

E N E R G Y 

Shopping for a Furnace, Heat Pump or Central AC?

Plain Language Improvements:

- Drastically reduced amount of copy
- Revised version is a 4 x 9 “energy card”

Buy the most efficient equipment, have it installed correctly, and get a tax credit, too.

When you’re shopping for a new heating system, don’t think you’re saving money by taking the lowest bid. Higher efficiency equipment will cost more, but will end up saving you energy and money every month for years to come. Here’s how to make a decision.

Get 2 bids. We recommend getting bids from 2 or 3 companies. You may also want to check with the Construction Contractors Board (503-378-4621 or on the Web at www.oregon.gov/CCB/index.shtml) to find out how reliable the company is. If you want a Residential Energy Tax Credit for a heat pump or central air conditioning make sure the company is on the Oregon Department of Energy’s list of tax-credit certified heat pump/AC companies.

Get bids for both medium and high efficiency equipment. Contractors may recommend medium efficiency equipment. Ask them to also bid a high efficiency tax-credit eligible model. They can give you an estimate of what the difference in your annual heating cost would be with each system, allowing you to compare the additional cost with future savings. Be sure the bids include all additional venting or electrical work needed.

If you are adding or replacing central air conditioning, get bids on both a tax credit eligible heat pump and air conditioner, since a heat pump is essentially a reversible air conditioner that can run “backwards” to help heat your home during winter months.

Compare warranties. Unfortunately, there’s almost no published information comparing the reliability of different heating equipment brands so the manufacturers’ and installers’ warranties may be an important factor in deciding which equipment to choose.



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After

Buy the highest efficiency equipment you can afford.

If you're in the market for a furnace or heat pump, look for models with variable speed blowers. They'll keep your house more comfortable year round. The highest efficiency heating equipment can be eligible for a state energy tax credit of 25% of eligible costs up to \$430.

Don't oversize. Bigger is not better when determining the capacity of the equipment. Oversized equipment runs less frequently, is less efficient and leaves your home less comfortable than properly-sized units. Your contract should specify that the installer will do detailed heat loss and system sizing calculations, based on the Air Conditioning Contractors Association (ACCA) Manual J.

Install it right. Your new furnace, boiler, heat pump or air conditioner is only as efficient as the installation. Sealed ductwork in forced air systems is essential so all the heat your furnace produces gets to the rooms you live in. And, there is an energy tax credit to help get the job done. In new construction, be sure your contract specifies that ductwork is designed using industry standards, such as ACCA Manual D.

To receive a tax credit for a heat pump or central air conditioning system, the air flow and refrigerant charge of the system must be verified by a tax credit certified technician. They will verify that the system is operating at peak efficiency. (Post-installation tests are not required for installation of high efficiency gas furnaces that are eligible for the Residential Energy Tax Credit.)

Schedule regular maintenance. We advise homeowners to check filters monthly and clean or change as needed. For heat pumps and central AC systems, this check should include tests performed by Oregon Department of Energy. This performance test qualifies for a Residential Energy Tax Credit.

For information about energy efficiency and the Oregon Residential Energy Tax Credit, contact us at 1-800-221-8035 or see our Web site: www.oregon.gov/energy



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