you can rest assured is fit for resale.”

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