



The Comfort Standard

Summer 2009 — Vol. 17, No. 3

If you're looking to protect yourself from volatile oil prices, budget your heating costs over the winter, or simply make sure you never run out of home heating oil, Eshenaurs has a fuel oil program for you.

For years, we have been offering three comprehensive heating oil programs that have provided our customers with thousands of dollars in heating cost savings and peace-of-mind.

However with all the uncertainty and volatility in the world's energy markets over the past two years, the cost for heating your home is understandably a major concern. Last year for example, oil prices went from record-breaking highs to lows not seen in decades. Plus, we've experienced a price "flip-flop" with lower heating oil prices in the winter rather than in the summer, which is typically when we buy oil for our Ready Reserve customers.

When all is said and done, there's not a whole lot you can do about the instability of the energy markets. But there's a lot you can do in conservation and in making the best decision when buying home heating oil. Whether you're looking to protect yourself from volatile oil prices, budget your

heating costs over the winter months, or to simply make sure you never run out of oil, Eshenaurs has a program for you.



The Ready Reserve

Our Ready Reserve Program allows our customers to purchase fuel oil in advance for an entire heating season at a fixed price. For the most part, the Ready Reserve program has saved customers hundreds of dollars in home heating costs because we purchased their fuel oil during the summer, when prices are normally at their lowest. However, this changed in 2006, when heating oil prices were lower in the winter than in the summer.

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A Word From Craig Eshenaur

Unless you don't own a radio or TV or don't read a newspaper, you know that President Obama has signed into law a \$789 billion dollar economic stimulus package. The bill passed the House by a vote of 246-183. And was passed by the Senate by a vote of 60-38.

What you may not know is that this package can save you significant tax dollars now and significant energy dollars down the road if you're in the market for a new heating or central air conditioning system for your home.

Like most laws written and passed by Congress, this one is long and overly complicated. But the long and short of it is this - the new law offers homeowners a 30% tax credit (up to \$1,500) on the purchase and installation of HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) systems that meet or exceed 90 per cent efficiency. Your Eshenaurs HVAC Salesperson can help you cut

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“The Ready Reserve is a price protection program that provides the opportunity for customers who prefer paying for the entire heating season up front in return for a locked-in price. And it also provides the customer with a guaranteed fuel oil reserve,” explained Fuels Manager Dave Skoczynski.

“Since we began the Ready Reserve program 14 years ago, our Ready Reserve customers have saved an average of \$1.25 cents on a gallon of oil. And in 12 of the last 14 years, the summer price has been lower than the winter price.”

“Another benefit for our Ready Reserve customers is that if an oil shortage occurs during the heating season, their oil has been paid for and stored in our one million gallon storage tank.”

When a customer signs up for The Ready Reserve program, the first thing we do is review the amount of fuel oil the customer has used on an annual basis over the past three to four years. We then calculate an “average usage” based on a period of time. Next we seek out the lowest possible “cash” price from our pipeline suppliers, and order a specific amount of oil at that price.

We then multiply the cash price times the customer’s anticipated usage. This amount of oil is reserved at the specific price point for the customer’s home. And finally, the customer is billed for the entire amount in advance. “There are no hidden ‘one time’ fees to lock-in a low-rate,” Dave continued. “Once the oil is paid for, the customer owns the oil.”

If the price of oil does go up, you still get the price you “locked into” at the end of summer. If you use your Ready Reserve gallons before the end of the heating season, your price for additional gallons is paid at the prevailing market rate.

The Budget Plan

If you would rather not pay for your oil in advance but want to spread your payments over 11 months, Eshenaur’s offers a “Budget Plan” that runs from August through June. This program is designed to stabilize our customers’ heating bills during the peak-heating season.

According to Dave, “The payment schedule begins in August and ends in June. The payments are calculated by multiplying the customer’s last year usage in gallons times an average price per gallon. This total is then divided by 11 months. Payments are due the 15th of each month.”

To make this plan even more convenient, Eshenaur’s provides Budget customers with a Budget Packet consisting of handy payment envelopes, and a place to log all deliveries and payments. Approximately halfway through the heating season, we’ll review your account and make an adjustment up or down if necessary. All payments, of course, must be paid on time.

The bottom line is this, if you’re an Automatic Delivery or Will Call customer, you should consider the benefits of our Budget Plan that provides you with an easier way to handle your heating finances — in the same manner you pay your monthly mortgage and car payment.

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Department Update

Plumbing

For many homeowners, the household plumbing is a “big mystery,” many of its working parts hidden, and thus forgotten about until it’s too late and you have to call a plumber. There are some basic “common sense” plumbing practices you can follow to avoid the “too late stage” when it comes to messy plumbing situations.

If you’re worried that your home has a plumbing leak, check your water meter at a time when no water is being used. Check the meter again about eight hours later. If the meter has moved, you have a leak.

In a plumbing emergency, you’ll need to stop the flow of water quickly. To do this, each member of the household needs to know the location of the main water shut-off valve, and the shut-off valve for every fixture and appliance.

The main water shut-off valve is the primary valve that halts the flow of water from the water meter into the home. They are usually located on the inside or outside of the house where the main water supply pipe enters. Turn the valve clockwise to shut it off.

In addition to the main water shut-off valve, individual fixtures in the home have stop valves, which allow you to shut off the water supply to that particular fixture. The valve is usually located underneath a fixture such

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Tips for buying a central air conditioner

After experiencing a cool, wet spring, hot summer weather has finally arrived...and the desire to stay cool and comfortable is now a priority. Regardless if you are replacing an old system or have finally decided to have central air conditioning installed in your home, here are some tips for buying a central air conditioner.

