

Condensation and Skylights

Condensation is an issue that I have noticed occurs in about 20% of tubular skylights in the Midwest. I have spent plenty of time trying to figure out how to remedy it only to be repeatedly frustrated. I am going to avoid giving you a science lesson here, but I will try to explain as best as possible how condensation occurs and how the products that I use prevent it from becoming a greater issue in your home.

In the depths of winter, when your home is warm and cozy and it is, well, winter outside, it is possible that your skylight will develop some condensation. I have noticed a couple of factors that come into play in homes with condensating skylights. The first is what other construction experts call a "moist house." I have no idea what that means but I have heard the term thrown around more than once. What constitutes a moist house seems to be somewhat of a mystery, but the symptoms of such a structure are condensation on windows and doors (and tubular skylights). The second common characteristic that is very frustrating to me is that the better sealed a house is, the more likely that a tubular skylight will have condensation. I say this frustrates me because these are the homes that I hope we will all have in the future. Tightly sealed, energy efficient homes. The short answer to the the condensation problem is that there is no solution. I have tried a couple of different things from tips I have found online including: Insulating the tube running through the attic Leaving "breather space" in the tube so air inside the tube can equalize with the attic Spraying great stuff around the bottom of the skylight in the attic to eliminate warm air escaping up around the tube Unfortunately, no combination of the above ideas has solved the issue. In the case of insulating the tube, it actually exacerbated the condensation. Basically, as with debris and bug issues, a tubular skylight is a window into the conditions of your attic. If you have a moist and humid attic, you will probably have condensation in your tubular skylight. However, the products that I use are designed to keep that moisture from dripping into your home or soaking into surrounding drywall. That's right. Condensation inside of your tubular skylight will do absolutely no damage to your home. The system is designed to hold that condensation until temperatures increase enough to evaporate the liquid. The condensation then forms on the dome on your roof - which is designed with "weep holes" to let the droplets drain out onto the roof. So if you see water drops inside of your tubular skylight, it is nothing to be alarmed about. Sun In's tubular skylights will keep the water inside and away from harming your home with water damage. If you have any questions about condensation and tubular skylights feel free to send me an email at: mike@suninlighting.com.