

# ENERGY SAVING IDEAS

## Testing Your HVAC Contractor

(NAPSA)—For most homeowners, preparing your home for colder weather should include a checkup of your heating, ventilating and air-conditioning (HVAC) system by a certified contractor. Because nearly half of the energy used in the home—an average of \$1,900 per year—goes to heating and cooling, a system checkup by a contractor can have a big effect on your utility bills and your comfort. The contractor selected to inspect, upgrade or install your HVAC system is as critical to the system's successful operation as the equipment itself. Properly sized and regularly maintained equipment, along with properly sealed ducts, can save as much as 20 percent on annual energy costs.

When consulting with a contractor, ask about energy-efficient solutions for your home. The U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) suggests the following:

- Ask about the “whole-house approach.” Rather than focusing on a single component, the contractor will assess how improvements to all of these components can work together to provide fewer drafts, consistent temperatures across rooms, better ventilation and humidity control, and lower utility bills.

- Ask your contractor to check your home's sealing. Improving a home's “envelope” or “shell” by sealing air leaks and adding insulation can lower utility bills and improve comfort and energy efficiency.

- Your contractor can recommend an ENERGY STAR-qualified programmable thermostat that can automate your heating and cooling system based on a preset schedule, keeping your home comfortable while saving you money.



**Preventative maintenance can save you money and will extend the life of your heating system.**

The DOE says that could save you up to \$150 per year.

- Your contractor can also check your home's duct sealing. Sealing and insulating ducts that move air to and from a forced air furnace, central air conditioner or heat pump can often improve your home's HVAC system efficiency by as much as 20 percent.

- A contractor can perform specific diagnostic tests such as using a duct blower to measure air leakage; a flow hood to test register efficiency; or an infrared camera to measure whole-house efficiency.

- If you need to replace your heating system, your contractor can recommend ENERGY STAR products that meet energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, such as the Coleman Echelon 5T heat pump or the Echelon modulating gas furnace.

To learn more about selecting an ENERGY STAR knowledgeable contractor, visit the Air Conditioning Contractors of America Web site at <http://www.acca.org>.

To learn more about energy-efficient heating products, visit [www.colemanac.com](http://www.colemanac.com) or call (877) 726-5362.