



Tips for maintaining your HVAC system

Ah, summer. Cookouts, swimming pools, camping — it's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. And when it's time to come back indoors, there's nothing better than that cool blast you feel from your home's air conditioning unit.

Your heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) system is essential to keeping your home comfortable during summer months, and if it breaks down, it's also the most expensive equipment to repair or replace. Luckily, there are simple steps you can take to lengthen the life of your HVAC system.

Change or clean filters.

Dirty filters block airflow, which can greatly decrease the efficiency of your system. The Department of Energy recommends changing or cleaning filters every month or two during the cooling season. If your unit is in constant use or is subjected to dusty conditions or pet hair, consider checking filters more frequently.

Clean the HVAC unit.

Outdoor condenser coils can become clogged with pollen, dirt and small debris. Use a hose to spray the HVAC unit once each season to ensure maximum airflow. (Warning: Do not use a pressure washer to do this, as it can damage the equipment.)

Clear space around the HVAC unit.

Dryer vents, falling leaves and grass left behind from the lawnmower can create buildup. Remove any debris around the HVAC unit. If you have foliage near the unit, trim it back at least 2 ft. around the condenser to increase airflow.

You should also have your HVAC system periodically inspected by a licensed professional. The frequency of inspections depends on the age of your unit, but the Department of Energy recommends scheduling tune-ups during the spring and fall, when contractors aren't as busy. With a little maintenance along the way, you can add years to your system's lifespan.

Are you ever unsure of how your home is using electricity on a daily basis?

To help, the cooperative has a trained staff of energy experts available to help you become more energy-efficient and understand just where your energy dollars are being spent.

Our experts can help you determine the right steps for maximizing the efficiency of your home, including whether an in-home energy audit will help find more savings and reduce your energy costs each month. Contact us at 919-774-4900 to schedule an appointment.