



Heating and Air Conditioning Tips:

Did you know that the largest consumer of energy in your home or business is your heating and cooling system followed by your water heater, boiler, then clothes dryer?

The useful “life” of an air conditioner can vary greatly. Climate, care, maintenance, quality and capacity can increase or decrease the service of a system by months and even years. On the average, a residential central air conditioner will last 10 to 15 years, a commercial unit will last approximately 10 years.

- ✚ Make sure your heating and cooling equipment is properly sized, bigger is not necessarily better.
 - Too large a unit will cool the space, but will not run long enough to remove humidity and will saturate the building with mold.
 - Too small a unit will constantly run, never able to satisfy the temperature the thermostat is calling for.
- ✚ Inspect, clean or change air filters **once a month** in your central air conditioner, furnace, and/or heat pump.
- ✚ Keep the condensing unit unobstructed to allow ample air flow around the unit. **Cut down bushes and other vegetation at least 12 inches back from the air conditioner. Do not build sheds or roofs over the air conditioner.**
- ✚ Keep the area around your furnace clean and unobstructed.
- ✚ Do not have anything combustible within six inches of your vent pipe.
- ✚ Do not close off more than 20% of the registers in your house. This can cause high resistance and unnecessary heat build-up in the furnace.
- ✚ Do not store combustible material such as paint thinners, gasoline, etc., near your furnace.

Efficiency Ratings: What Seer Means to You

The more efficient the equipment, the less energy will be used to do the same job. ENERGY STAR provides extensive information about [home improvement projects](#) to enhance energy efficiency, lower utility bills and increase comfort. *Your first step should be to contact your utility company to see if they offer free or discounted energy audits to their customers.*

Central residential and commercial air conditioners and heat pumps now use the designation SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio). This is a measure used by the U.S. Department of Energy to rate the efficiency of air conditioners and heat pumps. The higher the SEER, the greater the efficiency – and the lower the operating cost.

When is it time to replace?

- **Your heat pump or air conditioner is more than 10 years old.**
- **Your furnace or boiler is more than 15 years old.**
- **Your equipment needs frequent repairs and energy bills are going up.**
- **Some rooms are too hot or too cold.**
- **Humidity problems**
- **Excessive dust**
- **Heating or cooling system is noisy**

