

LIVING IN COMFORT

FALL 2020

**APPEL**
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It Wasn't Always a Flip of a Switch

You've come a long way baby, as you sit at your desk and fine tune the temperature of your house from your smartphone. Of course, it hasn't always been this easy (or this technical) to keep domestic life comfortably climate-controlled throughout the ages.... Sit back, and we'll take you through time to visit a few of the highlights of home heating over the decades.

Methods of keeping the chills at bay have gotten dramatically more sophisticated since the days of fires in caves...but it's taken some time. For thousands of years an open hearth in the middle of the home structure was the primary standard for heat in just about every civilization (this dates back to around 44,000BC, though evidence suggests we discovered fire almost 2 million years ago). There were some innovative twists that came and went with the Roman Empire, such as a central system, called a hypocaust, which heated an empty space beneath the dwelling and funneled the heat up through pipes—a primitive precursor to radiant heat.

After the fall of the Roman Empire things went back to the basics: a fire pit or hearth under a hole in the roof to vent smoke. Through the years various improvements to the venting system were introduced, allowing the heat source to be moved to exterior walls, rather than in the middle of the room. Around the beginning of the 13th century, chimneys became a popular way to funnel the smoke outdoors, which led to better air quality and heating efficiency inside the home. The chimney concept continued to become more refined and was eventually paired with masonry stoves in the 1500s.

In 1741 household heating methods made a major leap in safety and efficiency with Benjamin Franklin's invention of the Franklin stove, which made use of a hollow baffle to better circulate heated air and reduce the amount of smoke in the room. Things got even more convenient (and less smoky) in 1885 when coal entered the scene.

Meanwhile, outside of the United States, the Industrial Revolution began to change the landscape of indoor heating even more. In 1784, Scotland's James Watt developed a system for heating his offices that used steam heat through pipes. Just a bit south of Watts, in jolly old England, William Strutt invented a furnace system that funneled warm air into the room through ducts.

In 1883 another huge advancement was made when Thomas Edison invented the electric heater. Following along quickly came the first patent for a thermostat by Warren Johnson. During a flurry of innovation throughout the early 1900s, Alice Parker patented the first central heating system in 1919. Developments in heating technology now began to move at a rapid pace, and by the 1920s homes were universally heated by safer, more reliable heating methods.

Throughout the centuries, the basic principles have remained the same: source heat and distribute it in a way that keeps people comfortable in an energy- and financially-efficient way. We continue with that tradition each and every day as we send our team out to help ensure our customers are warm and cozy during the Indiana winters.

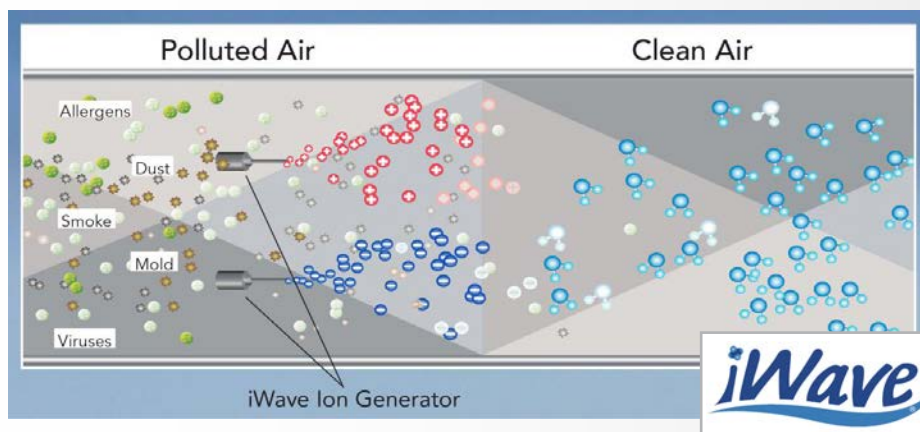


Adding Whole-House Purification to Your COVID-19 Arsenal

Indoor air quality has always been a topic of importance to homeowners as they strive to stay healthy, remove odors, fight pet dander, and address allergens. These days, the IAQ conversation has stepped to the forefront as we all spend more time cooped up inside our homes due to COVID-19.

There are a variety of methods available to cleanse the air in a home, from simply changing your HVAC filter more often, to installing something a bit more complex, such as a whole-house purification system. Many of these systems use the latest technology—UV lights, media air cleaners, and ions—to remove impurities from the air you breathe on a daily basis. Over the last few months, one of the systems we've turned to for our customers is iWave.

iWave is a device we install directly into your HVAC system that produces positive and negative ions. These ions are introduced into the air to break down pollutants using a patented technology called needle-point bi-polar ionization. Upon contact with the bacteria, viruses, or mold spores, the ions remove the hydrogen molecules, rendering the pathogens inactive.



