

TrashWall

THE PROBLEM

Many low-income renters in the US live in apartments and houses that are in poor repair and waste energy. Those with the least money spend the highest percentage of their limited incomes on keeping their living spaces warm in winter and cool in summer. Yet much of the energy they use is wasted....



Photo: National Farm Workers Ministry

Energy bills can be a burden for the poor. Many rent living space in run-down, decrepit and substandard buildings... that waste energy... and have high utility bills. Since landlords pay the costs of upgrades and maintenance for building but renters bear the utility costs, few building owners will invest in energy saving upgrades. Landlords simply have no incentive to improve the energy efficiency of rental properties.

What can people do?

THE SOLUTION

We harvest materials from trash to create beautiful, money saving, insulating TrashWalls that renters can install in energy wasting rental units.

Our solution to reducing energy waste, decreasing greenhouse gases and slashing energy bills is a temporary insulating wall, TrashWall, that renters can install in their apartments' existing exterior walls. In order to keep costs as low as possible and be ecologically kind, TrashWalls walls are fabricated of materials exclusively harvested from the local solid waste stream. By keeping the cost of each TrashWall below ten cents per square foot, the payback period from energy savings in utility bills due to each TrashWall should be less than one heating or cooling season.

Our interdisciplinary team of Architecture, and Engineering students from Washington State University has developed and built the first prototypes of these TrashWall interior insulating walls. TrashWalls will dramatically reduce heat losses from rented apartments, improve the comfort of those spaces during hot or cold weather, save renters significant money on their utility bills, reduce greenhouse gases and make a beautiful design statement in anyone's home!

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