Carolina Spray Foam



by Sara Sobota



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Ari Relford (right) reviews the operation of the equipment in the Carolina Spray Foam company vehicle before the start of a project in DeBordieu in Georgetown, SC. Relford thoroughly researched the best available technology in the industry before investing in Carolina Spray Foam's state-of-the-art equipment.

Think you know insulation? If you're picturing the traditional fiberglass padding that's tucked into the walls of an attic, it's time to think again. Spray foam insulation is a stronger, more effective product with a simpler application — and it's available for a significantly lower price than many contractors realize.



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As a result of the surrounding spray foam insulation, the HVAC components in this attic are now in a conditioned space.

Ari Relford, owner of Carolina Spray Foam as well as contracting company A.R.I. Construction, uses spray foam insulation on all of his own construction projects and has more than two decades' experience with the product. He established Carolina Spray Foam in 2019 to sell the energy-efficient insulator to contractors around the area.

Spray foam is applied everywhere traditional insulation would be installed, but it's sprayed on, dries in 3.5 seconds, and hardens, producing a moisture and vapor barrier using closed cell.

When it comes to the difference in insulation effectiveness, traditional fiberglass doesn't even compare to spray foam.

"I've got a customer with a 2,800-square-foot house in Pawleys Island," said Relford. "The ceilings are 10 feet on the first floor, 9 feet on the second floor, and when you walk in the front door, it is 8 feet to the top. They've never had a power bill over $120. It's crazy."

Relford said for new construction, the use of spray foam allows builders to use a smaller tonnage HVAC unit because of the level of energy efficiency. Between the reduced tonnage and the reduced electricity bills, spray foam pays for itself very quickly.

The product used to be prohibitively expensive, Relford noted, but the price of the chemical has come down, making spray foam much more affordable.

"Back 2007 or 2008, if it would cost $4,000 to do traditional batt insulation, the cost for spray foam would have been $19,000. But now, if it costs $4,000 to use traditional installation, I can do it for probably about $7,000 — it's just under double. With the efficiency of the house comes the effect that now you've saved on the air conditioner tonnage in the house, and it helps in that way."

Satisfied homeowners all along the Grand Strand can attest to the superior effectiveness of Carolina Spray Foam over traditional insulation, for reasons ranging from lower electricity bills to better sound proofing and stronger structural capacity.

Eric Wells, who lives full time in Charlotte, N.C., owns a 2-year-old vacation home in North Myrtle Beach that was built by A.R.I. Construction and insulated with Carolina Spray Foam. Wells said he sees a significant difference in power bills between the two homes, all attributed to the spray insulation.

"Compared to my house in North Carolina, the energy bill at the North Myrtle Beach house is about half the cost, and the house is exposed to more elements," said Wells. "It gets full sun, it's a block off the beach, and it's the same square footage as my full-time home."

Relford built and insulated Floyd Keels' 12,000 square foot beach front home in DeBordieu, which boasts 6 bathrooms, 7 bedrooms, and an elevator.

"Ari took care of everything," said Keels. "Our house was a very



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This ocean front home in DeBordieu in Georgetown SC, had 'Closed Cell' spray foam insulation applied during the remodeling process. 'Closed Cell' spray foam insulation is a vapor barrier, not allowing any moisture or air to come though it. It's also going to add 50 to 70 percent structural strength to the house.

PHOTO © CHUCK GEE



The application of 'Closed Cell' spray foam insulation before the completion of the interior walls in the construction process.



PHOTO © CHUCK GEE

The clean up process after the spray foam insulation is applied.

complicated project, building from the ground up, and he did a phenomenal job from start to finish."

Keels' primary residence in Atlanta has traditional insulation, and Keels most definitely notices the difference in power bills.

"My Georgia light bill, especially during the summer, can get up to $1,200 a month. The house is very comparable in size to the beach house, where the light bill is $300-$400," said Keels.

For Scott Wagner, coming across Carolina Spray Foam was coincidental, as he was simply looking for an efficient insulation job. Wagner was completing a progressive renovation of his existing home, and Relford used Carolina Spray Foam between walls and under the floors.

It was the product combined with Relford's customer service and availability that attracted Wagner to the company.

"It was great. He was Johnny-on-the-spot," said Wagner. "I was going to do rolled insulation, and I called several companies and they were booked up for months. When I called him, and he said 'I can be there tomorrow.' So he came, and we did our home in phases: he did our two bedrooms, and then a month later he sprayed my other living spaces because they were ready. It was easy to do it in phases. He only needed a week's notice to come do each area, so it really worked out in our remodel process."

In addition to the difference in the power bill, Wagner notices the difference in sound protection between his pre-renovation home and home renovated with Carolina Spray Foam.

