

# LIVING IN COMFORT

FALL 2015

**APPEL**  
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING  
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## Why Fall is the Best Time to Upgrade Your Air Conditioning System

It's FINALLY autumn, and the oppressive heat of the summer is behind us. What a relief—you don't have to think about that energy-hogging A/C for at least another 6 months. Right? Well...now is actually the perfect time to think about it!

How old is that air conditioning unit? Did it perform as efficiently and reliably this summer as you'd hoped? If you have an older unit that's starting to go south, the fall season is actually the ideal time to consider replacing it. Why? Time and money, of course.

Because you're not waiting for your A/C unit to fail on the hottest day of the summer (and it will...it always does), you have all the time in the world to do your research and find the equipment that's going to work best for your particular home and situation. HVAC technology has changed radically in the last several years. There could be systems out there that could end up saving you lots of energy and money over the long run.

Fall is also between heating and cooling seasons, so your HVAC contractors will be more available to spend the time needed to answer your questions and find your perfect solution. While they're at it, have them run new calculations on the ductwork, airflow, and cooling regulations for your home. These have probably changed since the system was originally installed.

Finally, we know replacing your entire A/C system can be quite pricey. Before you make any decisions, definitely have a qualified technician come out to see if replacing the system is even the best way to go. If it is, making this decision in the fall when you don't need air conditioning can give you plenty of time to save money and find the best financing opportunities to fit your family's situation.

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## The Appel Philosophy

At Appel, we're proud to be one of the best rated and most trusted HVAC companies around. Our philosophy is really quite simple—we give our customers the kind of service we would look for, if we were in their shoes.

### Honesty

We will never sell you what you don't need, or recommend the wrong equipment for your home. We think it's important for you to know what we're doing and how we arrived at our conclusions, so we'll explain our process in as much detail as you need to make your decisions. Ask us as many questions as you'd like! We're here to give you honest answers and advice.

### Fair Pricing

We promise to offer honest, fair prices for excellent products and services. As your service company, it's our job to research the best equipment out there to meet your particular needs, and we take that to heart!

### Customer Care

Our customers are our friends and neighbors, and we'd like them to stay that way. We treat your home with respect—no messes, no rudeness. We expect the Appel team members to be smart, clean, honest, and efficient and to always go out of their way to make your experience as pleasant as possible.

We stand behind this philosophy 100%, and hope it makes all the difference to you and your family!

# How to Properly Use Your Fireplace

The days are turning chilly, and nothing is quite as cozy as a roaring fire in the hearth. Stay warm and safe by following these quick tips:

- Reduce smokiness by burning a few newspapers first, to warm up the chimney.
- Crack a nearby window a couple inches to reduce smokiness. The extra cold air will go right out the chimney.
- Use well-seasoned wood with low moisture content.
- Make sure the damper is open.
- Keep the glass doors open, but the screen curtain closed.
- Only use the fireplace for 5 hours at a time.
- Have your chimney checked by a professional at least once a year. This is cheap insurance against a potentially damaging chimney fire.

# Repair or Replace: That is the Question

The dreaded question! If your HVAC equipment is starting to go downhill, so many factors go into determining what to do, it can be overwhelming. The best thing is to have a professional come out and assess the situation, but here are a few tips to help you know what to expect and make the best decisions for your family.

## How old is your system?

Though old air conditioning or heating systems don't always need to be replaced, if your units are more than 10 to 15 years old, you might want to consider it. A lot of this has to do with energy efficiency—more often than not, you're actually costing yourself more money in energy expenditure if you hold on to that clunker. In fact, you could be using up to twice as much electricity to run older units. Replacing could save you money in the long (sometimes even short) term!

## A Few Other Things to Consider

- Are you planning to sell your house any time soon? New HVAC equipment will increase the resale value of your home.
- If you replace your system with energy efficient equipment, you may be eligible for tax credits to help offset the cost.
- Before you replace or repair, be sure to have a technician check your home for leaky ductwork. Also have them check to make sure your system is the proper size for your home.



