

Hints For Homeowners

Heat Pump Or Furnace—Which Is Right For Your Home?

(NAPSA)—When a new heating system is in your home's future, you'd be wise to consider the pros and cons of heat pumps and furnaces. Both distribute air through a home using heated air rather than heated water. A heat pump does this by extracting heat from outside air and circulating it through your home. A furnace uses electricity or gas to produce heat.

The following tips can help in selecting the system that's right for you:

- **Consider the climate.** For people who reside in areas where the temperature rarely dips below 30 degrees, a heat pump may be more affordable than a furnace, removing heat from outside air and transferring it to the home. As temperatures drop below 30 degrees, the heat pump must work harder to extract heat and its efficiency decreases as a result.

- **Compare efficiencies.** The efficiency of a heat pump is indicated by the unit's heating seasonal performance factor (HSPF), while the annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE) measures the efficiency of a gas furnace. The higher the HSPF or AFUE, the more efficient the unit and the less fuel it requires to heat your home.

- **Evaluate fuel costs.** Electric furnaces are often considered 100 percent efficient. However, these units may be more expensive to operate, depending on the cost of electricity. That's why it's always important to consider the cost of



A quality furnace or heat pump can help you keep comfortable at home without straining your wallet.

available fuels, including electricity, natural gas and oil, and how they will affect operating costs of the unit you select.

- **Consider controls.** Electronic ones may offer tighter temperature control and the ability to program periods of temperature setback, improving system efficiency and occupant comfort.

- **Choose a quality brand.** Look for a brand of equipment with a reputation for quality and reliability.

- **Look for multi-stage units.** Some furnaces, such as the Luxaire Acclimate series from Johnson Controls, offer multi-stage and variable-speed capabilities that improve efficiency, maintain constant temperatures and reduce sound levels.

To learn more about heating systems, visit www.luxaire.com.