"It's a completely different feeling walking in," said Wagner. "The noise level feels less intrusive. We have golf carts driving around, so I can kind of judge from past experience — the noise level of the golf carts and even cars going by is so much lower. There's also increased solidness when you walk on the floors; there's no sound reverberation from your feet. It's completely different from the old rolled insulation that was in there."

Two different types of spray foam are open cell and closed cell, with the latter providing the strongest protection.



PHOTO © CHUCK GEE

The application of 'Open Cell' spray foam insulation at a custom home in Cypress River Plantation. "'Open Cell' spray foam insulation is the most economical and has a lesser R-value per inch," says Relford.

PHOTO © CHUCK GEE



The Carolina Spray Foam representative adjusts the temperature for the spray foam insulation before starting the project.

"Open cell is the most economical, and if they use it, it foams up more," said Relford. "It's got a lesser R-value per inch. Closed cell is going to be a vapor barrier, not allowing any moisture or air to come through it. And it's also going to add 50-70 percent in structural strength to the house."

Wagner said he opted for open cell spray foam in his home, but the company used closed cell in the area around his entryway because it happened to be in the hose lines when they arrived. The remainder of the house is open cell, and while Wagner is thrilled with the entire project, he admits that there's a notable difference: closed cell spray foam is even stronger than open.

"That entry door now is rock solid," said Wagner. "If you shut the door hard, you don't feel any vibration in the walls. It feels like it just shuts. If I had it to do over again, I might do closed cell in the entire house. As far as insulation, it would be even tighter if I'd done closed cell everywhere. But, the open cell for my exterior walls and my interior walls, for sound and insulation purposes, is spectacular."

Of all the homes that Relford has built using spray foam insulation, the homeowner satisfaction rate is 100%

"I've never heard a negative comment about it, ever. Everyone who does it wishes they'd done it ten years ago. Everybody loves it."

Another Carolina Spray Foam product is designed for the roof of commercial metal buildings, making them waterproof and more energy efficient.

"We spray 3 inches on the roof. The foam dries a little differently; it takes about six seconds to dry, so it molts down and looks a little better on the roof," said Relford. "After it's sprayed, we go back and spray silicone on top of it as a barrier against sunlight. Every ten years we just spray it on top, and now you've got a metal building that will never leak. Now you have a metal building that is insulated, which is unheard of." ■



Spray foam insulation can be applied to metal buildings as well as traditional stick built buildings and is equally effective for both types of construction.

Commonly Asked Questions About Spray Foam Insulation

Can interior walls and floors be spray foamed to reduce sound?
Yes, the air seal helps with sound protection both between walls and below floors.

Can spray foam raise the resale value of the home?
Yes, it's a strong selling point. There's no comparison between spray foam and traditional insulation; spray foam is stronger, more durable, and more effective.

Can spray foam damage pipes and wires in walls?
Spray foam, whether it's open cell or closed cell, does not damage pipes or wires.

How do I choose the right spray foam contractor?
Choosing the right spray foam contractor is essential, and knowledge is key. Go with a contractor with memberships in professional organization such as NAHB, SPFA, or HGHBA.

Is there anything I can do to offset the cost of spray foam?
Yes. With the improved efficiency, you will need less tonnage in your HVAC, and you will see lower electricity bills.

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The Importance & Increased Appeal Of Floor Covering For Both New Construction & Remodeling Across The Grand Strand

by Sara Sobota

Installing new flooring is not only for new construction. Over the past few years, remodeling existing homes has become more and more popular throughout our area. One of the largest ticket items used in remodeling is flooring. This includes tile for the conversion of basic tub / shower combinations to beautiful larger tiled showers. *Building Industry Synergy* reached out to three professional floor covering companies, that have made a positive impact throughout our community, to learn about the most popular trends in the industry today.

Simple. Yours. Elegant.

This straightforward motto reflects not only **Flooring Panda's** approach to its work in floor coverings, but also its high regard for its customers. For 17 years, Flooring Panda has offered beautiful flooring designed and installed by expert employees, ensuring that every project is completed efficiently and to the client's highest satisfaction.



Flooring Panda owner, Jaime Pando

"About 40 percent of the work we do is for repeat customers," said Jaime Pando, owner of Flooring Panda. "They come back because we're reputable, responsible, and responsive. They like the work we do for them and know they can depend on us."

Pando also emphasized that regardless of the size of a job, every customer of Flooring Panda's is treated with equal respect and care.

"When they call us, we call them back," said Pando. "Whenever they

(Continued on page 24)



Flooring Panda is located @ 864 Kingswood Dr. in Myrtle Beach, SC (Behind Suds Car Wash on Hwy. 544). They also have a 2nd location @ 5298 Main St. in Shallotte, NC (Next to the NC DMV).

