

## Solatube: A New Way to Bring Natural Light into Your House

If you're looking to brighten up your home while keeping the cost of energy down, there's a better option than a skylight, according to Jim Klausung of Transitions, Inc. He installs Solatube Daylighting Systems that capture sunlight in dome-shaped structures on your roof and direct the light into your home through airtight tubes that can pass through an attic and even a second floor.

Solatube, which can be installed in a matter of hours using seamless flashing that matches your roof, is leak proof and virtually maintenance free, says Klausung. It transmits no heat, and because the domes eliminate 99 percent of UV rays, the sunlight it brings in won't fade upholstery or clothing, making it suitable for living rooms and closets as well as kitchens and bathrooms.

Perhaps most appealing is what Klausung describes as the "cheerful atmosphere of light" Solatube provides. The system diffuses light and redistributes it evenly, cutting down on glare and illuminating the whole room rather than creating the rectangular hot spot produced by a skylight.

Even on overcast days, the smaller of two residential units, 10" in diameter, provides the equivalent of 300 watts of light and costs just under \$500 installed. The larger, 14" model, costs \$675 to install and provides about 450 watts, which Klausung says can illuminate a good-size kitchen. Less expensive than skylights, which typically start at \$1,000, Solatube actually puts money back in your pocket. As of this year, the government will provide a ten percent direct tax credit for installation and materials.

The system can be fitted with an electric light (for nighttime illumination), a ventilation fan, and dimmers.

Transitions, Inc. (502-468-4149) also offers another groundbreaking eco-friendly appliance, the SolarStar, a solar-powered fan that works to cool your house from the top down by moving hot, stagnant air out of your attic starting as soon as the sun comes up. At \$500 installed, capable of cooling down 1,200 square feet of living space, it can effectively reduce air-conditioning bills.

For more information, visit [solatube.com](http://solatube.com).

—Dale Burg



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