

## Awnings Design West provides shade for homes and businesses

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By Diana Pichardo



Alan "Gordy" Techner, Awning Design West general manager, and Krystal Kang, showroom assistant, stand in the Awning Design West showroom amid many sample awnings hung throughout the shop May 18, 2009. (Photo by Diana Pichardo.)

If you're looking for a way to cut costs on central air this summer or increase your living space, awnings may just be the right way to go, according to Alan Gordy Techner, general manager of Awning Designs West.

"An awning is in essence a tool," Techner said. "Awnings on windows help to reduce the heat from the sun. They can reduce the amount of heat gain by at least 20 percent."

In Europe, awnings have been popular for decades and not just for restaurants or businesses, as they are here. Many homes in Italy, for example, make use of some form of awning, Techner said.

Although in the U.S. the awning industry is still in its infancy, interest in awnings is definitely picking up in this area. "Awnings are becoming more and more popular," he said.

On June 12, 13 and 14, the store will host an open house and awning sale with special discounts, factory rebates and light refreshments. Customers who bring in measurements and photos of their homes, will receive a \$200 discount towards the purchase of an awning.

Awning Design West, located on U.S. Highway 130, in Windsor, is one of four locations. The shop opened a year and a half ago. It sells retractable awnings for decks, patios and windows, canopy patio awnings and cabanas, decorative commercial awnings and signage, and more.

Each store has its own display room, but the Windsor store has the largest.

"People can actually come in and see the products," he said; an important task in deciding what's right for each home. "We encourage people to come into the showrooms."

Enlarged photos of local homes with awnings purchased from one of the four locations also hang in the showroom to serve as examples.

Awnings of today are much more advanced than those of yesterday as well, Techner said. Many of the awnings sold at the store have the ability to tilt from side to side in the proper direction of sunlight, they can also be wired with motion sensors to adjust to wind and more.

Many of the beams in the old awnings featured anodized aluminum and would rust after so many years, but many new awnings, including models sold at the shop are powder coated in electrostatic spray, reducing peel-off. The arms supporting the awnings are much sturdier as well, he said. The fabrics used at the shop are all waterproof, UV protected and 100 percent solution dried acrylic, he said.

Awning Design West carries two commercial brands: Durasol and Nulmage, plus their own brand called SunBlok. Customers can purchase an awning at prices starting at \$2,400. The company installs and even repairs their awnings, if necessary.

"With this type of product, it's not just about selling the awning, it's about the service," he said. "We service our products when needed."

The fact that it's a small operation contracting with a few clients for parts, makes it easier for the company to replace parts if needed, he said.

Interested customers can come in the shop to first check out what is available. If they take measurements of their home and brings in photos before hand as well, they will receive a \$100 discount.

Once a customer decides they would like to purchase an awning or is strongly considering purchasing an awning, Techner will go out to the home to perform a solar evaluation, free of charge. Customers can expect awnings to be delivered and installed within four weeks of purchase.

The shop is open Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. On the Web: <http://www.awningdesignwest.net>.