a Matter of Comfort

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CLIMATECARE

Why should I get my heating system serviced?

Any central heating system should be checked by a qualified service person once a year. Annual maintenance can extend the life of the system while maintaining optimum efficiency and regulating the temperature throughout your home. It also presents an opportunity to proactively address any problems before they become costly repairs. We offer both service options and maintenance agreements, talk to us for more information.

What sized heating system do I need?

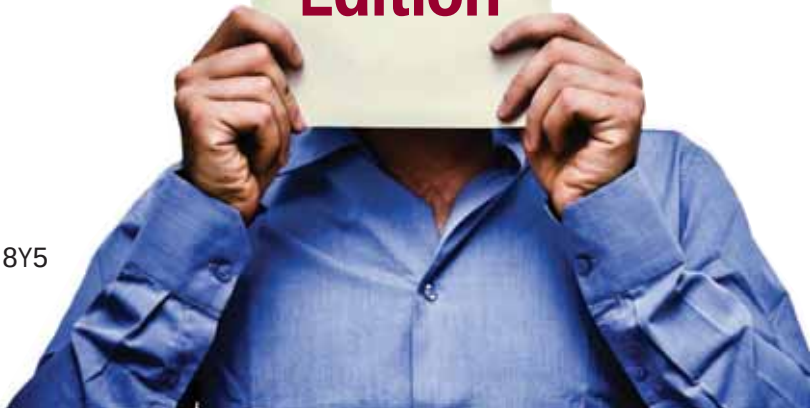
The first step to determine the right sized system is to have a complete energy analysis done by a professional. By measuring windows and checking insulation, ductwork and building materials, and reviewing a variety of other factors, the right sized heating system can be determined. We would be more than happy to help, give us a call.

How can I keep my home properly humidified in the winter?

Keeping your home's humidity between 30-60% can help reduce the effects of many unwanted conditions. If frost or condensation forms on your windows, the humidity level is too high. If your hardwood floors start to separate, the humidity is too dry.

Weather-stripping and caulking can help control humidity. You can also install equipment, such as bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans to reduce humidity. Humidifiers can be used to add humidity. Give us a call for more information, we can help determine what will work best for your home.

Fall Q&A Edition



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Are there government rebates still available?

Yes. Some rebates include:

ONTARIO POWER AUTHORITY'S COOL SAVINGS REBATE PROGRAM:

- $25 rebate when a program registered contractor installs a programmable thermostat.
- $125 rebate when you have an existing furnace replaced with a mid- or high-efficiency furnace equipped with an Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM).

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ECOENERGY PROGRAM & ONTARIO HOME ENERGY RETROFIT PROGRAM:

Eligible Improvements / Retrofits	Federal Grant Amount	Provincial Grant Amount	Total Available Amount
REPLACE YOUR HEATING EQUIPMENT WITH AN:			
ENERGY STAR® qualified gas furnace that has a 90% annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE) or better.	$300	$300	$600
ENERGY STAR® qualified gas furnace that has a 92% AFUE or better, and a direct current variable-speed motor.	$500	$500	$1,000
CAN/CSA-C448 compliant earth-energy system (ground or water source).	$3,500	$3,500	$7,000
Replace the heat pump unit of an existing earth-energy system (ground or water source). The system must be compliant with CAN/CSA-C448.	$1,400	$1,400	$2,800
Install an ENERGY STAR® qualified air-source heat pump (per equipment installed).	$400	$400	$800

Can I save on my heating bill by closing or sealing off unused heat registers?

Closing or sealing a small number of heating registers may have a small impact on your heating bill. However, with forced air systems, closing off more than one-third of the registers can create pressure imbalances and make your furnace's blower fan work harder, which may shorten equipment life.

If you are looking to reduce costs and regulate your comfort contact us. We will be happy to work with you to ensure your total home comfort.

Should I cover my air conditioner during the winter months?

It is not necessary as central air conditioning units consist of a compressor and condensing unit placed outdoors in a metal housing. These units are built to resist winter and generally do not need a cover. In fact, covers can cause problems because they trap moisture and can create an inviting home for small animals. If your air conditioner is subject to falling ice or other debris you could cover its top with a piece of plywood, plastic or metal held in place by a weight.

What should I consider when replacing my heating unit?

When replacing a heating unit in your home it is important to consider the size of your house as well as your overall needs. Factors like recent home additions will have to be taken into account when assessing your home's needs. We can review your needs and help recommend the unit that is right for you and your home.

