

LETTERS



7-11 Stair Argument Weak

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on the letter in reference to the "7-11" stair rule ("Steep Stair Blues," *Letters*, 4/93). I attended the BOCA convention in 1983 in Grand Rapids, Mich., where 7-11 was the main topic, and so had the opportunity to listen to the testimony of the proponents. My honest impression is that the data supporting 7-11 is, at best, totally inconclusive and doesn't prove that stair steepness is an overriding factor in stair accidents. At worst, the supporting data is a wild conclusion extrapolated from unsorted data from some hospital emergency room accident reports — in essence a case of making the "facts" fit the predetermined conclusion.

I know from experience that an 8¹/₄-inch-rise stair is a useful and functional stair that can get you from here to there at a reasonable cost without consuming a lot of space within the home to do so. No buyer

I've ever met has asked for a shallower stair. Using an 8¹/₄- or 9-inch-rise stair is hardly a sell-out of safety to the almighty dollar as Mr. Barnes alleges.

Persons who are inattentive, poorly coordinated, inebriated, or wearing poor-fitting or slippery-soled footwear can fall down a 7-11 stair just as readily as they can fall down an 8¹/₄- or 9-inch stair. Life is not ever going to be totally risk free.

Maybe it is time for regulators and legislators to recognize that people should start taking responsibility for their own actions — again.

William C. Lyons, Jr.
Fairfax Homes Inc.
Madison, Conn.

Efficient Dehumidifiers

To the Editor:

I have two comments about your recent article on dehumidifiers (*Toolbox*, 4/93): DEC Thermastor (800/533-7533) makes the Hi-E Dry 100 and 200 dehumidifiers, which use internal heat recovery to greatly

improve humidity. Although they are substantially more expensive than the ones in the Graingers catalog, the Hi-E Dry 100 removes 100 pints (pounds) per day at the standard 80°F 60% RH point vs. 50 pints for the units in Graingers, at about the same amperage. At 60°F 60% RH, the DEC unit removes 50 pounds per day, whereas the OD 3800HG removes 13, a fourfold difference, again at the same power draw.

For temporary heat on a job last winter, we rented a Rinnai sealed-combustion propane heater from the propane company for \$20 per month. It is quiet, has an output of about 30,000 Btus/hour, is cheaper to run than an electric heater, doesn't add moisture to the interior, and best of all, no one has to breathe its exhaust.

Marc Rosenbaum, P.E.
Energysmiths
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Likes Metal Roofs

To the Editor:

Your magazine is A-1. Articles

right on, good stuff. I pass it around to the roofing contractors I consult for (I'm a retired engineer).

One comment though: Every time I see an article on asphalt shingles (I call them glorified tar paper) I wonder why contractors and architects don't wake up to the alternatives.

With all the good, attractive metal roofing available at a comparable cost, why mess around with asphalt shingles? Metal roofs are attractive and will be good for 40 to 50 years or more. Metal roofs have 5% of the residential market and projections are 15% of the market by 2000. In spite of the fancy names given to asphalt shingles and no matter how much they try to imitate shakes or tile, they are still an inferior product.

F. E. Adams
Dallas, Texas

Keep 'em coming....We welcome letters, but they must be signed and include the writer's address. *The Journal of Light Construction* reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, and clarity. Mail letters to JLC, RR#2, Box 146, Richmond, VT 05477.