



NRC-CNRC

Institute for
Research in
Construction

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to the
built environment

Efficient Air Movement and Heat Delivery

Objectives

To investigate ways of improving the energy efficiency of fans in forced-air heating systems. To evaluate the energy efficiency of alternative heating systems.

Background

Radiant floor heating proponents claim fuel savings of 15-20% over forced-air systems. A hydronic system can transport a given amount of heating energy using less than 5% of the energy used by a conventional motor and fan in a forced-air system. Combined with more efficient forced-air systems, a hydronic system may improve comfort and save energy.

Statement of Work

- Develop a furnace fan with improved aerodynamic efficiency and couple it with a suitably sized electronically commutated motor (ECM). This will include seeking to ensure that any such improvements can be scaled down to the range of airflow rates appropriate for other residential ventilation devices such as range hoods, bathroom exhaust fans and heat recovery ventilators.
- Determine the relative energy efficiency of hydronic radiant floor heating systems compared to forced-air heating systems, and any promising hybrid combinations thereof. This will include a review of information available on radiant floor heating and hybrid heating systems combining radiant and forced-air heating to 1) validate the claims of improved energy efficiency and occupant comfort for radiant heating systems, and to 2) identify promising alternatives to forced-air systems.
- Evaluate prototype alternatives in realistic Ottawa weather conditions, using IRC's two-storey test house, to determine their possible energy benefits.

Expected Outcomes

Report summarizing energy benefits of better fans and alternative heating systems.

Partners

Panel on Energy Research and Development, Natural Resources Canada, EBM Industries Inc., Enbridge Gas Distribution

Start/Completion Dates

The project began in 2004 and is expected to be completed in 2007.

Project Managers

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For more information, see http://irc.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/ie/iaq/factsheet12_e.html

Factsheet 12, February 2005



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