

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Don't Sweat Cooling Your Home Tips for Keeping Air Conditioning Bills Low

(NAPSA)—When temperatures rise, so can the cost of cooling your home. An improperly functioning air conditioner will increase your utility bill. By properly maintaining your equipment now, you can save money and increase comfort all summer long.

These tips from North American Technician Excellence (NATE)-certified technicians can help homeowners keep their cool while using less energy.

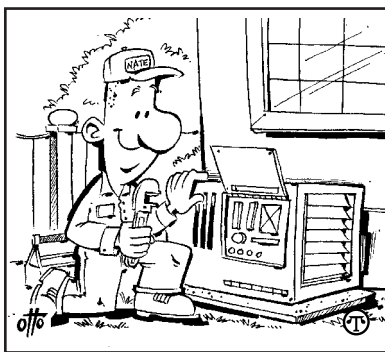
- Listen to your air conditioner—Make sure you hear the fans operating. Does it sound like the unit is turning off too quickly? Does it sound like the unit never stops running? In either case, it may be time to call a contractor who employs NATE-certified technicians who can inspect the unit. A NATE-certified technician has demonstrated knowledge and technical skills in the installation and servicing of HVAC equipment.

- Raise the temperature setting by five degrees—You can save money by keeping the setting at 77 degrees. For every degree you raise the thermostat, you have a cost savings of about five percent.

- Don't obstruct airflow to your outside unit—Plant shrubs and landscaping three feet away from the outside unit to assure proper airflow and circulation. Air conditioners need to take in the exhaust air to operate efficiently.

Insulate your house for maximum comfort and cost efficiency—Check your attic, attic stairway, attached garage walls and basement to make sure your home is insulated to DOE-recommended levels for your geographic area.

- Properly seal your home—Consider replacing single-pane



COOL IT—but in moderation.
For every degree you raise the thermostat, you have a cost savings of about five percent.

windows with double-pane windows with high performance glass. If you're worried about warmth, select windows with spectrally selective coatings to reduce heat gain. If cold is your concern, select windows that are gas filled with low e-coatings on the glass to reduce heat loss.

- Clean or replace air filters regularly—A clogged filter places an additional burden on your heating and cooling units. Air filters should be cleaned or replaced once a month or as needed.

- Consider replacing your cooling unit if it's more than 10 years old—An older unit might not be as efficient as newer models and the resulting cost savings may help defray the cost of a new unit.

The U.S. Department of Energy endorses NATE for its dedication in raising quality standards for installation and maintenance of HVAC equipment and contributing to increased energy efficiency.

To find a NATE-certified technician, visit www.natex.org.