Everyone deserves to be cozy during the cold winter months. At Appel, we take our civic duties seriously, which is why each year we participate in *Bring the Heat, Indianapolis*. Sponsored by the Heating and Air Conditioning Alliance of Indiana, *Bring the Heat* provides free heating services to

elderly/disabled, low-income homeowners in the Indianapolis area to ensure proper furnace operation, and to save lives! Volunteers provide no-cost furnace clean-and-check services, as well as a smile, a helping hand, and hopefully a ray of sunshine to those who need it the most.

# Common HVAC Issues

When your heating or air conditioning seems to stop working, it can certainly be panic-inducing. Dollar signs start floating before your eyes as you imagine a contractor telling you the whole system needs to be replaced. Relax! More often than not, these problems are much smaller and less expensive than you might think. Below are some of the most common HVAC problems we encounter. And we promise—none of them are as painful as they may seem.

**The thermostat is broken:** This is actually one of the quicker, more affordable fixes but, too often, homeowners ignore the problem and avoid calling to get it repaired. This just ends up wasting money by running a system that's not working properly.

**The filters are dirty:** Filters need to be changed out or cleaned regularly to keep them from building up all sorts of dust and gunk. When the filter is dirty, it causes the whole system to work harder to produce the desired results, which eventually wears everything down. Luckily, this issue is quick and cheap to prevent. Those filters you can buy at the hardware store for a buck or two? Change them out EVERY MONTH. The higher end ones can last up to 6 months. If you have a permanent filter, be sure to clean it every month, as well.

**The refrigerant is leaking:** This is just for your air conditioning system. If the air your unit is producing isn't cold enough, it could be because not enough refrigerant is getting through to the condenser. If this is the case, you should get it checked out immediately, since it makes the condenser work overtime and can lead to much bigger problems.

**A fuse is blown:** Check to see if a breaker is tripped in your fuse box—if so, that could be your problem. Fuses are designed to protect your unit from overheating though, so if the breaker trips again, call a service professional. It could be an indication of a larger problem.

**Improperly balanced airflow:** Air travels to the rooms in your house through a system of ducts. If the dampers aren't balanced, this could lead to uneven distribution of heated and cooled air and could cause issues for the system, as a whole.

**Other common problems:** Your equipment may be the wrong size for your home, your ducts may be leaky, there may be an electrical failure somewhere. HVAC systems are complex animals that need love and attention. The best way to prevent any of these issues is to schedule routine maintenance. Be sure to check out our Platinum Maintenance Plans under the Services tab at [www.appelheat.com](http://www.appelheat.com).



## Quick, Cheap Tips to Save Energy Around the House

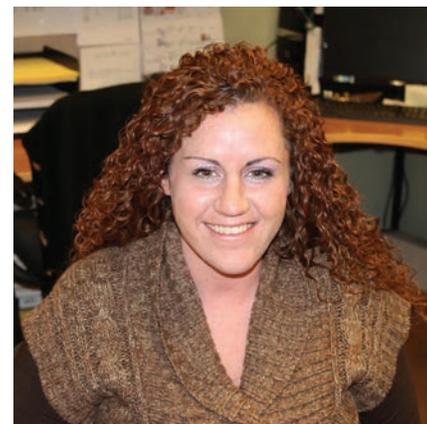
- Save up to 75% of lighting costs by switching to compact fluorescent bulbs. These babies also last much longer, saving you the cost of replacements, over time.
- Unplug all electronics and appliances when not in use. Leaving your computer on all day is awfully convenient, but it will cost you about \$75/year!
- Turn down the temp on the water heater to 120°. Consider wrapping it in an insulating blanket as well.
- Use cold water to wash your clothes. It cleans just as well and is actually a little easier on your garments.
- Setting your thermostat to 68-70° in the colder months can save gobs of energy—about 3% for every degree you lower the temp. Consider switching to a programmable thermostat to turn the heat down even more while you're away from home.
- Have you had your ductwork checked, lately? The average home loses around 20% of its energy through leaky ducts.

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## How to Prevent Winter Dryness

There's a cold wind blowing, and it's bringing with it dry, itchy, winter skin! Following these simple tips will help keep your home and yourself comfy through the driest of seasons.

