

Making the switch from “heat” to “cool”

(NC)—With the dog days of summer almost here, be sure to perform the following before switching your thermostat from “heat” to “cool”:

- Clean or replace the furnace filter. The air conditioner needs the furnace to circulate the air. A dirty filter circulates dust and other particles throughout the house and it also cuts down on a furnace’s efficiency.
- Check that the set-point on the thermostat is below the room temperature. Do not set the thermostat for cooling below 68 degrees. This can cause a multitude of problems with your air-conditioner, including freezing

up. Ideally, set the thermostat to 25.5° Celsius when at home; 29° when away.

- Turn the humidifier off during the summer cooling season. Leaving the humidifier on will only increase the cooling load and force the air conditioner to work harder.
- Close your drapes or shades and ensure all windows in the house are closed
- Close off vents in any unused rooms.
- If you have any ceiling fans, turn them on to circulate the air.
- Place a maintenance call to a qualified contractor to ensure the air conditioning system is operating safely and efficiently. To locate an air

conditioning contractor you call a toll-free at 1-877-411-HRAC (4722).

Some government agencies and utilities have recognized the importance of maintaining equipment for better energy efficiency and offer incentives and rebates for homeowners to maintain or replace their air conditioning units.

To see if any such programs are available in your area log onto www.hrac.ca under information library, click onto rebates and incentives.

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Replace your central air conditioner the most efficient way

(NC)—Contrary to what many homeowners believe, an air conditioner does not add cool air to an area, but instead removes heat from the air to make it cooler.

It is important to have all the facts when replacing your central air conditioning or heat pump system. After all it will affect your comfort level for years to come.

Split air conditioning and heat pump systems typically consist of two parts: an indoor (coil) unit and an outdoor (condensing) unit. These two parts are designed to work together as a “team” to provide top performance and maximum efficiency and comfort. So if you install a high-efficiency outdoor unit, but don’t include a new, equally efficient and properly matched indoor unit, the results could be uncomfortable and expensive.

Why a perfect match is important

Simply replacing just one of your cooling system’s units may offer you the lowest price, but it won’t give you the best value. At best, the system may still operate, but it won’t perform up to the promised energy efficiency level and provide you with the level of comfort cooling you expect.

At worst, improperly matched indoor and outdoor units can create undue stress on your cooling system, resulting in an unnecessary premature failure.

If you choose a new system using a non-ozone depleting hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerant, you must replace your indoor and outdoor units with a properly matched combination designed to work using this refrigerant. If you do not change

both units, your system will prematurely fail.

When you consider the costs of repairing or replacing an air conditioner or heat pump, installing a properly matched system the first time makes good sense. Of course, replacing the indoor coil will add to the cost of the installation, but it will mean greater comfort and energy savings in the long run.

Residential air conditioning systems should be installed and maintained by a qualified, licensed, well-trained technician who can verify the system is properly matched. To locate a qualified air conditioning contractor, across Canada, log onto www.hrac.ca or call toll-free at 1-877-411-HRAC (4722).

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Reduce your summer energy bills

(NC)—Are you concerned about paying costly energy bills to keep your home air conditioned during the summer? It is possible to keep your cool without re-mortgaging your house! The key is using energy wisely. Here are a few ways to keep your air conditioning equipment running efficiently while reducing your cooling costs.

- Keep grass clippings and other debris away from your outdoor air conditioning unit.
- Keep furniture, carpeting and draperies away from vents and grills in the home.
- Change or clean your system filter once a month (depending on the type of filter.)
- Use a programmable thermostat that allows you to cool your home only when you need to.
- Keep west-facing drapes or shades drawn in the afternoon.
- In some cases, it may be advisable to keep your furnace fan running to keep air moving. Ceiling fans are even better, because they draw less power.

- Consider installing an attic ventilator – pulling hot air out of your home can keep your home cooler in the summer.

- Have your cooling system checked annually. Having a qualified service technician check your equipment will help ensure that your air conditioning works efficiently and will not let you down when the heat is on.

For further advice and for regular service, contact a cooling contractor who is a member of the Heating Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Contractors of Canada (HRAC). While a company’s HRAC membership does not provide absolute assurance of quality, it tells you that the company has the appropriate licenses to install and service the cooling equipment that they sell. To locate an HRAC member company in your area, visit www.hrac.ca.

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