

# Can White Rooftops Save Money AND The Planet? *(Bill Clinton Says Yes)*

Source: [The Blaze](#)

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## “Hot enough for ya?”

As most of the country was locked under a heat dome, former President Bill Clinton was suggesting that big cities (or any place with a flat, dark-colored roof) could reduce the temperature inside buildings, saving money, and possibly the planet, just by painting the roof tops white.



COURTESY: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

From [Clinton's Newsweek](#) piece titled, “It's Still The Economy, Stupid”

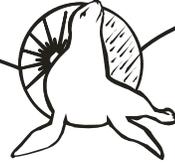
Every black roof in New York should be white; every roof in Chicago should be white; every roof in Little Rock should be white. Every flat tar-surface roof anywhere! In most of these places you could recover the cost of the paint and the labor in a week. It's the quickest, cheapest thing you can do.

This very simple idea is also not a new one. Back in 2009, [CNN reported that Energy Secretary Steven Chu](#) was pushing for white roofs and white roads, claiming that the benefit to the environment would be massive.

Whitening the world's roofs and roads would have the same effect on global warming as removing all the world's cars for 11 years.

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The Energy Secretary supports this claim with research from Arthur Rosenfield of the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab and as [CNN reported](#), Chu points out three benefits of white roofs and roads:

- It keeps buildings cooler, reducing the amount of energy required for air conditioning.
- It reduces the so-call “heat island” effect, the heating up of entire urban areas which then causes other buildings in the vicinity to heat up, whether they are in direct contact with the sun or not.
- A white roof or road will actually reflect the sun’s rays back into space, keeping the atmosphere cooler.



In this Thursday, Aug. 19, 2010 photo, James Peterson with Bio Neighbors, applies a coating of Acrymax to the roof of a row home in Philadelphia. The idea of painting roofs white has become something of a social movement, one that Energy Secretary (and Nobel Prize-winning physicist) Steven Chu believes could be a huge help in stopping global warming. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

New York City’s Mayor Bloomberg is also a supporter of the idea. His administration launched [NYC Cool Roofs](#), a project that claims to have painted/cooled over 1.5 million square feet of rooftops in the Big Apple.

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Many stories on the white roof idea claim the energy savings could be substantial, reducing cooling costs by as much as 20%. And while the thought of painting a tarred rooftop on a hot day like today makes even strong men shudder, the prospect of cutting 20% off monthly electric bills might be incentive enough. You can always paint at night, right?