When should I replace my heating system?

If your heating system is fifteen years old or more, it is most likely time to get it replaced. However, if your heating bill is constantly increasing or your system needs costly repairs, replacing it now may be a better choice. Contact us to have your current system assessed. We will work with you to ensure your home comfort system will continue to serve you efficiently and reliably.

What is geothermal heating and why is it called 'green' technology?

Geothermal heating is considered to be a 'green' technology because 70% of the energy required for it to run comes from the renewable energy of the sun warming the earth. The geothermal heat pump system operates based on the stability of underground temperatures: the ground a few feet below the surface typically has a very stable temperature. A geothermal heat pump uses the earth's heat in the winter and puts heat back into the ground in the summer. Rising energy costs and concern for our environment is making geothermal systems an increasingly popular choice.

Can a geothermal system be added to my furnace?

Yes. A dual system can be added to an existing furnace, where the heat pump is the main source of heating and the combustion furnace provides supplementary heat during extreme cold. However, since most customers switch to a geothermal system for the efficiency savings and environmental benefits, a dual system is not typically used.

What should I consider if I want to install a snow and ice melt system?

- **Utility costs and availability –** Consider the cost of electricity versus other power options such as propane, oil, natural gas and solar.
- **Space –** An electric system simply plugs into a junction box. For a hydronic system you must have the space to accommodate the water heater or boiler, circulating pump and manifold.
- **Melting expectations –** Do you expect the driveway to be free of snow at all times, or is gradual melting within a few hours acceptable? To be free of snow at all times it would require higher equipment, installation and operating costs.
- **Run-off –** A drainage system may need to be installed to account for water run-off when melted.
- **Retrofitting –** If the melting system is to be installed in an existing slab it is easier to retrofit an electric cable because it has a smaller diameter.
- **Maintenance –** A hydronic system typically requires more maintenance. Also, you must be sure to check the fluids in a hydronic system periodically just like you do with your car.

Does a radiant house take a long time to heat up from a cold start?

It depends on what type of system you are running, since the response time is dependent on available heat energy, which is determined by the heat source, tube spacing, back insulation and time. If you are finding your system is not performing to your expectations, contact us and we will check your system to ensure it is working to its full potential.

What is variable speed? Why should I pay for it?

Variable speed refers to a furnace's fan motor, which controls air flow throughout the home. Conventional single-speed motors run the fan at a constant speed, whereas a variable-speed motor is constantly changing its speed to compensate for factors like dirty filters and ductwork design. A variable-speed motor allows just the right amount of air necessary to provide the desired level of heating comfort.

Variable-speed motors can save you money on your energy bill because they consume less electricity than standard motors.

My furnace isn't working, how can I troubleshoot before calling a professional?

HVAC systems are complicated networks of machinery that should be serviced by a certified professional. However, if your HVAC system seems to be malfunctioning, you can try a few basic steps, which may correct your problem prior to calling a professional:

- Disconnect and reconnect your power switch
- Make sure your filters are clean
- Check the settings on your thermostat
- Make sure the system switch is on the appropriate HEAT setting

What is two-stage heating and why is it beneficial?

Traditionally furnaces operate at one level – high. However, with temperature fluctuations and many somewhat mild winter days, having your furnace work at full capacity isn't the most efficient solution (for your home comfort or bank account!)

Two-stage furnaces use a lower setting approximately 80% of the time (about 68% of the furnace's capacity) and a higher setting only when the temperature drops and the lower setting cannot handle the extra heat load.

More even heat distribution (since there is no 'blast' of hot air), quiet operation, improved air filtration and efficient performance (meaning lower energy bills!) are a few benefits of a two-stage furnace.

Talk to us about combining a two-stage furnace with a variable-speed blower, for even greater efficiency!

Our C.A.R.E. Promise

As a ClimateCare member company, we take our commitment to our customers very seriously. We truly care about the people we serve and the communities in which we live, and this dedication forms the foundation of our C.A.R.E. promise:

Comfort at home, all year round.

Accountability for our work, always.

Reliability, because you shouldn't have to wait.

Excellence in your experiences with us.

We thank you for your continued business and look forward to meeting all of your heating and cooling needs.

We'd love to hear from you!

Please let us know what you think of our newsletter and what you'd like to see in it.
We'll try to answer your questions and cover topics of interest to you, our valued customers.

Please contact us at: A Matter of Comfort
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