The type and size of air conditioner you need depends on your climate and cooling needs. For this region, compressor-driven air conditioning systems are the only choice.

When you begin your search for the right system, look for a SEER rating higher than 13.0. Depending on the type of central air conditioning system install, homeowners may be eligible for a tax credit equal to 30 percent of the installed costs or up to \$1,500.

If you already have a forced-air heating system, you may be able to tie an air conditioner into existing ducts, depending on their size and your home's relative heating and cooling loads.

There are two key elements in determining air conditioner efficiency: proper sizing and installation. Too large a unit will not adequately remove humidity, and too small a unit will not be able to maintain a comfortable temperature on the hottest days. Improper unit location, lack of duct insulation, improper duct sealing, and incorrect refrigerant charge can greatly diminish efficiency as well.

When buying a central air conditioner, look for a system with a fan-only switch so you can use the unit for nighttime ventilation to substantially reduce air conditioning costs; a filter check light to remind you to check the filter after a predetermined number of operating hours; and an automatic-delay fan switch to turn off the fan a few minutes after the compressor turns off.

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A Word From Craig (Continued from page 1)

through all the red tape and decide what equipment qualifies under this government mandated criteria.

Of course the money you save with the tax credit is just part of the savings. If your home heating and air conditioning system is more than 10 years old or not keeping your house comfortable, you should have it looked at by a professional HVAC contractor. If it is not performing efficiently or needs upgrading, consider replacing it with a unit

that has earned the ENERGY STAR. Installed correctly, these high-efficiency heating and cooling units can save up to 20% on heating and cooling costs. By the way, the tax credits are good through 2010.

Naturally, before you invest in a new HVAC system, make sure that you have addressed the big air leaks in your house and the duct system. Sometimes, these are the real sources of problems rather than your HVAC equipment. Call Eshenaurs Fuels, Inc. today at 236-5031 for more information.

Department Update (Continued from page 2)

as a sink or a toilet, or behind an appliance, such as a clothes washer, at the point where the water supply pipe (or pipes) connects to the appliance.

Another plumbing common sense tip is to not flush anything but toilet paper down the toilet. And despite common belief, your bathroom toilet is not the best place for a fish funeral.

When using the garbage disposal, add the garbage a little at a time, and be sure to keep utensils out of the drain. Also, avoid potential drain cloggers like cornhusks, artichokes, other fibrous foods, or liquid fats poured down the drain.

Because elements within any household plumbing system decay or wear out over time, your best bet with preventing major plumbing emergencies is with an annual inspection by one of our trained plumbers.

For just \$29.95, we'll send one of our certified plumbers to your home to do a thorough 20-point inspection. And when the inspection is complete, you'll know more about the condition of your home. Plus, we'll apply the \$29.95 to any plumbing service that is required as a result of the inspection. Call Eshenaurs today at 236-5031 to schedule an appointment.

Fun Plumbing Facts

Albert Einstein was named an honorary member of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Union after saying publicly that he would become a plumber if he had to do it all over again!

Eshenaurs Fuels, Inc.

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Fuel Oil Programs (Continued from page 2)

Automatic Delivery

There's no real reason for running out of fuel oil in the middle of winter, unless you're a "will call" customer and haven't paid attention to your fuel oil usage. A "will call" customer is one who reads his or her own oil tank gauge and calls when oil is needed. Too many times we get calls from a "will call" customer who needs fuel oil right away, and right in the middle of our peak delivery times.

As you might expect, our Automatic Delivery Service is the perfect program for "will call" customers. By enrolling in this plan, we will maintain your oil service by scheduling fuel oil deliveries exactly when you need them. We determine this by analyzing both the weather and your past energy requirements.

No longer will you run the risk of running out of oil, particularly during an extended cold snap — when our Fuel Oil Delivery Service is working at maximum

capacity. The Automatic Delivery Service provides you with peace of mind at no extra cost!

For more information or to sign up for any of the above programs, please call our Customer Service Department at 236-5031.

There are other ways to protect yourself against high energy costs. If your heating equipment is more than 15-years-old, you should consider investing in a new energy-conserving, environmental friendly oil boiler/burner or furnace/burner unit for your home. You'll experience long-term energy savings, help the environment with a clean burning energy resource, and enjoy the comfort of uniform heat throughout your home.

If replacing your old system isn't in your budget, then have the furnace cleaned over the summer months. By doing so, you can save as much as five percent on heating costs. Also cleaning and/or changing the filter will reduce the furnace energy required to heat your home as well as cool it.

Historically, oil heat has al-

Tips for buying central air (Continued from page 3)

Look for a unit with quiet operation. If you need or want to replace your existing air conditioner's outdoor (compressor) unit, make sure the indoor (blower coil) unit is compatible with the new outdoor unit. A highly efficient outdoor unit will not achieve its rated efficiency if paired with an older blower coil.

To help you determine the best central air conditioner for your home, especially when it comes to size and efficiency, give us a call at 236-5031 and ask for Dave Boyne or Ray Desautels.

ways delivered value, comfort and dependability. As a customer of Eshenaurs Fuels, Inc., you can rest assure that we are always working hard to provide you with the lowest possible prices, along with excellent and dependable service.

If you have any questions about our programs, or would like us to sign you up right away, call us at 236-5031.