

LIVING IN COMFORT

SPRING 2016

**APPEL**
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING
www.appelheat.com | 317-846-0434



Appel in the Community

At Appel Heating and Air Conditioning, we care about our community. This is why, year-round, we choose to participate in activities we know will give back to the neighborhoods and families we serve. This is a sample of the programs we feel strongly about, but keep checking the "Appel in the Community" page on our website, as we continually add information about other outreach projects we've had a hand in.

Bring the Heat

Everyone deserves to be cozy during the cold winter months, 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, and low-income homeowners in the Indianapolis area to insure proper furnace operation...and to save lives! Volunteers provide furnace clean-and-check services at no cost, as well as a smile, a helping hand, and hopefully a ray of sunshine to those who need it the most.

Susan G. Komen

Several years ago, Appel was looking for additional ways to give back to the community. Recognizing that breast cancer is a disease that affects millions of people every year, we decided to paint one

of our vans pink for breast cancer awareness. Each year, we continue to pledge \$5 of every clean and check performed by our pink van to Susan G. Komen of Central Indiana. This money helps to fund early detection and treatment of breast cancer for local individuals who are underinsured. Last year, Appel and the pink van raised \$1,740! We're looking forward to participating in this program again, and to providing even more support in 2016. Check out the videos on our website to see our pink van zooming around town, and watch for it in your neighborhood!

Furnace Replacement for a Family in Need

This past winter, Appel heard one of the families in our community was in a dire situation. They had fallen on hard times and desperately needed a new furnace to keep them warm throughout the season. We jumped at the chance to help out! What we found when we got to their home was a cheap, old furnace, stuffed with a tangled mess of wires. We replaced it with a shiny, new furnace: an 80% efficient Concord, generously donated by Ted Kolbus of Capitol Supplies, Indianapolis. Our team member, Josh, even custom-built a return air plenum with a filter rack to keep the family healthy and comfortable for years to come. Visit our website to see more before & after photos and to watch a video of Josh in action!



May is National Bike Month

Sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists and celebrated in communities all across the United States, May is the month to dust off those handlebars and get your pedals in gear. National Bike to Work Week is May 16-20 this year, and National Bike to Work Day is May 20th. Hope to see you on the streets!

10 Ways to Save on Heating & Air Conditioning Bills

Heating and cooling make up close to half your overall utility expenses, so any little thing you can do to conserve energy helps. The best way to save money is to adopt a whole-house approach (including proper maintenance, energy efficient upgrades, proper insulation, air sealing, and thermostat settings), but here are our 10 best tips on reducing energy expenditure to save money:

1. Set the temperature as high in the summer (ideally around 78°) and as low in the winter (68°) as is comfortable. A good rule of thumb is, you'll save 1% for every degree higher or lower you set the thermostat.
2. Speaking of thermostats, we highly recommend switching to a programmable or WiFi model. This will allow you to set the temperature higher or lower while you're asleep or away from the house. No need to blast the air conditioning when no one is home to enjoy it!
3. Use fans in the summer to circulate cooled air throughout your home. Studies indicate this allows you to set the temperature 4° higher without affecting your comfort levels.
4. Clean and replace your filters regularly. Your heating and cooling system can't function at 100% efficiency if it's clogged with all that dust! While you're at it, be sure to clean your registers, and return air grilles, and make sure they're not blocked by carpeting, furniture, or drapes.
5. During the winter, keep the drapes on southern facing windows open during the day to let in sunshine, and close them at night to reduce the chill coming off the cold windows. In the summer months, keep drapes closed during the day to block some of the sun's heat.
6. In the summer, keep windows closed—even on cool nights. Opening the windows lets in warm, humid air, and your air conditioning unit has to work overtime to remove the extra moisture.
7. Plant trees or dense shrubbery along the eastern and southern sides of your house. This provides shade in the summer and a windbreak in the winter. Ask your local nursery for ideas on the best types of plants for your home's location.
8. Replace window screens with storm windows in the winter, and vice versa for summer.
9. Seal up all those cracks: make sure the weather stripping in your home is in good condition, and get some stuffed draft blockers to put at the base of your exterior doors. Have a professional come in to inspect your ducts and repair any leaks.
10. Maintenance, maintenance, maintenance! Have your system inspected before the severe weather hits. A properly functioning unit can save you up to 25% in energy bills and reduces the chance of unexpected expenses related to breakdowns or major repairs. Take a look at Appel's off-season Platinum Maintenance Plans to save even more money!