Rather than relying on mobile purification devices to address individual rooms, iWave mounts within your ducts to cleanse the air in your entire home. It also does not contain any parts that need to be changed out frequently, such as UV bulbs, making this device a no-maintenance solution. We're able to quickly and easily install the system so you can enjoy cleaner air without the hassle.

If you're interested in finding out more about whole-house purification systems, including iWave, give us a call! We will be happy to discuss solutions unique to your home and family for optimal air quality, day and night.

COVID-19 Update: Your Safety Comes First!

We understand that your heating needs don't just stop during a pandemic. In fact, keeping your HVAC system running efficiently and smoothly is even more important these days as individuals continue to transition to more time spent at home, and air quality needs become more important.

As an essential service provider, Appel continues to service our customer's needs while following best COVID-19 practices. We continue to monitor all information and updates provided by the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and WHO (World Health Organization) to ensure we follow the latest guidelines to the letter. In addition, all our technicians wear masks, gloves, and shoe booties while working in your home.

So, when your doorbell rings for your scheduled visit from one of our technicians, you can rest easy that we will be doing our part to keep you safe, healthy, and warm all winter long.



Keeping on Top of Carbon Monoxide

The conversation about carbon monoxide poisoning always heats up as the weather cools down. Each year, around 400 Americans lose their lives to carbon monoxide poisoning, and this odorless, colorless gas prompts 20,000 ER visits annually.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning occurs when a device that combusts natural gas or other fuel (wood, charcoal, gasoline, etc.) leaks or otherwise pollutes the air with dangerous CO gases. When inhaled, these gases attach to red blood cells, interrupting their job of carrying oxygen to the body tissues and effectively starving the body of oxygen.

According to the CDC, the most common symptoms of CO poisoning are “headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. CO symptoms are often described as ‘flu-like.’ If you breathe in a lot of CO it can make you pass out or kill you.”

So how does one defend against this invisible threat? There are several simple steps homeowners can take:

- Install an adequate number of carbon monoxide detectors throughout the house. These devices will alert you if the amount of CO in your home reaches a dangerous level. Experts recommend they be placed on each floor, including in the basement and outside of sleeping areas. Additional units can also be placed near appliances and devices that use fuel.
- Check your detectors monthly to make sure each device is working soundly.
- Schedule a yearly furnace maintenance visit to ensure your unit is working as it should with no gas leakage. Keeping your furnace well maintained is important for safety and efficiency.
- Schedule yearly chimney cleaning and maintenance to keep your fireplace working properly.
- Know the symptoms and be alert. If the whole family (plus pets) are feeling off and are experiencing similar symptoms, that’s a very good indication that something isn’t right. Especially take note of symptoms that seem to get worse while you’re in the house but are alleviated when outdoors or away from home.
- Be smart about knowing which secondary heat sources are safe for indoor use and which are not. Never, for instance, use a gas oven or range to try to add heat to the home.
- Emergency generators should never be used inside the home or basement. Position them outside the home and at least 20 feet from doors or windows.
- Never leave a vehicle running in a garage, even if the garage door is open.

If you feel you are experiencing symptoms of CO poisoning, exit your home immediately, and call your local fire department to come assess the situation. It’s always better to be safe than sorry! For additional resources and information, your gas company’s website is a great place to start.

SAD: How to Stay Happy When the Sun Won’t Shine

Are you more prone to feeling blue in the winter months? Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a recurrent depressive disorder brought on by the shorter daylight hours of the fall and winter seasons.

Symptoms of SAD include low energy, listlessness, sleeping issues, change of appetite, and feelings of hopelessness, among other classic signs of depression. Those who suffer from SAD often experience a nearly overwhelming dread of the winter months.

Thankfully, there are courses of action that can help mitigate the effects of SAD. Since the low moods are often connected with the diminishing sunshine, it is important to take extra steps to get some of those precious rays, which can boost your serotonin and vitamin D levels. You can do this by braving the cold and maintaining outdoor exercise throughout the winter months—in fact, exercise, in general, can be quite a boost. You can also add some sunshine to your life courtesy of specially designed therapy lights, which mimic being outdoors. Studies have also shown that adding vitamin D supplements to your diet can help.

If you feel the weight of winter, be sure to speak to your doctor about solutions that may be helpful towards making the cold months a little more bearable.





