

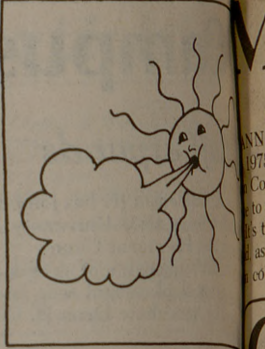
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# Solar air conditioning no sweat for engineering

By SARAH E. WHITE  
Solar air conditioning may seem to be a contradiction in terms. But Dr. Jeff Morehouse, Texas A&M professor of mechanical engineering, predicts that a solar air-cooling system developed here may replace electrically-powered systems within three years.  
Morehouse said recently that the working model developed by himself and a team of researchers may cool as efficiently as the familiar vapor compression cycle air conditioner. And prices, he said, could compete with the high electricity

power units. Although they don't produce temperatures as low as standard air conditioners, the solar units can cool rooms to as low as 65 degrees Fahrenheit.  
In the solar air units, desiccants are used to dry out humid air by absorbing water vapor as air passes overhead. Dry air is then sent through an evaporative cooler, which replaces some of the air's moisture as well as lowers the temperature. The cool air is then sent into the room.  
Solar energy, Morehouse said, is used to dry out the saturated desiccant. Solar panels, installed on the roof of a building, collect the sun's heat. Between 50 and 60 feet of solar panels are needed to heat water for an average house, and the panels cost about \$12 per square foot. He estimated that installing equipment and panels for the solar air-cooler would cost between \$1,500 and \$1,700. Monthly payments, he said, could be less than or equal to electricity bills.  
The vapor compression cycle air system has four major components:



a compressor, two heat exchangers and an expansion or throttling device.  
"In effect what we're doing is placing some electrical energy, solar energy," he said. "It's the energy to run the compressor, the air-conditioning system now. We don't have a compressor this (the solar-cooling system) We're trying to replace it (the compressor) with a heat input."  
This heat input would dry the desiccant, he explained. Morehouse said that because the solar conditioner will not be a separate unit, leaks may develop.  
The major objective of the search is to find a desiccant that dries in 160 degree air, he said, a desiccant requiring 400 degrees dry is being used. Morehouse said that gas is used to boost the temperature to the necessary level. Researchers hope to find the desiccant so the cooler can use solar energy alone.



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About the Artist: Mr. Fray is professor of art at the University of Texas at Austin. His work has been exhibited in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and his paintings are in public collections in the National Collection, Washington, D.C., the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, the McNay Institute of San Antonio, and many others. Mr. Fray is presently director at large of the Texas Watercolor Society.

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# Horse sense taught

Tarleton State University is riding high in the saddle with its new horse program.  
The north central Texas school's new four-year horse program is the first of its kind. The program emphasizes a practical approach designed to place its graduates in key positions within the horse industry, Dr. Les Waymack, program head, said recently.  
Students will spend 12 to 14 weeks putting into practice what they have learned. These "internships," arranged by Waymack, will be in the commercial horse industry, at locations ranging from the high Sierra of California to the bluegrass of Kentucky and including some of the larger spreads in Texas.  
"We'll have some fun, all right, but we are going to work and work hard," Waymack said. "When these students get their degrees, they will not only have earned them, but will be equipped to compete for jobs in the horse industry."  
Through the efforts of Clyde H. Wells, chairman of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, the Tarleton administration and several leaders of the horse industry, the program was initiated and approved by the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System.  
"We discussed this program back and forth, and it seemed a natural," Wells said. "Not only is Texas the leading state in horse production (800,000), but Tarleton is close to the Dallas-Fort Worth area where the largest concentration of horses is located."  
There are "many horse programs, but the only other close to the one offered by Tarleton is in California," Waymack said. "The horse has returned to the scene and interest will increase."  
When a student completes the program he will have a license to think and to learn about the industry," Waymack said. "The able skills need to be developed to be used to advantage in the industry."  
He said there are job opportunities to take a student into the individual wants to go. Some of the professional areas include: training and management, journalism, enterprise management, veterinary tack and other industries (A&M, horses), and preparation for advanced degrees leading to research in physiology and nutrition.  
Waymack said the first program graduates are expected in the fall of 1979. They will receive a bachelor of science degree in agriculture with a concentration in horse science management.  
"We're not here to train boys or cowgirls...we want to train horsemen with broad background knowledge not restricted to one area," he said.

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