



# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## How To Upgrade Your AC

(NAPSA)—Upgrading your central AC unit can save you some cool cash—if it's done correctly.

Federal regulations recently raised the minimum seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) to 13, from the previous minimum of 10. Higher energy costs might prompt many homeowners to upgrade their systems this year.

A central air-conditioning unit has two parts: an indoor unit and an outdoor unit. Some homeowners may be tempted to save money by just replacing the outdoor unit, but that may wind up costing them money later on.

In central air-conditioning systems with a 13 SEER or higher rating, the two units must be perfectly matched for the system to function properly. Improperly installed systems may function, but not at peak performance, and could prematurely fail.

Experts at the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI) suggest that homeowners ask their contractors to confirm that the outdoor unit is well matched with the indoor coil by giving them a Certificate of ARI-Certified Product Performance. This certifies that the product they purchased will perform as stated by the manufacturer.

Homeowners can also check if the system is perfectly matched by using the ARI Directory of Certified Product Performance at [www.aridirectory.org](http://www.aridirectory.org).

To be sure a technician has the experience and training to properly install the air-conditioning system, experts also recommend consulting a NATE (North American Technician Excellence)-certified technician. For more information, go to [www.NATEX.org](http://www.NATEX.org).