

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Latest In Home Heating Innovations

(NAPSA)—If your home's furnace is 20 or more years old you're not alone. The Environmental Protection Agency says that one in every four U.S. furnaces falls into this category.

With Americans spending more than half of home energy budgets on heating and cooling, it may be time to take a look at replacing your old furnace with a new, more energy-efficient model. If your utility bills aren't chilling enough, waking some cold winter's night to discover that your old furnace has called it quits is an experience most of us could do without.

With numerous technology advances in furnaces over the last two decades, homeowners have more options to consider than ever before. One thing that hasn't changed is the importance of local dealers in helping homeowners choose the right heating solution for optimum winter comfort.

While the Internet allows consumers to more thoroughly research furnace brands, models and new technologies, research conducted by Carrier Corporation shows that more than 70 percent of homeowners still rely on the recommendation of their local dealer when selecting a furnace brand and model.

Whether you're looking to save on utility costs, or hoping to avoid waking to icicles hanging from your bedroom ceiling, a number of innovations now allow you to pre-set your furnace to much more consistently maintain what Carrier calls an individual "indoor weather" preference.

Older furnaces tend to heat a home by blasting warm air in a full-on cycle until the thermostat senses that the pre-set temperature level has been reached. The thermostat then tells the furnace to shut down. What follows is a full-off cycle in which the home cools



**Here's an idea to warm to: the comfort of home can be easier to keep with a modern furnace.**

down until the thermostat again initiates another full-on cycle.

The result? A comfortable temperature is achieved only in those few moments after a strong blast of heating subsides, and before the colder point in a full-off furnace cycle.

The solution? Today's variable-speed gas furnace. With the potential to save up to 20 percent on heating-related energy costs, the lower operating mode of a variable-speed system delivers consistent comfort by gradually delivering heated air to the home.

Heated air tends to add to already low humidity levels present in cold, dry winter weather. The impacts range from dry lips to more serious health concerns, such as persistent cough. Because dry air feels cooler to most people, homeowners often find themselves unnecessarily increasing their home's temperature setting.

This only adds to the lack of humidity in the air, and raises temperatures and energy costs. A number of technologies have emerged to meet demand for both increased moisture levels in winter months and, if a central air conditioning system is in place,

the ability to decrease humidity in warmer months.

Carrier took this new technology to a higher level by developing a system that adjusts humidity when neither heating or cooling is required.

Another recent development may be of particular importance to homeowners looking to increase their storage space or just to move their furnace out of the way into a closet or crawl space. Engineering innovations have brought dramatic advances in the size-reduction of gas furnaces. A variable-speed gas furnace recently introduced by Carrier, the WeatherMaker™ 8000 stands just 33½ inches tall, is much quieter and takes up less than half the space of the old "monster in the basement." The options available with today's gas furnaces present the homeowner with many decisions to consider before purchasing a new system. Operating cost, energy savings, maintaining a consistent pre-set temperature, humidity control, even noise level and furnace size are being looked at by today's more discerning consumer.

Several tips to consider before making a decision:

- Start by researching. A good starting point is the EPA's EnergyStar program Web site—[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

- Have an informed discussion with your dealer. Be prepared to prioritize your needs when discussing options. Set your cost limit, discuss options such as heat and humidity control systems, and weigh the benefits against the cost for each option.

If your furnace's days are numbered, now is a good time to start understanding what today's furnace innovations can mean to your family's comfort, and budget.