



Hints For The Home

Prepare Your Air Conditioner For Summer

(NAPSA)—Although the dog days of summer are months away, it's never too soon to begin preparing for them. This includes taking a few simple steps to make sure your air-conditioning system is ready to properly cool your home.

Begin by clearing the area around your outdoor compressor, removing leaves, twigs and other debris that may have accumulated over the winter. The space around and above the unit should be clear and uncluttered.

Next, check the system's filters, typically located along the return duct. Dirty filters can block airflow and reduce system efficiency, so it's important to clean or replace them regularly, preferably every month when the system is operating.

Holes or separated joints in the ductwork can also impact airflow and efficiency, so turn your system on and make sure air is flowing properly through the vents. If you suspect a leak in the ductwork, hire a professional to make the necessary repairs.

Use this time to caulk and weather-strip around doors and windows. This often overlooked step will help keep cool air inside your home during warm summer months and warm air outside.

It's also a good idea to add insulation around air-conditioning ducts when they are located in unconditioned spaces, such as attics, crawl spaces and garages.

Finally, contact a certified technician to do a pre-season check of your system. An annual inspection should include the following:



It can be a cool idea to prepare your air-conditioning system before the hot weather sets in.

- Clean indoor and outdoor coils
- Check your system's refrigerant charge and adjust it, if necessary, to meet manufacturer specifications
- Clean and adjust blower components to provide proper system airflow
- Lubricate all moving parts
- Inspect the condensate drain for clogs that can cause water damage, affect indoor humidity levels, and breed bacteria and mold
- Check thermostat settings and system controls to ensure proper and safe operation
- Tighten all electrical connections
- Measure voltage and current on motors

Taking these steps to prepare your air conditioner for summer will also help to extend the life of your system and save you money by detecting small issues before they become major problems.

To learn more or to locate a Champion HVAC contractor near you, please visit www.championhomecomfort.com, or follow them on YouTube and @Champion_HVAC on Twitter.