Indiana Staycations

The kids are almost out of school, but we don't always have the time or money to take a much needed vacation. Luckily, Indiana is full of fun things to do—all within a day's drive!

Holiday World — Roller coasters, rides, amusements, and a waterpark, all in beautiful Santa Claus, Indiana!

Indiana Dunes State Park — Pretend you're by the ocean while sunning yourself along any of the Dune's 15 miles of Lake Michigan beachfront. You will find lots of great hiking opportunities over those rugged dunes, wetlands, and prairies.

Indianapolis Zoo — Get a family membership for extra savings this summer. Dolphins and orangutans and butterflies, oh my!

Rhythm Discovery Center — Located in downtown Indy, this percussion museum is one of a kind. Visitors are encouraged to bang away on most of the "artifacts!"

Turkey Run State Park & Sugar Creek — Hike through the beautiful forests and ravines, then throw on your swimsuit, grab a raft, and float lazily down Sugar Creek.

Wolf Creek Habitat — Interact with some of North America's most majestic creatures, just a short hop away in Brookville, Indiana.

Clever Tips for Rookie Gardeners

Do you get pangs of jealousy, watching your neighbor tend to her perfectly landscaped yard? Here are a few tips to help you cultivate your green thumb and keep up with the Joneses!

- Give yourself a leg up by selecting easy-to-grow plants. Talk with an expert from your local nursery to find out what works best for your particular location and lawn.
- Grind up eggshells into a powder and sprinkle them in the garden. The calcium in the shells will give your plants a boost.
- Strategically plant plastic forks, tines up, around your plants to keep pets and critters from trampling your garden.
- When you cook vegetables, save the leftover water and sprinkle it over your plants as fertilizer. The water contains tons of nutrients your garden will thrive on.
- Combine 1 gallon white vinegar, 1 cup table salt, and 1 tablespoon liquid dish soap to create your own weed killer.

Meet Rob Jenkins!



As one of Appel's trusty maintenance/service technicians, Rob is the guy who makes sure your HVAC equipment is in tip-top shape. Did your furnace fritz out on the coldest day of the year? Rob may have been the one who came to your home and made everything warm and toasty again.

Rob has been with Appel for about 3 ½ years and says his favorite parts of

the job are chatting with our wonderful customers and working with such a great group of people. In his spare time, Rob most enjoys spending time with his family and cheering for his kids at their many sporting events.

We're so glad to have Rob on the Appel team!

Energy Efficient Air Conditioning

In general, you know that replacing your old heating and cooling equipment with newer energy efficient models can have an impact on your energy and cost savings. However, navigating the nuances of energy efficiency and finding the right unit for your home can be overwhelming. Many factors go into determining which equipment is right for your home, and the best way to come to a decision is to have an Appel professional come out and look everything over. If you're wanting to do some research on your own (which we highly recommend!), here are a couple things to look for:

You've probably seen the acronyms "EER" and "SEER," but what do they mean? These are probably the best ways to get a snapshot of a unit's energy efficiency. EER stands for "Energy Efficient Ratio" and is comparable to a car's MPG rating. In essence, EER describes the unit's efficiencies under peak demand on the hottest day of the year. It indicates how much cooling output (BTUs) is generated for every unit of energy (watts) consumed. Typically, an EER of 12 or higher is considered excellent.

SEER, or "Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio," on the other hand, is derived from a complicated formula that measures cooling output vs. energy consumed over the course of an entire summer season. This number is usually between 13 and 23, with the higher number corresponding to more energy efficiency. In fact, in 2015, certain regulations were put into place that require these units to take into consideration geographic location, as well. Obviously, in hotter areas, the cooling output is greater. Since SEER is based on an average temperature of 83°, for every 5° above this, you subtract 1 SEER point.

In summary, EER rates how well the unit stands up to the hottest day of the year and SEER rates how it performs over the entire summer season. Either way, switching to a more efficient model can save you a significant amount in terms of energy costs. For example, assuming all other factors are equal, replacing a SEER 10 unit for a SEER 15 unit could help you save 34% per year in overall cooling costs and energy consumption!

At Appel, we install several brands of air conditioners with excellent EER and SEER ratings. If you're interested in upgrading to a more energy efficient system, give us a call and we'll find exactly the right equipment for your home's needs.

