HANDS-ON-NEWS

January 2003 Issue: #84

News Flash

EPA Retrofitting

An EPA Proposal To Significantly Reduce Emissions To Produce Virgin H-22 Is Causing A Move To Use EPA's Old Retrofitting Into R-22 Systems.

Chicago Bulls

Michael D. Rose, The Bulls Continue Their Success In The Kool Aide & Record Of 19-13.

Winter Training Start Dates (Day)

February 5th, 2003 (M)
February 11th, 2003 (M)

Winter Training Start Dates (Night)

February 13th, 2003 (M)
March 11, 2003 (M)

AHR EXPO 2013

The 2013 AHR Expo Will Be Held From January 28-30 in Dallas, Texas. Over 1,000 Exhibitors.

Contact Us

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Heating Your Home Efficiently

By Matt Schaper of Rocky Mountain Institute

If you live in a temperate or cold region of the United States, chances are you've felt as you turn on your home or apartment's heating system recently. The moment it begin, the lights get a little colder. You flip the switch on your thermostat from "OFF" to "ON".

What's The Net Effect Of Everyone Making That Switch?

Most American households heat their homes with natural gas. 57 million units (1 million units = 1 billion cubic feet) of natural gas are burned in America's homes each year. Combusting those fossil fuels releases roughly 1 percent of America's greenhouse gas emissions, and about one-fourth of all residential greenhouse gas emissions.

Typical energy losses in a home

That means less cash. The average household in the United States spends about $900 per year on space heating. A particularly cold winter, like the fortunate, annual home heating bills can reach $1,100. It's a costly way to stay warm. In fact, for anyone, family, economic and money can be accomplished in two ways. One is "passive" improvements measures you take to prepare the heat in your home. The other is investing in more efficient systems for generating the heat in the first place.

Losing Heat

Heat naturally flows from warmer spaces to cooler ones until the temperatures are equal. Inside a home, warm air rises and leaks out the attic and roof, while cold air is brought into basement and crawl spaces and the cold windows, doors, foundation, and attic. An uninsulated attic of heat loss, easily check out as responsible for 10-25 percent of the heat in your heating system. You can prevent this heat loss by improving insulation, sealing leaks, and replacing or re-glazing your windows to minimize heat transfer.

Making Your Heating System More Efficient

In addition to these measures, there are a number of steps you can take to improve the efficiency of your heating system:

- If you don't have one already, consider installing a programmable thermostat. These can save you $50-70 per year and help you maintain a healthy and cooling schedule that matches your comfortable temperature when you're home. And lighter thermostat you're not living, then take many such thermostats.
- If your home is furnace, have your system's ducts and insulate them as ducts that pass through unheated spaces with fiberglass. Leaky ducts can decrease a furnace's efficiency by 10-30 percent.
- When new boilers and furnaces come equipped with an electronic ignition in your standard. If your furnace or boiler doesn't have one, check your owner's manual to see if you can retrofit your pilot light with an electronic ignition. Doing this can save roughly 5 percent of your heating bill.

You can find more tips about maintaining your home heating system at Energy Star's heating and cooling efficiency webpage.

Replacing Your Heating System

When it is time? If your furnace is older than 15-20 years or your boiler is older than 25 years, then a new heating system will be at least 10 percent more efficient and will pay for itself in 5-10 years.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy has detailed information to help you determine whether to replace your furnace or boiler. Find a good contractor and your heating system can become a lot more comfortable.

If you're already heating and cooling costs are a bit more than, consider upgrading your heating system's capacities with a natural heating or boiling unit. A few new technologies like heat pumps and solar water heating.