

LIVING IN COMFORT

SPRING 2017

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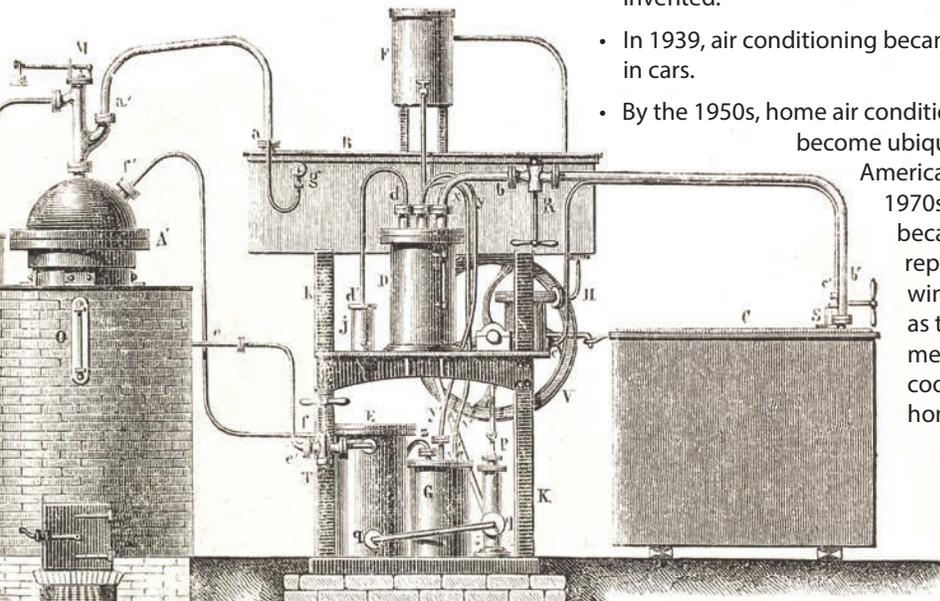
A Brief History of Air Conditioning

- Primitive forms of air conditioning are said to date back to ancient Egypt where wind blowing through windows hung with moistened reeds cooled and humidified the dry desert air.
- In ancient Rome, water from aqueducts circulated through the walls of some homes, cooling the rooms within.
- Mechanical cooling techniques date back to 2nd century China where large, manually-powered rotary fans were invented. In 747, this method was improved for use in Emperor Xuanzong's Imperial Palace by adding water to power the fans and incorporating jet streams of water from fountains.
- In 1758, Benjamin Franklin and John Hadley began to explore the principles of evaporation of volatile liquids (such as alcohol and ether) as a way of cooling objects rapidly.
- Though the concept of using ice for cooling dates back to prehistoric times, by the 1800s the practice of harvesting ice in the winter and storing it for use in the summer became popular. This method was eventually replaced by mechanical ice-making devices, and led to several inventors experimenting with compression technology to create ice and cool air.
- In 1902, the first large-scale electrical air conditioning was invented by Willis Carter.
- In 1906, Stuart W. Cramer explored ways to add moisture to the air in his textile mill and coined the term "air conditioning."
- The first private home air conditioning unit was installed in a Minneapolis mansion in 1914, and residential air conditioning was introduced more widely in the 1920s.
- In 1931, the first individual room air conditioning—or window units—were invented.
- In 1939, air conditioning became available in cars.
- By the 1950s, home air conditioning had become ubiquitous in

America, and by the 1970s, central air became popular, replacing window units as the preferred method of cooling one's home.

Make the Most of Your Ceiling Fans

- Set your fan to turn clockwise in winter, counterclockwise in summer. Many people have no idea that the circulation of the blades should change each season. Having the fan turn counterclockwise in the summer creates a wind chill effect that will keep your home much cooler.
- Make sure they're the right size. This can actually make a huge difference! Look up suggested fan sizes and make sure your fan's blade span fits with the suggested room size.
- To maximize air flow, install your fans 7-9 feet from the floor and 10-12 inches below the ceiling.
- Turn your ceiling fans off when you're not in the room. Unlike an air conditioner, a fan will cool a room immediately when turned back on. Turning them off when you're not using them will save energy and extend their longevity.



The Benefits and Risks of Smart Homes

You've heard of smartphones...have you heard of smart homes? What once seemed like something out of a science fiction movie has become reality. Smart homes use digital technology to connect everything from your appliances and heating and air to your entertainment and security systems, and make them all controllable remotely from your phone or tablet. Many families are gravitating towards this advanced technology and here's why:

- **Convenience.** Did you forget to turn the lights off when you left the house? Want to turn your coffee maker on from bed? Or maybe check in on your house when you're away? With a smart home you can do this and more.
- **Safety.** If set up properly, smart homes can be far more safe than traditional homes. For example, if your fire alarm goes off, your smart home will call the fire department, unlock your doors, and even light a path for your escape. A smart home immediately takes care of all the details so the only thing you need to worry about is getting your family to safety.
- **Accessibility.** Smart homes are particularly beneficial for the elderly and can even replace a person's need for assisted living. A smart home can notify a person to take their medicine, alert the paramedics if a person falls, and help with simple tasks like turning off the oven and lights.

