



ROOF RIDGE VENT UTILIZES  
NATURAL MATERIALS

BY DEANNA FRYER



# FROM THE EARTH



“These natural components form a durable, long-lasting and cost effective product that helps prevent roof damage, decreases cooling costs and promotes healthy, breathable air,” said Andy Swan, President of Blocksom & Co.

Like Blocksom’s Roof Saver ridge vent, many other green products have a unique story; each one evolving from Mother Earth’s reusable resources that we take for granted every day. But do we really know how these materials are transformed from nature’s bounty to create green building components?

Even though Blocksom & Co. is headquartered on the southern shores of Lake Michigan in Michigan City, Ind., Roof Saver originates in the coconut plantations of Sri Lanka, a tropical country off the southern tip of India. Sri Lanka is a popular source for coconut products because the industry has developed commercial uses for every part of the coconut. Coconut products serve as a major economic engine for Sri Lanka. The unique fiber extraction method developed in Sri Lanka results in a stronger, cleaner fiber that produces exceptionally durable products.

The process begins by individually plucking coconuts from the tree by hand. Once the coconuts have been retrieved, the husks are separated from the nut and are then soaked for several months, which allows easier sepa-

ration and results in strong, long fibers. Workers load soaked husks into a de-fibering machine to extract and separate the fibers. The bristle fibers are examined following the fiber extraction. The final step of processing involves hackling, which aligns the fibers and removes impurities.

This process utilizes parts of the coconut that would otherwise be wasted. Unlike an ear of corn, which is typically only used for the consumption of the kernels, while the stalk, cob and silk fibers are discarded, the entire coconut can be put to some kind of commercial use. The copra, the inner white meat of the coconut, is used to make confections, the hard outer shell is used as an activated carbon to filter water, the husk (the section of the coconut that surrounds the copra), containing fibers and pith, is used as a soil amendment in lieu of peat moss. De-fibering machines in Sri Lanka are used to extract and separate the fibers from the husk, creating a strong, clean grade of fiber, which is used in Roof Saver ridge vent.

Originating from the earth, green products are making their way into homes from the ground up. Roofing product manufacturers have especially taken notice of earth-friendly building products, utilizing more recyclable materials that are attracting architects, consumers, specifiers and contractors.

Blocksom & Co., manufactures the environmentally conscious Roof Saver rolled ridge vent composed of natural fibers, including coconut husk fiber, also known as coir fiber. The fibers are blended and bound together with a premium adhesive to form a non-woven textile. The vent is a flexible mat that conforms easily to any roof slope and can be conveniently cut to the appropriate length required.

In areas where the husk is not used for commercial purposes, unprocessed husks are discarded and used as firewood or buried to eliminate the bulky piles of waste. "In fact, in some tropical countries there are piles of coconut husks that are more than 100 years old. The husks do not decompose unless they are buried. Disposal of this material can be an expensive burden for many of these third-world countries. The life span of the ridge vent is attributed to the durability of the coir fiber used to make Roof Saver," Swan stated.

The unique green benefits of Roof Saver are apparent in the attic ventilation industry, especially since most ridge vents are manufactured from petrochemicals: corrugated plastic, synthetic polyester, nylon or injection-molded plastic. What was once only a unique home improvement product is now a standard ventilation system that has opened new options to earth-conscious customers and homeowners across the country. "Roof Saver is the only ridge vent made of natural fibers," confirmed Swan.

In addition to Roof Saver's green features, it is also an essential building component that is key to the health of the home. Without proper ventilation, excess heat and condensation moisture can build up in the attic and enable the growth of mold and mildew, cause higher cooling costs and shorten the life span of the roofing system.

"Energy costs decrease in homes that utilize air-conditioning since there is cooler air flowing in to replace super-heated air in a properly ventilated attic," said Swan. "While developing Roof Saver, our research department found that a system consisting of continuous ridge vents combined with soffit vents provides thorough ventilation of the attic, including air spaces that often hold stagnant air when other types of ventilation are used. Continuous ridge vents combined with soffit ventilation allow outside air to flow into the entire attic and displace super heated and moist air. Air is always able to exit the attic and exhaust contaminants from the home."

Installing a roof with inadequate ventilation may void the shingle manufacturer's warranty. When moisture in the form of water vapor migrates through the interior



of the home, builds up and condenses in the attic, the sheathing, shingles and insulation will deteriorate. On a typical summer day, the attic temperature may exceed 150 degrees Fahrenheit even when outside temperatures are only 90 degrees Fahrenheit. To properly ventilate the roof, 50 percent or more of the total required ventilation should be at the soffit and the remainder at the ridge of the roof.

With Roof Saver, damage is avoided by effectively ventilating the roof at the ridge. The system is a continuous shingle-over ridge vent that installs easily along the ridge, providing a cosmetically pleasing finish for any home. Due to the bristly texture and nail gunnable qualities of the recycled materials, installation is easier and the result is a cleaner look to the ridge of the roof.

The combination of these recycled materials has created a unique attic ridge venting system. The product's strength is supported by a non-prorated 40-year warranty and meets the requirements of all nationally recognized building codes and has a UL Class A Fire Rating. It has also passed 110-mph independent wind-driven rain and snow tests and does not deteriorate or corrode from wind, snow, rain or ice.

"Roof Saver is an exceptional sustainable product that avoids negative impact on the environment," said Swan. This dynamic ridge vent has evolved with the new trends, but continues to excel based on old traditions. +

*Deanna Fryer is a freelance writer for the construction industry. For more information on the roof ridge vent product in this article, please visit [www.roofsaver.com](http://www.roofsaver.com).*

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