Helping Seniors Through Winter

During the winter months, seniors in our community tend to experience many struggles, often out of proportion with the rest of us. These challenges can include basic mobility issues, financial strain, and loneliness. Pre-planning and good neighbor practices can touch someone in ways you might never suspect.

- If you've ever slipped on snow and ice, you know how painful it can be—even more so for someone with limited mobility or health issues. Consider clearing and salting the driveway and walkways of someone you know who could use the extra help!
- The financial strain of higher utility bills can be especially daunting for individuals on a fixed income, but it can be confusing for them to navigate the system to find a better alternative. Many service providers offer budget billing, which assigns a fixed monthly amount to alleviate the highs and lows. By making a few phone calls on their behalf, you might be able to help save them lots of money and frustration. Other helpful resources can be found through the Energy Assistance Program and the Warm Heart Warm Home Foundation. If you know of someone who is struggling to pay their heating bills, you can also make a gift deposit through the foundation directly to their account.
- Winter often brings a slow down to social activities, and loneliness can easily creep in. Staying connected with family and friends is critical for the physical and mental well-being of seniors. Activities such as book clubs, fitness classes, hobby groups, and old-fashioned visits for a cup of coffee make getting through the long, dark months easier for everyone. And, of course, never underestimate the power of a simple phone call!

Farewell Frozen Pipes

Frozen pipes are a common wintertime hazard, especially during sustained periods of bitter cold (a phenomenon we're quite familiar with in good ole Indiana). Identifying the factors that lead to frozen pipes and addressing them before disaster happens (burst pipes are NO FUN) can save you time, hassle, and money.

Although most plumbing systems can take below-freezing temps in stride, when the temp really drops ice can form inside the pipes, leading to dangerous pressure. When the mercury begins to sink, you can do a few easy things to help prevent freezing:

- Allow faucets to drip a bit. This keeps air and water moving through the pipes and alleviates pressure. If the sound of a dripping faucet drives you bonkers, tie a string to the faucet head, and allow the drip to travel to the drain in blessed silence.
- Open up the cabinets under sinks on exterior walls, so the heat can flow in and warm the area around the pipes.
- Know the red flags. If your water flow has suddenly slowed to a trickle, you may have a problem. Take a look at your pipes—if there's frost on them, warming things up pronto is in order.
- If you know certain pipes are predisposed to freezing, there are further steps that can be taken to avoid future soggy catastrophes. Speaking with a plumber is your best bet to come up with effective solutions.



4 Ways a Furnace Tune Up Pays Dividends

Although it might not make the tippy-top of every homeowner's To-Do List, a fall furnace tune up is a great way to ensure the safety, efficiency, and convenience of your furnace and will pay big dividends when the wind begins to whistle and the temperature plummets.

1. Safety First

An annual tune up includes a clean and check of all the elements that make your furnace run smoothly and safely. One of the most important aspects is testing the gas burners to make sure they are lighting correctly and burning at the right temperature. When the burners are performing optimally, the flame will be using the gas in the most efficient manner, resulting in a blue flame. If the flame is weak or yellow in color this may mean the gas is not feeding the flame and is instead dispersing into your home, raising dangerous carbon monoxide levels.

2. Ditch the Dirt

A clean furnace is a happy and well-functioning furnace. When all the elements of your furnace are free of build-up and debris, they are able to heat more efficiently. This results in a lower utility bill and a unit that will run smoothly across its lifespan. This also contributes to better air quality throughout your home (and maybe even a little less dusting). Once your furnace is sparkling, keep it that way by changing your filters regularly.

3. A Stitch in Time

Waking up at 3 am on a Saturday to frigid temperatures is no fun and can be costly, as well. Making a furnace tune up a priority before your furnace begins to act up can catch any problems early. You may find that there are certain repairs or adjustments that need to be made, and doing so before the snow falls will save you hassle and money. Additionally, it is much preferable to do furnace shopping when your teeth aren't chattering.

4. Heed the Warranty

Many manufacturers specify certain maintenance considerations should be completed on a yearly basis in order to keep the terms of your warranty valid. If unexpected issues arise during the life of your furnace, keeping up-to-date on your maintenance visits may make the difference between a costless repair or replacement and a very expensive fix.

Go ahead and move the furnace tune up from your "Should Do" list to the top of your "To Do" list—reaping big dividends is just a phone call or text away.

Dos & Don'ts: Heating Your Home This Winter

There's virtually no end to the steps, big and little, you can take to help heat your home more efficiently during the long winter months. Energy-saving tips run the gamut from replacing old units to using your window coverings in more savvy ways, and everything in between. To help sort it all out, we've come up with a few tried and true Dos and Don'ts for heating your home.

