

Ask Jon Eakes

DO I NEED AN EXHAUST FAN IN THE BATHROOM?

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Yes. If your house is well sealed the bathroom will create too much humidity, and an exhaust fan will get rid of the tremendous moisture produced by a shower quickly, before it spreads through the house. This excess load function of the exhaust fan will work even if the bathroom exhaust ducting is being used without the fan to control the neutral plane. The fan will just put the ventilation into high gear. (search keyword "ventilation" for the title "WHAT IS A PLANNED-HOLE-HIGH-IN-THE-HOUSE?")If your house is not well sealed -- and often too dry -- you may think that the shower moisture will help humidify the house. There are two problems with this thinking. First, the moisture in the bathroom doesn't help much in the bedroom or recreation room where it's needed. Second, the high humidity in the bathroom of a poorly sealed house will cause moisture problems inside the cold wall or attic surrounding the bathroom. Even if the house isn't well sealed, dump bathroom moisture outside, beyond the walls. A bathroom exhaust fan can be profitably and safely run through a balanced air change system or an air-to-air heat exchanger.

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