Of course, there are risks associated with smart home technology. If you're considering making the switch, it's important to educate yourself on the potential liabilities:

- **Vulnerability.** Perhaps one of the most concerning issues about smart homes is their ability to be hacked. Much like your computer, your smart home isn't immune to tampering, and if a hacker is able to infiltrate your system, they would have complete control of the house.
- **Technology failure.** With so many interconnected parts, a simple technological failure in a smart home could pose a huge problem. Not only could it prove a serious inconvenience, but it could increase your vulnerability.
- **Money.** Installing a smart home system isn't cheap. While it may pay for itself in the end, the initial cost can come as a shock.



Stay Safe on Hot Days

Follow these simple steps to have a safe, fun, and healthy summer!

- **Stay cool.** Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing, take breaks from the heat, and know your limits. If you feel overheated, relocate to a shaded or an air conditioned space.
- **Stay hydrated.** Drink LOTS of water and avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- **Recognize heat exhaustion.** Symptoms include dizziness, headache, and nausea. If you are experiencing these symptoms, immediately go to a cool area and drink plenty of water.
- **Avoid sunburn.** If you're going to be in direct sunlight for an extended period of time protect your skin with sunblock!

The Benefits of Whole-House Dehumidifiers

If you've lived in Indiana for any length of time, you know we're heading into a wet season. And we don't just mean rain—spring and summer in this part of the country tends to get horribly, stiflingly humid. This humidity isn't just uncomfortable to move around in, it can also pose risks for your home. Mold, mildew, and other allergens thrive in moist environments and can trigger asthma and other respiratory ailments. This moisture can also become a breeding ground for insects...yuck!

Store-bought dehumidifiers can be obtained easily and inexpensively, but they're not designed to deal with large areas, nor do they work well in cooler spaces (like your basement) where moisture levels are at their highest. A whole-house dehumidifier, on the other hand, works in conjunction with your home comfort system to automatically sense and maintain the ideal humidity levels for your house and lifestyle.

Not only does this help to purify your home's air by removing or diluting toxins, but it's much quieter and more out of the way than a portable dehumidifier. Whole-house dehumidifiers are also easily maintained, usually just requiring an annual filter cleaning, and can be hooked up to certain Wi-Fi thermostats to give you complete, remote control.

Call Appel today to see if a whole-house dehumidifier is right for your home.



Employee Spotlight: Eric and Josh Sharp

At Appel, we're like one big family, and two people who can attest to that are Eric and Josh Sharp. As father and son working in the same company, Eric and Josh have a unique relationship. Eric loves that his son decided to follow in his footsteps, and he couldn't be more proud of Josh's skills. As they work in different departments, they don't often see each other at work, but they enjoy talking shop, comparing notes, and learning from each other.

Eric has been a Senior Service Technician with Appel for five years. His favorite part of the job is meeting new people in the community and the values we hold as a company. He loves that Appel "promotes honesty and integrity." When he's not at work, Eric loves to camp and golf. He's also quite skilled at making hiking sticks with wood burning and paints. As a father of four and a grandfather of eight, Eric and his wife Tamyé certainly have their hands full!

Josh has been with Appel for three years as an HVAC Installer. He's one of the skilled Appel technicians putting in your new furnaces, heat pumps, air conditioners, humidifiers, and more. His favorite part of the job is the mechanical creativity: "Each job is like a puzzle, and I get to solve it." Outside of work, Josh likes to read, paint, and play guitar. As a single father, there's nothing Josh likes more than spending time with his three children.

Spring Cleaning Starts with HVAC Maintenance

How long has it been since you cleaned out your closets? Dusted your knick knacks? Scheduled maintenance for your heating and air conditioning system? As you brush off the winter cobwebs from your home, don't forget to add "schedule Appel maintenance" to your spring cleaning list! Here's why it's so important:

