

Heating an old mobile home.

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Darlene from Charlottetown, PEI wants to put an old 33 foot travel trailer out by the ocean and live in it, but it isn't very warm. How can she winterize this old rig? It was interesting to research the evolution of mobile homes in Canada. From the 70's to the 80's, they almost doubled their amount of insulation. From the 80's to the 90's they changed their names to "modular homes" and began to be delivered in two or more sections that when stuck together were as big as many bungalows and had a third more insulation than in the 80's -- now being equivalent to regular built homes. But Darlene has an old one with very thin walls and little or no insulation. There is not much room to do much from the inside so the best thing to do is from the outside. If there is no insulation at all in the walls, strip off the siding and have a contractor spray the outside, perhaps even the top and the bottom with polyurethane foam to fill up the wall cavity. This is expensive stuff but gives R-7.5 per inch, the best we have, and at the same time will seal off all air leaks. You can even buy large packs sold for the recreational vehicle people to spray this yourself, but be sure to get a pack that has a spray nozzle for a wall application, not just for sealing cracks. Then if you still need more insulation, or you can't get into the walls, cover the outside with a couple of inches of ridged foam insulation panels and put on new siding. The floor should be insulated as well. On the television we showed a new heating system that could do good service in a small space. It was a hydronic heating system that would get its heat from the hot water tank, and send it through tubes set in routed out grooves in a 3/4 inch thick floor. You can put a rug or any other flooring right over it. This system is not designed to completely heat a house, but to add a warm floor inexpensively to a problem area, like a bathroom.

Keywords:

Water Heating, Heat Loss, Mobile Homes, Heating, Insulation, Hydronic