DO

- Consider upgrading to a smart thermostat. The savings reflected by these state-of-the-art devices can save you up to 10% on your heating costs.
- Use a whole-house humidifier to keep that warm air nice and moist. Dry air feels colder, so by adding moisture your house will feel warmer at a lower temperature. And, of course, your skin and nasal passages will thank you!
- Get your furnace serviced yearly. This simple step will ensure your furnace is running at peak efficiency and ward off pricey emergency heat crises during the coldest nights of the year.
- Make sure vents are open, uncovered, and not obstructed by furniture. It may seem like an obvious thing to point out, but the fewer objects that restrict airflow, the better.
- Keep outside doors closed as much as possible. Even a few minutes of arctic blast can make your system work hard to recover.

DON'T

- Ignore those cracks and crevices around windows and doors. Although they may seem small, they can make a big difference in your heating bill over the course of the winter.
- Neglect to change your filter. A clean filter means your furnace doesn't need to work as hard to heat your home to the optimal temperature, saving you money and allowing your furnace to live a good, long life.
- Forget to close the chimney flue when you're not using your fireplace. Warm, toasty air can escape in a hurry if you leave an open path to the outdoors, so make sure everything is closed up tight when you turn in for the night.
- Leave your windows covered during the day. Allowing the sun to stream in will help make your home a sunny, warm oasis. When dusk falls, close them to retain that heat for the overnight hours.
- Underestimate the power of layers. Set your thermostat a few degrees cooler and wrap up in a comfy sweater or blanket to stay snugly warm all winter long.

When our friendly service techs visit to address your furnace maintenance needs, be sure to ask them what their favorite tips are for optimal comfort and savings. They've been around the block and are sure to have a few ideas that will help keep you cozy for less!

Fireside Reading Classics

There's nothing quite like curling up in a comfy chair by the fire with a mug of hot tea and a good book. Want to bump that cozy mood up a notch? Consider reaching for a classic! We may have groaned when we had to read them for high school English class, but reading them as an adult, on your own time, can be an unexpected delight! Here are a few of our faves to get you started:

Little House on the Prairie **by Laura Ingalls Wilder**

For young and old readers alike, these tales of settler life will sweep you back in time. They might even help you appreciate all the modern conveniences (like your trusty furnace) you tend to take for granted!

The Complete Sherlock Holmes **by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**

A good mystery has always been an indulgence connected with the dark, chilly winter months, and Sherlock and Dr. Watson's adventures are about as classic as you can get! You're probably familiar with many of the more popular Sherlock stories, but diving into the completed works might just unearth some lesser-known gems.

Wuthering Heights **by Emily Bronte**

Romance, mystery, and madness abound on the windswept moors of this much-loved novel. Can the flickering warmth of your fireplace keep the chill of Heathcliff's despair from seeping into your bones? Only one way to find out!

One Hundred Years of Solitude **by Gabriel Garcia Marquez**

Perhaps you're looking to be transported to warmer climes as you trudge through another dreary Indiana winter. Journey to the fictional Columbian town of Macondo in this masterpiece of magical realism, and you'll smell tropical flowers and feel soft summer breezes in no time.





Expand Your Virtual Horizons

With so many in-person events on indefinite pause these days, it can be thumb-twiddling trying to figure out what to do with your free time. The Center for the Performing Arts knows this all too well and has offered a solution by pairing the arts with virtual adventures! The new Performing Arts Connects series offers live workshops and presentations highlighting cultural organizations throughout the world. Delve into country-style songwriting, test your Muppets trivia, and much more. The best part is, you can enjoy these special sessions from the comfort of your home via Zoom!

For more information, registration, and a schedule of upcoming events visit: thecenterpresents.org/PerformingArtsConnect

Favorite Fall Recipe: Turkey Rueben Dip

When the leaves begin to fall, it's time to think about all the enticing flavors of the new season. We love the savory goodness of sauerkraut mixed with creamy swiss and tangy dressing. This hearty dip is perfect for those lazy autumn weekends, cheering on the Colts or taking a lunch break from raking leaves.

- 1 cup chopped deli turkey (ask for thick slices for easy chopping)
- 1 can sauerkraut (drained)
- 1 ½ cup shredded swiss cheese
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 8 oz cream cheese (softened)
- ¼ cup ranch dressing
- Assorted dippers, such as rye bread, baguettes, celery sticks, crackers, or apple slices

Preheat the oven to 375°. Mix all ingredients until thoroughly blended. Place in a greased 9x11" pan, and bake for 25-30 minutes until the dip is heated through and bubbly.

Grab several of your favorite dippers, and go to town!

Enjoy!

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(air conditioner and furnace)

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