

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Does Your HVAC Need A Little TLC?

(NAPSA)—Just like your car, your home heating system requires routine maintenance in order to run properly. Without regular servicing, heating systems can waste energy and are more likely to break down. But with the proper attention, your system will keep you warm all winter long.

According to the experts at Luxaire, a brand of heating, ventilating and air-conditioning (HVAC) equipment manufactured by Johnson Controls, there are a few basic tips you and your local HVAC contractor can follow to ensure your heating system operates properly.

A Few Basics

- **Inspect Your System**—A close inspection will uncover leaks, soot, rust, rot, corroded electrical contacts and frayed wires. In furnace (forced-air) and boiler (hot-water) systems, the inspection should also cover the chimney, ductwork or pipes, dampers or valves, blower or pump, registers or radiators, the fuel line and the gas meter or oil tank, as well as every part of the furnace or boiler.

- **Run Your System**—Your heating system should be run through a full heating cycle to ensure it has plenty of combustion air and chimney draft. Contractors use smoke pencils to check for sufficient draft and also test the air for carbon monoxide.

- **Clean the Burner and Heat Exchanger in Furnaces**—Scour the burner and heat exchanger to remove soot and other gunk that can impede smooth operation. For the burner, efficiency hinges on adjusting the flame to the right size and color, regulating the flow of gas or changing the fuel filter in an oil-fired system.



Don't give the cold shoulder to your heating system. It should be serviced regularly.

- **Check all the Components of a Heat Pump**—Inspect the compressor, fan, indoor and outdoor coils and refrigerant lines. Indoor and outdoor coils should be cleaned, and the refrigerant pressure should be checked. Low pressure indicates a leak; to locate it, contractors feed tinted refrigerant into the loop and go over it with an electronic detector.

Annual Maintenance

Luxaire recommends contacting a qualified contractor to perform some of these maintenance activities as part of an annual service call. Heat pumps and oil-fired furnaces and boilers require a yearly tune-up. Since gas-fired equipment burns cleaner, it should be serviced every other year.

To learn more about heating systems and routine maintenance, visit www.luxaire.com.