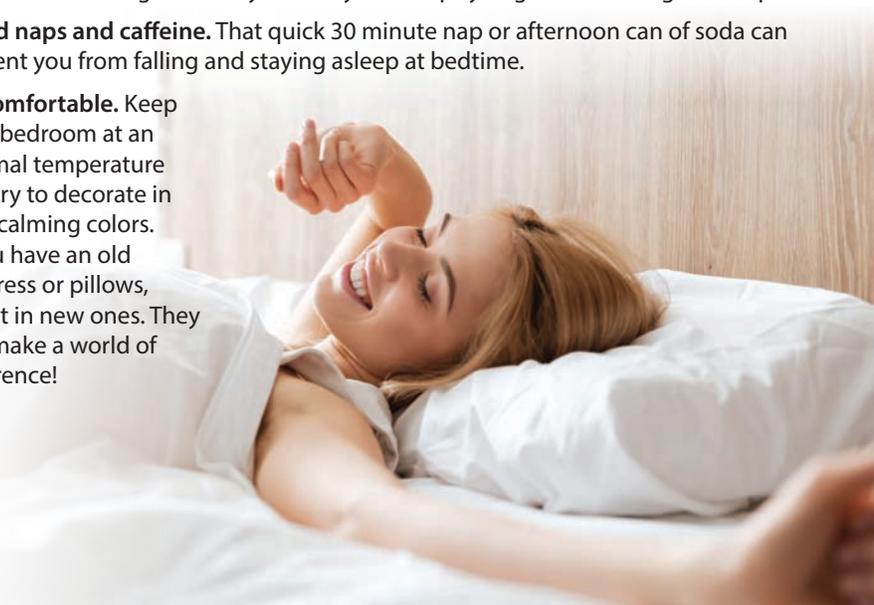
- If you hold off on HVAC maintenance, you run the risk of needing costly repairs down the road. A trained Appel technician can identify and fix any problems before they become full-blown (and very expensive) issues.
- Performing regular maintenance ensures your systems are running as efficiently as possible, which saves the amount of energy they use—and the amount of money you spend in utility bills.
- Keeping everything clean and ship-shape helps ensure you get the maximum number of years out of your HVAC system.
- Regular maintenance keeps your home safe from risks associated with leaky, broken HVAC equipment. Appel's technicians are trained to look for and fix any potential hazards to your family's health and home.

How to Maintain Your HVAC System Between Scheduled Visits

- **Very important!** Clean or change your air filters every 90 days to make sure they aren't clogged. This is one of the easiest ways to prevent a major breakdown of your unit...and it ensures all of the dirt, dust, and grime that's stuck in them won't circulate throughout your house and contaminate your air.
- Inspect your outdoor unit. Maintaining two feet of clear space is ideal when it comes to protecting your outdoor A/C unit. Check to make sure debris like leaves, branches, and grass clippings don't build up around the grills.
- Perform a visual inspection of your equipment to see if anything is leaking or broken. Unless you're trained in HVAC maintenance, however, don't attempt to fix the issues yourself—call your Appel service technician if anything seems amiss!

Tips for Better Sleep

- **Stick to a sleep schedule.** Getting up at the same time every day has been shown to improve your sleep cycle and help you feel more rested throughout the day.
- **Exercise!** Exercising tires out your body and helps you get a better night's sleep.
- **Avoid naps and caffeine.** That quick 30 minute nap or afternoon can of soda can prevent you from falling and staying asleep at bedtime.
- **Be comfortable.** Keep your bedroom at an optimal temperature and try to decorate in soft, calming colors. If you have an old mattress or pillows, invest in new ones. They can make a world of difference!





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Fragola Pazzo (Crazy Strawberry)

We love this fresh, light, warm-weather dessert! Unique and simple to make...and you don't even need to touch your oven.

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbs white sugar
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 pints fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered
- 1 oz square unsweetened chocolate, grated

Directions:

Mix balsamic vinegar, sugar, and black pepper together in a bowl. Add strawberries and stir to coat; marinate in refrigerator until chilled, about 10 minutes. Grate chocolate over top as a garnish.

Enjoy!

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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, Instagram, and Yelp, as well. **Send us some love!**

How to Protect Your Family from Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Heaters and cars, ovens and grills...there are so many useful devices these days which add comfort and convenience to our lives. If not used and maintained properly, however, they can cause serious physical harm. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas which is produced whenever a fossil fuel is burned—and it's more common in your home than you might think. Fortunately, carbon monoxide poisoning can be prevented by following these simple steps:

- Install a carbon monoxide detector. This is the easiest prevention tool and perhaps the most important. These battery operated alarms will warn you as soon as they detect the slightest hint of carbon monoxide. We recommend purchasing a low-level CO detector online. They are more expensive and not UL listed,

but they are superior to retail store options which do not detect low levels efficiently.

- Never use charcoal grills indoors. Burning coal gives off high amounts of carbon monoxide—easily dispersed when you barbeque outside, but deadly when contained in your home.
- Have your furnace, water heater, and any other fuel-burning appliances serviced regularly. A trained technician will know how to check for any problems or possible leaks and can repair them quickly and efficiently.
- Always make sure you use your gas appliances correctly, so you can avoid possible carbon monoxide hazards.
- Don't block air vents—especially the ones in your kitchen. Proper ventilation is extremely important as it can help prevent buildup of carbon monoxide throughout your home.

It's also important to recognize the symptoms of carbon monoxide, which include fatigue, headaches, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness, and can progress to confusion and loss of coordination and consciousness. It's important to receive prompt medical attention if you suspect you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide for any prolonged amount of time.

