

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Cutting Heating Costs

(NAPSA)—Proper furnace care and smart purchases can help you reduce the high costs of heating your home. That's good news considering that energy bills—which are already historically high—are expected to continue to climb. In fact, a recent article in USA Today reported that homeowners on average will see a 25.7 percent increase in heating costs compared to a year ago.

To reduce heating costs, experts say that the energy efficiency of your furnace is extremely important. According to Jim Miller of Amana brand furnaces, "Homeowners don't have much control over the price of natural gas, but they can take steps to minimize the impact of home heating costs." He offers these tips:

1. **Have Your Furnace Checked.** "If you haven't already done so this year, have a licensed HVAC contractor inspect your furnace now," Miller emphasized. "He can perform a safety inspection and clean your furnace so that it runs as efficiently as possible."

2. **When Buying a New Furnace, Choose High-Efficiency.** A furnace's efficiency is indicated by its Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency percentage, or "AFUE," a measurement developed by the U.S. Department of Energy. The higher a furnace's AFUE, the more efficient it is. "Furnaces older than 15 years operate at efficiencies of approximately 60% AFUE. This means that for every dollar spent on heating costs, only 60 cents actually helps warm your home, while the remaining 40 cents is wasted.

"If you were to replace that 60% AFUE furnace with a high-efficiency unit, such as the Amana



**Some energy-efficient furnaces can cut heating costs—and provide a tax deduction.**

brand AMV9 96% AFUE Variable-Speed Furnace, you would get 96 cents worth of warmth for every dollar you spend toward heating your home," said Miller.

He added that furnaces with a variable-speed blower are even more efficient because the blowers typically require up to 75 percent less electricity than a standard motor. In addition, a furnace's blower also works with the home's cooling system, meaning consumers experience increased efficiency year-round.

3. **Investigate Tax Credits for High-Efficiency Furnace Purchases.** Thanks to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT), homeowners who purchase furnaces with an AFUE of 95% or higher in 2006 and 2007 may qualify for a tax credit of \$150. And if that furnace uses a variable-speed blower, they may qualify for an additional \$50 tax credit.

For more information and tips on minimizing your utility bill, visit [www.amana-hac.com](http://www.amana-hac.com) or call (888) 292-6262.