

Comfortable LIVING

*"Despite the forecast,
live like it's spring."*

- Lilly Pulitzer



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6 Home Features that Cut Heating and Cooling Loads

The move toward passive heating and cooling is growing. It saves money and reduces greenhouse gases. Here are some ways to cut down on heat gains and losses from your home.

Insulation

Insulation slows down heat flow. In winter this means less heat escapes and in summer, it keeps your air conditioner from working overtime. In both cases, you have smaller equipment to worry about when building or replacing. Upgrading insulation is a sure-fire way to cut your energy use.

Proper sealing

If air leaks in around windows and doors, you undo everything your

insulation does. Known as infiltration, this air carries moisture in summer and low temperatures in winter, taxing your equipment and wasting energy. Sealing off these locations is a fairly cheap way to cut back on your energy bills.

Window locations

In the northern hemisphere, the sun in winter sun shines from the south. The opposite is true for the southern hemisphere. Having large windows face the winter sun allows for sunlight to heat up those rooms, reducing your heating load. The downside is that more heat is lost through these windows at night and on cloudy days.

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6 Home Features that Cut Heating and Cooling Loads

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Window treatments

Curtains and blinds can reduce heat gain and loss depending on their insulation value. Blocking out the sun in summer keeps the space cool even if you have no shading from outside. Trees and foliage outside your window also reduce heat gain in the summer. If you pick the right trees that lose their leaves in winter, you still gain the advantage of winter sunlight heating your home.

Heavy curtains keep the heat in on cold winter nights, reducing losses from large windows.

Overhangs

Strategically placed overhangs can prevent your large windows from creating large problems in the summer. During this season, the sun is high in the sky. Overhangs that block windows from direct sunlight reduce the heating effect of the sun and keep your cooling bill down. The winter sun's low path across the sky allows sunlight to enter the room without being blocked by the overhang.

Type of glass

Glass performance has two main characteristics: heat transfer coefficient and shading coefficient. The heat transfer coefficient indicates how well the glass prevent heat from flowing through. The shading coefficient affects the sunlight entering the space. A higher shading coefficient keeps more sun out. Glass thickness, the number of panes and coating type all impact these numbers and vary between manufacturers.

You still need well-maintained equipment. Even with minimal heat gains and losses, your HVAC equipment needs to run efficiently. Give us a call to assess ways you can reduce your energy usage and keep your equipment in top shape.



Should You Keep Your HVAC Equipment Running?

For some climates, you need to leave your heat on from October to April (or May!). For others, summers are brutal and for health reasons, your air conditioner should stay on. In most cases, though, there are times where leaving your equipment running is optional.

The question is: should you?

Reasons to leave your system running:

1. You don't have to wait for the temperature to reach where you want it. Your home will be a consistent temperature throughout the day with more opportunity to even out throughout the house.

2. During summer, your air conditioner takes care of humidity as well as heat. Leaving it on keeps your humidity within reasonable limits and doesn't overburden the unit if you leave it off for a long time then put it on.

3. You may be tempted to turn off the heat to save energy on a mild winter day, or if you'll be away for a while. This can lead to frozen pipes if the temperature drops unexpectedly. Leaving it running keeps your home safe from too-low temperatures.

Turn down your thermostat to a minimum of 10oC (50oF) to save on energy without the risk of freezing.

4. Forced air systems have the option of running the fan continuously, even when heating or cooling isn't required. This circulates the air continuously, passing it through the filters and improving indoor air quality.

5. Another reason to have your fan run continuously is to provide better temperature distribution throughout your home. Constant air movement mixes air throughout your home. This prevents stagnant air pockets from forming and giving you unpleasant hot or cold spots.

Reasons to shut it down:

1. While your system draws more electricity during ramp up, it also consumes more power if left on 24/7. Leaving your system running continuously results in more energy consumption overall.

2. Most residential air conditioning systems use a refrigerant. Peak efficiency for these units is close to full load. So when the air conditioner is working



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Coupon Corner

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Unscramble these Words

1. ATHE

2. TUCD

3. CCEINTINHA

4. TRTOTAMESH

5. EFTIRL

hard to lower your home's temperature, its efficiency is high. If you leave on the air conditioner to maintain your home's temperature, the unit's efficiency falls. Ultimately this adds to your summer energy bills.

3. You'll see quicker wear and tear on parts. This translates into higher maintenance costs and a shorter lifespan.

4. When your fan runs continuously, it passes more air through the filters. Because your filter is taking care of more air, it clogs faster and needs replacing sooner.

Whether or not you decide to run your HVAC equipment continuously, you need it working well. Give us a call to make sure your unit is at peak performance!

14 Spring Activities

These fun suggestions are great for all ages!

1. Make a decorative bird feeder
2. Set up an outdoor scavenger hunt
3. Explore a Farmers Market
4. Go fly a kite
5. Picnic in the park
6. Go to your local library
7. Enjoy an evening walk
8. Spring clean your home
9. Sightsee at the zoo
10. Plant a garden or flowers
11. Reread your favorite book
12. Play miniature golf
13. Take a morning hike
14. Attend a major/minor league baseball game



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Yes, the season is upon us when everyone sneezes, sniffles, and gets sick.

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Veal Lettuce Wraps

This red wine reduction, veal lettuce wrap may be the best ever! So delicious and so easy.

Ingredients:

1 head of iceberg lettuce
2 tbsp minced garlic
½ small white onion
½ cup cabernet

1 tbsp olive oil
2 green onions, chopped
¼ cup shredded carrots
½ pound of thinly sliced veal

1 cup mushrooms
½ cup beef stock
1 cup chopped cashews, unsalted

Directions: Heat olive oil in pan on medium heat. Lightly pan fry the veal on both sides. Remove and cover. Add wine and beef stock to the pan and heat to boil. Reduce to simmer, stirring occasionally

to reduce. Use a food processor or blender to chop the cashews and set aside. Puree the white onion and mushrooms and add to the pan, continuing to stir occasionally. Dice the veal. When the wine

mixture has reduced and thickened, add the veal, cashews, and garlic. Stir until heated through. Spoon the veal mixture into iceberg leaves and garnish with green onions and carrots. Enjoy!