

Home comfort news for the customers of Appel Heating & Air Conditioning

Save money, energy, and headaches this spring with our superior professional service

You've just begun a quiet afternoon puttering around the garden when you notice strange rattling, scraping, and groaning noises.

Just as you begin to wonder whether exorcists are listed in the yellow pages, you realize that the noises are coming from the air conditioner. You begin calling various contractors for a diagnosis of the problem and a quote, if necessary. "Sounds like it's probably a fan motor" some might say, but each company quotes you a different price on the cost of the repair.

Before you decide to go with the cheapest quote, just remember: when it comes to the service of home comfort equipment, the old

adage "let the buyer beware" definitely applies. A good service call will probably not be the least expensive, but a "bargain" service call usually ends up being the most costly of all.

There are reasons why good service may cost a little more: well-stocked trucks, quality tools, proper testing equipment, state-of-the-art technology, good management, organized dispatching, and professionally educated, trained, and experienced technicians are all essential to providing you with superior hassle-free service.

Take the example of your failing air conditioner. A competent, professional service person would carefully check your air conditioning system and replace the old fan motor with one that is the correct size and capacity for your air conditioner. He would also advise you of other solutions that could save you more energy and money in the long run. What a good service technician will not do is try to pass off as new a motor that has been rebuilt from used parts. He also won't "service" the air conditioner

by simply squirting a little oil on the motor. This may extend the life of the motor for a short time, but eventually you'll have to call for service again. The bottom line is that poor service can be hard on your home comfort equipment, reduce its efficiency, and result in further calls for service.

Because good service will prolong the life of your equipment, make it run more efficiently, and save energy, in the long run your service appointment will pay for itself.

We Can help you....

- **Save energy and money, reduce your carbon footprint, and improve indoor comfort**
- **Prevent costly repairs and prolong the life of your heating and cooling equipment through regular service**
- **Provide your family with healthy, fresh indoor air**



Be cool



Five sure-fire ways to save energy and water this summer

1 Have your air conditioning and plumbing systems serviced annually, so these important systems function cost effectively and any potential problems are caught early before they become big, expensive repairs.

2 To keep your home cool and dry, tighten up the envelope of your home by caulking exterior leaks and replacing weather stripping around doors and windows. Don't forget possible air leaks around electrical wires and pipes that penetrate exterior walls.

3 Have your duct work professionally inspected and sealed by a qualified HVAC technician.

4 Place a rain barrel at far corners of your yard for handy watering.

5 Have your regular toilets, faucets, and showers replaced with low-flow fixtures.



Feeling itchy, wheezy, or head-achey? Maybe you're having a bad air day

If you've improved your home by adding insulation, caulking, and weatherstripping, then you can pat yourself on the back. These measures prevent a lot of energy from escaping out the window. Unfortunately, they can also trap indoor air pollutants.

Many well-sealed homes have indoor air that's actually worse than outdoor air, with pollutants that are 100 times higher inside than they're outside! The symptoms of indoor air pollution that has reached critically high levels include respiratory problems (especially with asthma and allergies), itchy skin, headaches, nausea, and flu-like symptoms.

The good news is that you can have an energy-efficient home and healthy indoor air. Here's a list of



some of the things you can do to clean up your air.

- Use local ventilators (kitchen range hoods, bathroom fans) to control excess humidity.
- Instead of oil-based paints and solvents, choose water-based products.
- Clean up mold as soon as you notice any sign of it (such as offensive odors, stains on furniture, carpets, fixtures, etc.).
- Have your home's combustion appliances professionally maintained. Oil- and gas-fired furnaces and hot water heaters, gas-fired stoves and clothes dryers, and wood-burning stoves are all examples of appliances that can give off particles and dangerous gases, such as carbon monoxide, if they're not properly maintained.
- Avoid using air fresheners. Instead, find and remove the source of the odor.
- Be aware that chemicals stored inside an attached garage often infiltrate the house, so try to reduce or remove chemicals such as pesticides, solvents, and fuel oil.
- Most common house cleaning products contain unnecessarily harsh chemicals. Many alternative products are easier on lungs and your wallet.



Spring cleaning? don't forget to...

...Change your furnace filter. A dirty furnace filter puts a lot of stress on your central air conditioning system, which will result in higher operating costs and excessive wear-and-tear. A regular furnace filter will not help keep your indoor air clean, so to keep the air inside your home clean and healthy, ask your service technician about air-cleaning products when he services your air conditioner.

...Check around the house for drips and leaks, and have them looked after by a qualified plumbing professional, who can also replace your older, water-guzzling fixtures. By addressing problems now, you could save gallons of water and prevent much more costly repairs down the road.

