

Making A Deck & Patio Area More Useful In The Summer



Most houses today have a patio or deck area for entertaining and relaxing. The summer months is when those outside areas are used more often due to the warmer weather and easy access to other complementing items like a pool, outdoor grill, or the increasingly more common outdoor kitchen. Additionally, we now often use weather resistant outdoor furniture to enjoy the great outdoor's open feel. This open feel is relaxing because most of our daytime hours are spent trapped inside walls and windows at work or home. When outdoors we can unwind and recharge. We can also use these areas to enjoy family and entertain friends.

Relaxing and recharging are the primary purposes of these outdoor spaces. Frequently we like to use these areas in afternoons, but all too often, the sun is just unbearable. As

we've all experienced, intense sun can make walking surfaces extremely hot. On one deck where we were installing a canopy frame, I checked the surface temperatures with a digital thermometer and was very surprised with what I saw. I knew patios and deck areas get hot from the sun's rays but I never realized they could

...without stressing a family's budget, awnings can expand your outdoor living space and more importantly its usage – while providing significant year-round energy savings

reach a temperature over 50 degrees warmer than the air temperatures. At the time, it was 11 a.m. and already 87°. I double checked the surface temperatures of various other areas

We have found that by covering an area with an awning or canopy, the heat ends up above us and we can walk around in bare feet comfortably or sit on furniture and enjoy the outdoor breezes. Eating and cooking becomes more enjoyable when you have extra sun protection especially for those who want to avoid UV rays. You also have more control of the weather changes and peace of mind that a rainy day won't ruin your event and chase everyone inside. Your outside areas become more useful and enjoyable even in uncertain weather.

And speaking of uncertain weather—a word of caution regarding those retractable awnings that you may have seen advertised—they are extremely wind sensitive. Wind gusts or winds as little as 10 mph will chal-

where the sun hadn't yet hit and they were all registering 87°. I then pointed the digital thermometer to an area that had several hours of the morning sun and to my surprise it was showing 139°. It wasn't even noon yet and already the sun-exposed area was over 50° hotter than the air temperature and the deck area not yet exposed. With that kind of sun-induced heat, it's no wonder those bare footed have to move quickly on those hot surfaces.



by **Les Kreider**
President-Owner
Kreider's Canvas Service, Inc.

lenge most retractable systems. Sun and rain sensors along with motion sensors offer some safety but could still cause the awning to retract and leave everyone fully exposed to the elements with only one option—to retreat indoors.

A permanent-frame awning, on the other hand, offers the best and most consistent protection from rainy weather and from sudden storms. A properly-fitted cover with a strong frame can withstand summer storms and not leave you sitting in the rain or sun, even on a windy day.

Cheap imitations offered by large box stores can give you a taste of protection offered by a stationary frame, but buyers beware. The main problem with this light-duty imitation is the lack of durability and piece of mind that comes with a custom fitting stationary frame canopy. The imitations from the large box stores don't handle winds well and will be a source of worry every time there's a threat of heavy rains or winds. Owner's will fret over the decision to remove the cover each and every time there's a chance for heavy weather.

On the other hand, the cover of a custom stationary-framed awning (if properly constructed and designed) usually only needs to be removed at the end of the season. In other words, the awning cover is installed in the spring after the last snow and will provide sun and rain protection thru late fall and up until the early snow. Given how moderate our fall weather has been of late, homeowners are significantly extending their outdoor living season.

Another important item to note is that these big box store imitation fabrics don't handle the sun's UV rays very well causing the covers to tear usually within a year or two of summer use. A custom stationary-frame's fabric on the other hand often, uses a solution-dyed fabric called *Sunbrella* which comes with a 10-year prorated warranty. The colors in the yarn are woven into the fabric (not painted-



