

# Hints For Homebuyers

## Check Out A New Home's Heating And Cooling System

(NAPSA)—Comfort is important, and never more so than when you're buying a home... regardless of whether it's a new home or pre-owned.

How do you know if you have a viable, economic heating or cooling system or an energy hog that will gobble up utility dollars? Many homebuyers rely on the builder, but the fact is that many builders put in the least expensive units they can find.

It was inspected, right?

Most inspectors look at the outward appearance and at best check to make sure units come on and that the thermostat works.

Most don't do an in-depth analysis of the system, checking SEER or burners.

With the new 13 SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating) going into effect January 2006, you can't afford not to know the system's strengths and weaknesses.

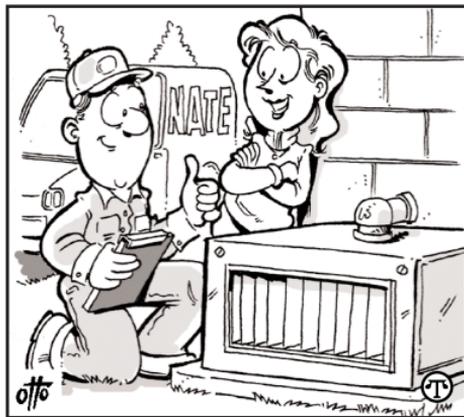
Often, you can upgrade a new home's system at a slight increase in price.

With an older home, check it out.

Ask to see maintenance bills.

Talk to whomever did the work on the system and ask how reliable the system is.

Pay for a heating or cooling con-



**Remember, when purchasing a new home heating or air-conditioning unit, select one with the EnergyStar-qualified seal.**

tractor for a thorough checkup—just as you would if buying a used car. Have them evaluate the system—and the cost might save you bigger bucks down the road.

These tips are brought to you by North American Technician Excellence, or NATE, the nation's largest, nonprofit certification organization for heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration technicians. The U.S. Department of Energy endorses NATE for raising quality standards and energy efficiency. For a contractor with NATE-certified technicians, go to the Consumer Contractor Connection at [www.natex.org](http://www.natex.org).