FAQs About HVAC

Q: Why is my house dusty?

A: A large amount of dust comes in on your clothes when you return home. As you take off your coat or change clothes, this dust comes off and most of it settles on furniture, etc. If the furnace blower is running, some dust will be sucked in and caught, but large dust particles tend to settle before reaching a return grille to be filtered.

Q: What is the best filtration system for my home?

A: Overall, the best bet for price and performance is a media air cleaner. This is a 4-5" replaceable filter that goes in a cabinet in your furnace's return air duct. For most homes, they last 1 year. They're very effective and impose much less air restriction on the system than the 1" pleated filter you get at the hardware store.

Q: Should I run my blower all the time?

A: Both yes and no. It's helpful to have the blower running if you wish to balance out the temperature between rooms and floors. Also, the constant circulation means air is always being sucked into the return to be filtered, reducing household dust a bit. In the winter, however, this can lead to draftiness and might make the room feel colder than it is. In the summer, when the cooling is cycling on & off, the constant airflow can cause higher levels of humidity as it evaporates the water left on the cooling coil when the A/C shuts off. Try both modes and see what you like best.

Q: Should I set my temperature back when I'm gone or sleeping?

A: In most cases, yes. Studies have shown that a reasonable setback over an 8 hour period leads to energy savings. Don't get carried away; 5-7° is probably the most you'd want to adjust it. The case where the answer would be "no" is for heat pump owners in the winter. When it's mild outside—40° or above—if you let a programmable thermostat make the temperature setback, you can save some energy. But, if it's colder or you raise the temperature manually, the thermostat will energize your backup heat which, if it's electric heat, will actually cost more than you save with the setback.

Q: What's the buzz with WiFi thermostats?

A: There are a couple of advantages: you can change the temperature from your phone or tablet while you're away. If you'll be coming home early or staying out late and want to override your program accordingly, you can do so. You can also monitor your house while you're away. Most of these apps can email or text you if the house gets too warm, too cold, too humid, or if the power goes out. One model can monitor a freezer, sump pit, etc. and email you if there are any problems. Note that in Central Indiana, currently, Vectren will pay a \$100 rebate for installation of a WiFi thermostat.



Rebates & Tax Credits

Taking steps to save energy in your home can also save you big bucks—and not just on your monthly utility bills. Check out these energy efficiency rebate programs offered by the IRS and your local utilities companies:

- **Federal Tax Credits:** up to \$500 for qualifying energy-efficient HVAC upgrades
- **Vectren:** up to \$350 for qualifying energy-efficient HVAC upgrades
- **Duke:** \$200 for qualifying energy-efficient HVAC upgrades

Visit www.appelheat.com/rebates for information on these and other qualifying programs.



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Like Our Work?

We'd love to hear from you! We take pride in the work we do, but it's always encouraging to hear nice words from our satisfied customers. Send us a testimonial, and it could be featured on our website! We're on Facebook, Google, and Yelp, as well. **Send us some love!**

*Extraordinary experience. Brent explained every step, answered every question, and enthusiastically shared his expertise. My faith in the HVAC trade has been restored.
-P.H.*

Seasonal Allergies?

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Size Matters

In recent surveys, statistics have shown that up to half of all heating and cooling systems in the US are too big...and, in this case, bigger is NOT better. Though, smaller isn't necessarily better, either. There are many factors to consider when purchasing new heating and cooling equipment for your home, and by far the best way to go about it is to have a trained, trustworthy professional come out and take all the proper measurements.

Don't assume your old system is the correct size for your home when you're considering a replacement. All heating and cooling equipment loses efficiency over time, and the only way a professional will know he's ordering the right size is if he first performs a load calculation for your home. This calculation considers many factors, including the climate where your house is located; the size, shape, and orientation of your house; insulation levels; total area and types of windows and doors; air infiltration rates; number and ages of family members; types of major appliances; and lighting used throughout the house.

If a less-than-thorough heating and cooling professional underestimates these factors and installs a system that's too small for your home, not only will your unit not keep you comfortable, but it will also end up operating continuously. This leads to increased repairs and reduces the lifespan of the unit, as well as increases your monthly utility bills. A unit that's too big, on the other hand, operates in very short cycles and won't run for long enough to properly dehumidify the air, which can lead to mold and mildew. Those short cycles also mean the unit is constantly turning itself on and off again, which adds to the wear and tear of the equipment and increases the likelihood of repairs.

