

There's more to saving energy with your new central air conditioner than meets the eye

Getting the most out of your new air conditioner requires not only efficient equipment, but also proper selection to meet the needs of your home, proper installation, and proper operation and maintenance. If you are about to purchase a new central air conditioner, here are a few things to keep in mind.

Equipment efficiency

In January 2006, the federal government raised the minimum Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) for manufacturers of central air conditioners from 10 to 13. The higher the SEER rating, the more efficient the unit and the less energy it requires to operate. Units with efficiency ratings of up to 20 SEER are available today. To help ensure the efficiency of your new air conditioning unit, ask your dealer to make sure your new air conditioner is a "matched" system and ask for a copy of the certified efficiency rating published by the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI) specifically for your system.

Equipment sizing

When it comes to central air conditioning, a bigger unit isn't necessarily better. When you have your dealer install a properly-sized unit, you can realize several additional benefits:

- **Lower utility bills** – Frequent starting and stopping means your air conditioner isn't running as efficiently as possible. Think about the difference in gas mileage your vehicle gets when driving in stop and go city traffic, versus cruising on the highway. Air conditioners operate in much the same way, running more efficiently when they can run for longer periods of time.
- **Lower equipment costs** – Properly-sized air conditioners are typically smaller, meaning you pay less up front for a new unit.
- **Improved comfort** – By running more consistently, properly-sized air conditioners provide better circulation of cool air, reducing cold drafts and warm spots. A properly-sized air conditioner is designed to cool your home to 75°F or colder at least 97.5 percent of the time during the cooling season.

To realize these benefits and more, ask your dealer to calculate the cooling load of your home using the Manual J approach, developed by the Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA), and then select the proper size of air conditioner for your home.

Proper installation

Your energy costs and your comfort will be affected if your air conditioner is not installed properly. While there are many aspects to a quality installation, here are some key points to discuss with your dealer:

- **Refrigerant charge** – Refrigerant is the working fluid in your air conditioner that removes the heat from your home. To operate properly, air conditioners must have the appropriate amount of refrigerant. That amount is dictated by the installation of your system and is unique to your home. Ask your dealer what procedures they use to ensure that your system is charged according to your manufacturer's recommendations. Ask them for a copy of the start up or service sheet documenting these activities.
- **Airflow** – To effectively remove heat and cool your home, air conditioners require the proper amount of airflow through your ducts. Too much or too little airflow can reduce the efficiency of your system and affect your comfort levels. Ask your dealer what procedures they use to ensure that your system's airflow is within the manufacturer's recommendations. Ask them for a copy of the start up or service sheet documenting these activities.

- **Duct sealing and insulation** – Don't waste your cooling dollars by letting your cool air escape through leaky or uninsulated ducts before it reaches your home. Ask your dealer to check for and repair any major leaks in your ducts before installing your new air conditioner. If possible, also take the time to insulate your ducts. Duct sealing and insulation to a minimum R-value of 6 are especially important if your ducts run through unconditioned areas of your home, such as a crawl space or attic.

Proper operation and maintenance

So you have worked with your dealer to select and install the appropriate air conditioner for your home. Don't give up now because you're almost ready to realize the full energy efficiency and comfort benefits of your efforts.

- **Operation** – Take advantage of the capabilities of your new air conditioner and operate it efficiently. A programmable thermostat can help, but remember, if you don't take the time to learn how to use your thermostat properly, you won't realize the potential benefits.
- **Maintenance** – Failing to provide proper maintenance is the number one cause of air conditioner failures. Help keep your new air conditioner operating at its peak by cleaning or replacing the air filter once a month and having your dealer conduct an annual pre-season check-up of your system.

Our Cool Cash Incentive program can help you get the right air conditioner installed – and up to \$250 in cash incentives

For a limited time, our 2007 Cool Cash Incentive program is available to customers who purchase and install qualifying central air conditioners. Cash incentives are available to residential Rocky Mountain Power electric customers who live in Utah. Available incentives include:

- **\$150** for the purchase and installation of a new, matched air conditioning system with an efficiency rating that meets or exceeds 15.0 SEER and 12.5 EER. Air conditioners that meet these requirements may also be eligible for a \$300 federal tax credit in 2007. Consult your tax advisor for details.
- **\$50** for the purchase and installation of a new, matched air conditioning system that is properly sized to meet the cooling loads of your home.
- **\$50** for the purchase and installation of a new, matched air conditioning system that is properly installed.

You can qualify for one or more of these incentives. In addition to receiving the incentives, your new air conditioner will operate more efficiently and provide better comfort. Remember, incentives are available for a limited time only.

For complete program rules and details, or to receive a copy of our Cool Cash Incentive program application, contact your local dealer or visit www.rockymountainpower.net/coolcash.

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