- A humidifier can be your best friend during the winter months. It reintroduces moisture into the air you breathe, it also keeps your skin, mouth, and nasal passages nice and lubricated. This is important, as the mucus in your system actually traps germs and prevents you from getting sick. Set the humidity level to 30-50%—anything higher, and you run the risk of growing mold and fungi and other gross things.
- Seal your home. Not only does this keep the cold, dry air out, but it means you don't have to crank the heat up as high, either. Both ways, you preserve what moisture remains in the house, and it helps save on your heating bills, too!
- Take shorter showers. This is a tough one, we know...long, hot showers on cold, blustery mornings are the best. But all that hot water is actually washing away important natural oils. Try to keep it under 15 minutes, if possible, and be sure to use warm (not hot) water. Soaps with higher fat content (oils, cocoa butter, lanolin, etc.) are also a good idea.
- Moisturize, moisturize, moisturize! With thick, oil-based lotions and ointments. Do this frequently, and especially after you get out of the bath or shower. And don't forget the sunscreen—it's not just for summer, you know. Use sunscreen with added moisturizers and an SPF of at least 30. To keep nasal passages moist, rub a little salt water or petroleum jelly in each nostril.
- DRINK LOTS OF WATER. This is good for you in so many ways, all throughout the year. In winter especially, it will help keep your skin and mouth from drying out. Add tea or a little juice to give it some pizzazz.



### Employee Spotlight: Meet Tarrah!

As Service Coordinator here at Appel Heating & Air Conditioning, Tarrah is the one who takes care of our customers and dispatches our technicians to your home. We asked her a few questions about herself, so you have a chance to get to know her a little better. Here's what she had to say:

#### **What's your favorite thing about working for Appel Heating & Air Conditioning?**

I would say my absolute favorite part of this job is getting positive feedback from our customers about our technicians and the services we perform, or hearing about how Appel saved them a lot of money because we are so honest in what we do here. I also enjoy working with Liza, Connie and Deborah—they are absolutely great women to work with!

#### **What are your hobbies and interests, outside of work?**

This past year, we purchased a boat and jet skis. So this summer has been filled with trips to the lake, enjoying the outdoors!

#### **What else would you like our customers to know about you?**

I have five kids at home, so time management skills are pretty important to me. Carrying these skills with me to work really makes my job that much easier and more fun.

Tarrah has been with us for a little over three years, and we can't imagine Appel without her.

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**Thanks! We appreciate your business.**

## New Technology

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## Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Week was October 4-10. The National Fire Protection Association's key message for 2015 is smoke alarms, smoke alarms, smoke alarms! They recommend installing these little lifesavers in every bedroom, outside every sleeping area, and on every level of your home—including the basement. According to the NFPA, roughly 50% of home fire deaths occur between 11pm and 7 am, when most families are asleep. It's estimated that having a working smoke alarm can cut the chances of dying in a fire in half.



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## Keep Your Pets Safe During Cold Winter Weather

They're our best friends, but sometimes we forget that they're as susceptible to the elements as we are. Follow these tips to keep them healthy and well this winter:

- Everyone knows about hot cars, but cold cars are just as dangerous. Don't leave your pets in a parked car during cold weather!
- Keep them indoors, except for walks/bathroom breaks. They may have fur, but they can still get hypothermia and frostbite.
- Consider getting sweaters for your short-haired friends.
- Wipe down your pups' paws when you come in from a walk. Salt and chemicals from the sidewalks could make them very sick if they lick it off. While you're at it, check their paws for any signs of injury or damage from frostbite.
- Bang on the hood of your car before you start it up. This will scare away any stray cats or other critters who may have sought out the warmth of the engine.
- Take your pet in for their annual wellness check before the winter months hit. Cold weather can exacerbate certain existing conditions.
- With colder weather comes blizzards. Be sure to include your pets in your disaster preparedness plans—include food, water, and medication to last at least 5 days.
- If your pets are outdoors only, be sure to provide them with adequate shelter.
- Make sure any food/water bowls left outside are plastic. Cold metal can stick to your pet's tongue!



## Stay Warm

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