Did you know?

“Studies have shown that improperly installed air conditioners and duct systems waste one-third or more of the energy used by the air conditioner. New and replacement equipment (and ducts) need to be properly designed and installed to realize all the possible savings.”

—Source: Home Energy Magazine

Oink!

Evict the sneaky energy hogs in your home



Research shows that we're losing—and paying for—a lot of energy from sources that we may not even be aware of. Here are a few hidden energy hogs to look out for.

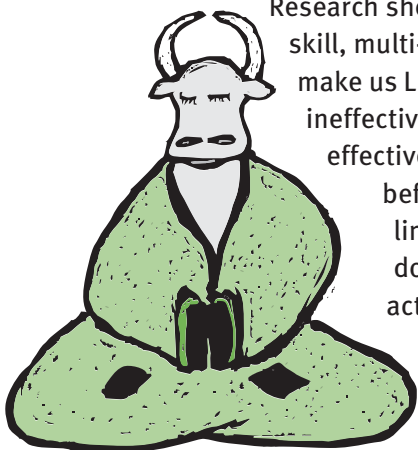
Set-top boxes—those little black boxes that sit on top of the TV, connect us to the world of cable or satellite TV. Each box consumes a lot of electricity, even when it's switched off. That's because these boxes are designed for security and customer service, not for saving electricity. This can translate into 1.5% of hidden residential energy use. When you're not using it, unplug it.

Turn off your home office equipment when you're not using it, because a computer that runs 24 hours a day can use as much power as an energy-efficient refrigerator. If you have to

leave the computer on, at least turn off the monitor, which uses over half of the system's energy.

Cell phones, digital cameras, and many other consumer electronic devices use external power supplies to convert high-voltage alternating current (AC) into the low-voltage (DC) current that these devices need. On average, these power supplies are 65% less efficient than they need to be, and it has been estimated that they consume about 2% of all electricity used in North America. Fortunately, in 2005, Energy Star began labeling consumer electronics that have energy-efficient power supplies. So look for the Energy Star label the next time you shop.

Save your energy: stop multi-tasking!



Research shows that, far from being an effective time-management skill, multi-tasking actually impairs memory, increases stress, and make us LESS productive. It can also make us feel exhausted, ineffective, and unsatisfied. That's because people can't effectively concentrate on more than 2 or 3 things at a time before they get confused and start making mistakes. By limiting the number of tasks we try to do at once, and doing each one little more slowly and mindfully, we can actually be a lot more productive in the long run, and a lot less stressed. Some time-management experts also suggest scheduling in time for things that help us recharge, like exercise and rest.

Cooling that doesn't cost the Earth

{What you should know about air conditioners, saving energy, and protecting the environment}

When bigger is NOT better

If your home never seems to be cool enough during the summer, it's probably not because your air conditioner is too small. When it comes to air conditioners, bigger is definitely not better, and a little on the small side is usually just right. That's because an air conditioner has to remove humidity from the air as well as cool it. If the unit is too big, it will cool the air too quickly and shut off before it can control the humidity. The result is a cool but clammy house—an environment only mold and mildew would love.

Is it time to retire your A/C?

If you have had a problem getting and keeping your home cool in past summers and you have been having it serviced at the start of each cooling season, then it could be that your air conditioner is ready to retire. And since air conditioners today are a lot more energy efficient and easier on the environment than

they were just a few years ago, it makes sense to upgrade an older unit with a new, more efficient one. Call us today for more information on how you can save energy and money with a new air conditioner.

Don't blow your cool

If you think your air conditioner needs more coolant, don't top it up yourself. Refrigerant handling should always be left up to a licensed, trained technician, and topping refrigerant up without properly fixing the leak is illegal in most areas. If you need cooling, call us today.

How to maximize your cooling dollars

- Set your thermostat to a reasonably comfortable setting and leave it there for the whole summer. If you turn it off, humidity will build up, which will make your air conditioner work a lot harder and use a lot of energy to cool the house back down. (Don't be a Thermostat Jiggler!)
- Your air conditioner needs good air flow for maximum efficiency and to prolong its life. Annual maintenance is the key to ensuring good air flow, but you should also make sure that supply and return air vents are not blocked by furniture, drapes, etc.
- If your air conditioner is several years old and you have trouble getting and keeping your home cool, it's probably time to replace your air conditioner. A new, high-efficiency air conditioner will save energy and cost less to operate each month. Call us today for more information.

Appel Heating & Air Conditioning Company



530 SOUTH RANGE LINE ROAD
CARMEL, INDIANA 46032-2184

317-846-0434

Visit our website at www.appelheat.com

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