

Homeowner News



News & Information For The Customers Of Air-Tro Heating & A/C Winter, 2007

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Hold Down The High Cost Of Heating & Cooling

The high cost of comfort is like a hidden tax on homeownership. It's a tax that keeps going up and up. It's rising faster than your paycheck. But what can you do? You have to heat your home when it's cold and cool it when it's hot.

Actually, there are things you can do. Some are inexpensive. Others require investments in your home, but pay off almost immediately. Here are three ways to cut the cost of comfort.

Air Infiltration

One of the simplest ways to reduce utilities is by reducing outside air infiltration into your home. In other words, don't pay to heat and cool the great outdoors.

Infiltration is a bigger problem with older homes than new ones. New homes are usually built tight. There is not a lot of leakage from inside to out. Older homes were built to different standards when energy usage was less of concern.

Visually inspect weather stripping, looking for cracks. Use an incense stick to check for drafts and air leaks around windows, doors, recessed lighting fixtures, and attic hatches. Replace old weather stripping and seal the leaks.

Annual Maintenance

Empirical research shows that giving your home comfort system a professional tune-up will save more than it costs in a few

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Home Energy Use

Heating and air conditioning accounts for 53% of home energy. Water heating accounts for another 17%. The rest is used by lighting, refrigeration, and other appliances.

Natural gas supplies 49% of home energy, followed by electricity at 39%.

Source: Energy Information Administration

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Sausage Cheeseballs

This is an easy recipe to prepare, and is delicious for breakfast on a cold morning. Prepare a batch at the beginning of the week, refrigerate, and use as desired all week long

- 3 cups of Bisquick®
- 2 jars of Old English® brand sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 lb sausage

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Dump all of the ingredients into a large mixing bowl, mix thoroughly, and knead.

Spoon mixture and roll into one inch balls. Place on a cookie sheet and bake for 20 minutes.



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Kitchen Conversions

	Tea Spoons	Table Spoons	Fluid Ounces	Cups	Pints	Quarts
1 Gallon =	768	256	128	16	8	4
1 Quart =	192	64	32	4	2	
1 Pint =	96	32	16	2		
1 Cup =	48	16	8			
1 Fluid Ounce =	6	2				
1 Tablespoon =	3					

Cut this conversion chart out and leave it in the drawer where you keep your measuring spoons (even if you don't need the chart, others in your household might).



Homeowner News

The Homeowner News is a quarterly publication of Air-Tro. It is provided to our customers free of charge. We welcome your suggestions and ideas. Contact us at:

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Hold Down The High Cost Of Heating

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months of operation, prevent breakdowns, restore lost heating and cooling capacity, and extend equipment life. A comfort system is a robust collection of mechanical equipment. It operates as many hours in the course of a year as your car does in three or four years.

Just like your car's performance would degrade after three or four years of operation without any maintenance, your comfort system's performance degrades after a year of operation. You need annual maintenance. Moreover, it saves more utility expense than it costs. And, it will make your home more comfortable. Warm weather is just around the corner. It's not too soon to schedule a tune-up for your cooling system.

Humidification

Tight houses help on energy in the summer. During cold months, the savings can be offset by low humidity. As the temperature rises, air can hold more moisture. Heat your home in the winter and the air draws moisture like a sponge. Perspiration on your skin evaporates instantly, creating a cooling sensation (i.e., it's a "dry heat").

By introducing supplemental moisture to the air, humidity is raised and comfort increases despite a lower winter thermostat setting. Proper humidity saves energy because people feel comfortable with a lower thermostat setting.

While tabletop humidifiers abound, the best solution is an automatic whole-house duct mounted central humidifier. These products sense the humidity in the home and add moisture directly to the air stream as needed. You can set it and forget it.

Upgraded Equipment

The biggest savings come from replacing old equipment with new, more energy efficient equipment. Heating and air conditioning equipment is two to three times more efficient than a couple of decades ago, depending on the type of equipment. This means that you can dramatically reduce the cost of heating and cooling your home, simply by upgrading equipment. You can probably make your home more comfortable too.

Upgrading your equipment does require an investment, but it's less than you might think. The energy savings will offset most or all of the monthly payments. Depending upon the age and condition of your existing equipment, you could easily end up with more money in your pocket at the end of the month by upgrading.

You can either pay the utility or you can invest in an upgrade. The utility will keep wanting more and more with nothing tangible to show. Buy upgraded equipment and you will improve your home's comfort and continue saving long after the equipment is paid off.

Call Us

If you want to find out how much you can save, call us. While the weather's mild, we'll set an appointment at your convenience and provide a complementary analysis of your home's comfort system. But hurry. Once the weather turns, the schedule fills fast!



**FREE
MEDIA AIR-FILTER**

Homeowner News Readers...

Replace your furnace before March 31 2007 and we'll give you a media air filter FREE when you mention this newsletter. Call for details.



HOME

Let's End NIMBY

Everyone wants the conveniences of modern life, such as plasma television, cable and satellite television networks, a reliable Internet, and mobile phones that work anywhere.

Everyone wants the conveniences, yet no one wants the ugly infrastructure that makes modern life possible. Specifically, I'm referring to power plants.

This is called NIMBY. NIMBY stands for "Not In My Back Yard." We all want power. We just don't want power plants. Worse, we don't even want transmission lines.

The problem with NIMBY is we live in an interconnected world, or at least, an interconnected continent. Power is wheeled across North America and problems in one part of the grid affect other parts. This is why an outage in Ohio can blackout

New York or Toronto.

As a society, we can no longer afford NIMBY. As individuals, we need to inform our elected representatives we support the addition of environmentally safe power generation, such as clean coal technology.

As individuals, we can also play a role by our own actions. We can take steps to reduce household energy use. What steps? Start with those we identify in the cover story: reduce air infiltration, get your comfort system tuned up, add humidity as required in the winter, and consider upgrading your home comfort system.

Call me at (626) 357-5311.

- Bob Helbing



The Corner

Q: What do you call a silly old man?

A: A fossil fuel.

Q: If you step on a bare electric wire with both feet while barefoot, what do you get?

A: A pair of shocks.

Q: What do you get when you plant light bulbs?

A: Power plants.

Q: What fossil fuel does a car use in the early hours of the morning?

A: Midnight oil.

Q: How do you charge a car battery?

A: With a credit card.

Q: Where do you put gas guzzlers?

A: In a fuel cell.

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