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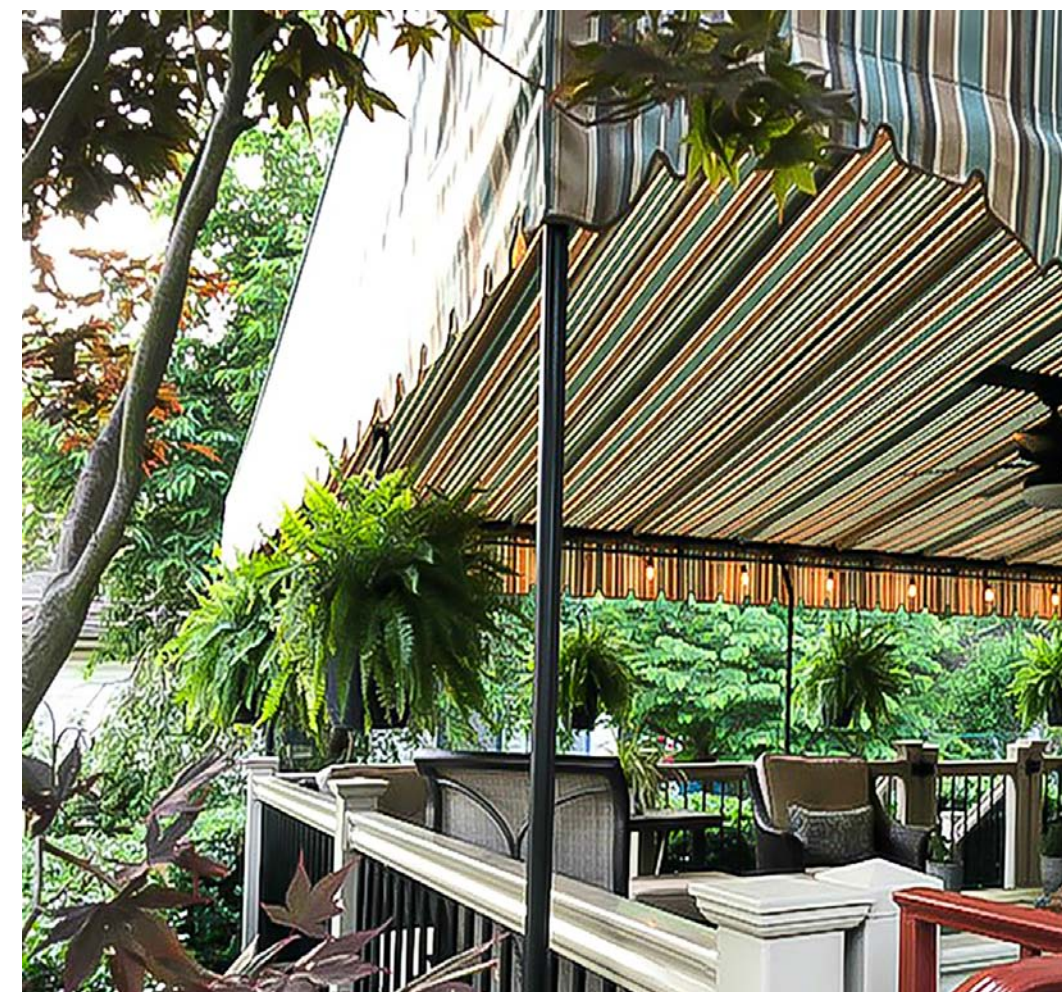
Kreider's Canvas Service

has been installing awnings since 1975 and has over 100 years of combined experience within our team of service personnel. Professionally manufactured and installed canvas awnings for your home or business is our specialty. We are committed to exceeding the expectations of all our clients and producing a long lasting quality product.

on), making the fabrics more fade resistant. The woven acrylic fabrics have a high sun resistance along with great UV resistance—especially in the darker colored fabrics. This sounds completely opposite from what our normal thought process would allow us to reason. While light colored fabrics (even striped areas) are

cooler, they often offer half the useful fabric longevity. We have experienced several black canopies that have lasted over 20 years in comparison to several striped and light tan fabrics that have lasted only 8 to 9 years.

Having a strong science background, I wanted to understand why this hap-





Whether it be for residential or commercial purposes, high-quality awnings that are properly fitted and installed can provide both practical and beautiful shielding solutions from rain and excessive sun.



pened because the total fabric construction is a solution dyed-acrylic fabric, and not just the dark areas. The way a large fabric supplier answered my question makes total sense. On a plant tour of their manufacturing/weaving facility, our guide who was in charge of their Research and Development, told me that their research had narrowed the fabric longevity down to the fact that the more carbon in the synthetic fabric—the longer the fabric life and the more resistant the fabric is to UV ray breakdown. In other words, the darker the color, the longer the fabric will last when exposed to the sun's rays.

While a drawback of the darker colors is that they hold more heat, we at Kreider Canvas Services have developed a venting system that will allow this trapped heat to escape by convection from the peak area of the canopy. Rain is blocked out and no fan is needed as the heat will rise and move out along the top edge while allowing cooler air to move in along the lower perimeter areas. We have noticed a very major temperature drop approaching close to the normal surrounding air temperature, as opposed to the feeling of trapped hot air under the canopy that was normally experienced on dark covers. With this system you can have the long life of a dark color while not experiencing the heat normally trapped under the surface.



weather refuge—regardless of Mother Nature's mood.

ers are enjoying *staycations* more than ever.

Think about it...excessive heat, rain, or gusty breezes won't have to cancel your outdoor plans anymore. Maybe that's why many homeown-

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R&A



Another main benefit of a stationary-framed awning is in year-round energy savings. This awning cover when removed over winter allows the sun to heat interior room areas. This gain can be in the 15° to 20° range, or even higher depending on the amount of glass window surface in a room. This seasonal shade and removal cycle for canvas awnings has been studied in several midwestern college studies and have reported results of up to a 30% savings on energy bills. This savings comes partly from reducing the sun's rays over the summer. In the winter when the cover is removed, the sun's rays can warm your room like a greenhouse. This removal and reinstallation of the roof cover isn't difficult if the covers are properly constructed. We provide this installation and removal service to over a thousand customers annually—some of whom make the awning reinstallation a family event when opening their pool for the season.

In summary, without stressing a family's budget, awnings can expand your outdoor living space and, more importantly, its usage—while providing significant year-round energy savings. A properly designed, fitted, and installed awning will be durable and will afford you and your family, a comfortable and reliable warm-

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