

# What's New In Windows



Windows can improve the appearance of a home. A quality window will keep your house cool in the summer and warm in the winter, they bring the outdoors in and in return improve the quality of our lives, yet many home owners probably give little thought to the windows in their home. This article focuses on the last 20 years of windows; where they were, where they are, and where they are going.

*We teamed up with Jerry Sanders of Anderson Windows to provide for you the information that his 21 years of experience in the window industry can bring. Jerry provides a wealth of knowledge; after all, windows are his specialty.*

## *Twenty Years Ago*

Jerry explains to us that 20 years ago windows were much different than they are today. LowE was beginning to take rise and IG, or insulated glass was prevalent. The exterior colors, shapes and sizes were limited. Vinyl was available, but mainly in R&R segment, and they were very low-tech. Fiberglass products also were available, but were also very limited and used mostly in entry doors. Terms like “Green” and “Leed” were not heard of and no one recycled. At that time, distribution was a two-step process, manufacturer to wholesale to dealer; also most products were sold through lumberyards and dealers did not install or offer service.

## *10 Years Ago*

Within 10 years, much had changed in windows. LowE2 coatings become the norm & code in many states. Vinyl expanded nationally and in new construction. Sizes and shapes exploded, and windows became very complex due to offering consumers many choices and styles. Patio doors that were poor performers in the past due to leaks and warps, had greatly improved due to design and hardware improvements. Fiberglass took off, but mainly in Entry & Patio doors. Coastal products emerged as high performance products became necessary due to code enhancements. Manufacturers began to add new clad materials to their portfolios. NRFC & Energy Star were born, helping to standardize product ratings & performance. Energy efficiency became a buzz word in some markets and “Green” and “Leed” became new terms in the markets, as recycling became a new phenomenon. Big-Box chains emerged and manufacturers began to sell directly to dealers. Some dealers began to offer installation and embrace service.

## *Current, last 3-5 years*

Nearly 100% of the U.S. now uses LowE2 as standard code. LowE3 (triple) glazings have come on line as a high performance glazing for upcoming code challenges. Insulated glass, or LowE, is nearly extinct. Vinyl has become mainstream in starter/ move- up homes and R&R. Exterior colors are numerous and their are a huge array of sizes, styles, and prices. Replacing windows has become a larger segment than new construction due to economy, aging homes, and homes that have been previously built with low quality/ sustainable materials. Terms like “Green”, “Leed”, and “sustainable” are now common place, but in the industry only, consumers for the most part, have a lack of understanding of these terms. Fiberglass is now showing up in more windows and proves strong and durable. Tax code is driving a new window/door performance rating. Movement towards high performance, energy efficient and sustainable products has begun. Recycling is very mainstream and has become a competitive advantage. Coastal codes are very stringent and have expanded to most coastlines. The economy has closed many trades and manufacturers and only the strong are surviving. The internet and social media has begun to change the way manufacturers advertise. Many dealers are now offering installation and service as a differentiator.

## *The future in windows, next 3-5 years*

Fiberglass materials will be mainstream and aluminum exterior cladded products will significantly decline. More glazing choices will be available. Taller and better performing windows will emerge with decorative high performance glass. New features and technologies will emerge that will make them “smart” and more interactive in the home. Significant changes to code effecting energy efficiency will also effect cladding material used. “Green” and “Leed” will become standard and have high levels of participation and performance. New coastal products will emerge that exceed code and improve design aesthetics. More R&R products will be introduced and will be more installation friendly. There will be more consolidation between manufacturers, trades & dealers. Big box dealers will begin to sell less complicated window/ door packages unless helped by quoting technology and experienced staff. Manufacturers will begin to offer financing. Dealers will have to install and service products.

*If you feel that you could improve the energy efficiency of your home by replacing your old windows or if you are looking to update the look of your home, contact us for a free consultation. We will help you choose the windows that best suits your lifestyle and budget.*

