a Matter of Comfort

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CLIMATECARE.

How do I know when I should replace my air conditioner?

If your air conditioner is 10 years old or more, it is usually more economical to replace it than to fix problems that arise.

If you're not sure whether to replace your older unit, take a look at your utility bills and talk to your ClimateCare contractor. They will be able to help you determine how much cost savings you will realize by replacing your system.

Welcome to the Spring 2008 *A Matter of Comfort* newsletter!

In this edition, we are hoping to answer the questions ClimateCare contractors are asked most often. From cooling a radiantly heated home, to environmental responsibility and everything in between, this edition offers the answers.

Of course, no one publication can answer every question. If you have a question or concern please contact your ClimateCare professional. We are your HVAC partner and are committed to your total home comfort.

What brand of home comfort equipment should I buy?

When you shop for new home comfort equipment, there may be one brand that offers benefits others do not. However, generally speaking most air conditioners, furnaces, boilers and indoor air quality equipment are well made. Your ClimateCare contractor has strong working relationships with manufacturers and can help determine the best equipment to suit your needs.

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What are my electricity choices?

In the current marketplace, there are many choices for purchasing electricity, but… what is the right choice?

Ontario hydro users have two choices when it comes to buying electricity:

1. **PURCHASE ELECTRICITY FROM YOUR LOCAL HYDRO UTILITY:**
   If you decide to buy hydro from your local utility, the electricity rate you pay is set by the Government of Ontario. This price generally changes every six months.

2. **PURCHASE HYDRO FROM AN ONTARIO ELECTRICITY RETAILER:**
   Ontario electricity retailers cater to consumers who want long-term electricity price protection. They can provide a fixed electricity rate for up to five years.

For more information on your local electricity options, speak with your local utility.

GREEN ELECTRICITY

If you are interested in purchasing environmentally-friendly electricity, consider Bullfrog Power™. This 100% green electricity retailer in Ontario sources electricity exclusively from wind and low-impact water power producers who meet or exceed the federal government's EcoLogo standard for renewable energy.

Why do I need to get my AC serviced?

It is important to have your air conditioner serviced annually by a qualified technician. Regular maintenance will allow small problems to be identified and fixed before they become major expenses. The life of your unit is also extended and breakdowns are less likely. Units working at their best use less energy, saving you money on your cooling bills. Invest in a maintenance plan with your ClimateCare contractor to ensure your equipment is properly maintained.

How can I make my AC system more efficient while being environmentally responsible?

1. Plant trees to help shield your house against the sun.
2. Ensure your system is always working at peak efficiency by investing in a ClimateCare maintenance plan.
3. Invest in an ENERGY STAR® qualified air conditioner.
4. Buy the right sized air conditioner for your house.
5. Ensure your duct work is cleaned regularly.
6. Keep vents clear of furniture and other obstructions.
7. Close your curtains during the day to block out the sun.
8. Keep your thermostat at a reasonable temperature – the normal range in the summer is 73 to 79ºF (23 to 26ºC).
9. Invest in a programmable thermostat – turn the temperature up when you are not home and down when you are.
10. Properly seal and insulate your doors and windows.

How do air conditioners work?

Air conditioners have three main parts, a compressor, a condenser and an evaporator, which work together to convert chemicals from a gas to a liquid and back again.

The working fluid leaves the compressor as a hot, high pressure gas which then flows into the condenser where it is changed from a gas to a liquid. The liquid then goes into the evaporator where its pressure drops and begins to evaporate into a gas. By the time the working fluid leaves the evaporator, it is a cool, low pressure gas.

Connected to the evaporator is a fan that circulates air inside the house. Because hot air is lighter than cold air, it rises. When it reaches the top of a room it is sucked in by a vent and travels into the air conditioner through ducts. The hot air is then used to cool the gas in the evaporator. As the heat is removed from the air, the air is cooled and then blown into the house through other ducts usually at the floor level. This process continues over and over until the room reaches the desired temperature.

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