

SEASONAL SHIFT

The Highs and Lows of Home Comfort

Cooling your home can take quite a bit of your cold, hard cash. And the air conditioner itself – based on its age, condition and energy-efficiency rating – has a lot to do with whether you're spending more or less.

Central air conditioners are not created equal, and you see the differences in the SEER, a rating standard for "seasonal energy efficiency ratio". The higher the SEER, the better the energy efficiency.

Air conditioners are significant investments for any home. Plus, there's the operational costs. Overall, you'll want to look for a balanced investment – comparing the air conditioner's cost with your monthly operational savings. Here's your range of options:

- **High/Low** – Yes, they cost more upfront, but they also save more. Many homeowners prefer the logic of a higher upfront cost that saves them months after on their energy dollars. For high-efficiency central air conditioners, you'll look for 16 to 23 SEER.

- **Mid** – When you see SEER 14.5 to 17, you're in mid-range efficiency for central air conditioners. They're priced a little lower than the higher efficiency units and have a few less benefits. If you're replacing an air conditioner that's more than 12 to 15 years old, this would seem like top of the line by comparison.
- **Low/High** – Minimum energy efficiency comes in a 13 to 14.5 SEER air conditioner. The lower initial cost won't bring as high a level of savings on the operational costs, but many homeowners on a tight budget will consider this to be a good value.

What's right for your home? Give us a call or email us at kappl@kapplhvac.com to get our free report *Maximizing Energy Efficiency*. As a customer of **Kappl Heating & Air Conditioning**, we'd also be glad to come out and give you a free Energy Survey. Just give us a call.

Your **Quick Call** Comfort Hotline:

818-772-6215
www.kapplhvac.com

KAPPL
 HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

MY WORD

The Future

By Kevin Kappl

Hello Friends,
 Do you ever get the feeling that real life sometimes seems a little more like science fiction?



Our smartphones are smarter than we are. Our cars tell us where to go – and will even caution us if we've made a turn they didn't recommend. Wherever we go, we can carry as many books with us as we want, without breaking a sweat, thanks to eBook readers.

Yes, time and technology marches on. In a lot of ways, that's a good thing.

In this business, for example, we have seen incredible advances in home comfort systems over the years. For someone like me, who truly appreciates equipment that is the top of its kind, I'm impressed all the time by improvements in energy efficiency, convenience and comfort. And I love to see the faces of happy customers when they first "feel" this difference in their own homes.

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What Emotions Are Behind Your Shopping Decisions?

Emotions affect our behavior, including our shopping decisions. For example, if someone has cut you off in traffic on the way to the store, and you are experiencing a flash of anger, you may bring that anger into your decision-making process over, say, a new outfit. That might not sound logical, but once emotions are triggered, they influence what you do – whether you realize it or not.

Though anger is thought to be a negative emotion, it can actually give you a sense of optimism and a feeling of control, which can lead you to take more risks, says Dr. Jennifer S. Lerner, director of the Emotion and Decision Making Group at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

On the other side of the emotional scale, sadness can cause you to spend more money than if you were in a neutral state. Lerner's research involved two sets of participants – one group watched a sad film, the other group watched a neutral film. The participants watching the sad film were certain that the sadness would not influence their spending habits. Yet during another part of the study, they were willing to pay almost 300% more for a routine item than those who had seen the neutral film.

MONEYWISE

Home Improvements That Pay Off (or Turn Off)

Home values have slumped and the stock market is a rocky ride, but some investments can still increase value while enriching your quality of life. Certain home improvements are likely to improve the value of your home – and, hopefully, make it more attractive to a buyer down the road. But strategy helps – because some home improvements don't improve home value and can even lessen the ability to sell.

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So where's the payoff and what's the turn off? Most experts say making changes in the kitchen and bathroom are a "go" and can earn homeowners an 80% and upward return on investment for remodeling projects.

Kitchen Remodeling – The kitchen is the center of family activity and the most-used room in the house. Some of the areas where you can give attention are new plumbing fixtures, energy-efficient appliances, solid surface countertops, tile flooring and recessed lighting.

Bathroom Remodeling – Investments in a bathroom remodel are also viewed favorably. You can start with the plumbing where it is and replace outdated fixtures, maybe tub and toilet too. Other areas include updated lighting, tile floors and vanity.

Outdoors – Adding a deck or patio yields a good return – a covered patio in particular.

Landscaping is still a great bet too. It adds value and can be done with limited budget. Also, landscaping in the front adds that ever-attractive "curb appeal" that will impress your friends and neighbors and entice a future buyer.

Some areas of improvement, however, don't tend to yield a good return on investment. What areas are a "no"? A swimming pool could deter a significant pool of future buyers.

Also, while an outdoor kitchen is attractive and enjoyable, it's not the way to cook up a higher home value. Look for the "home value" caution flag in these areas too: converting a garage into a family room and converting a spare bedroom to an office.

Another upside of making home improvements now is that the cost may be less, starting with a low interest rate on a home equity line of credit. Additionally, contractors that aren't as busy as they once were may offer a discounted price, and home building materials that aren't as much in demand may be available at a better price.

"Quotable"

"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."

– Anne Bradstreet

Poison Prevention Begins with Smart Practices

As you spruce up your lawn or garden for the greener days to come, you'll find many elements that you'd be pleased to see eradicated – like weeds and pests. But the poisons and chemicals that take care of business at hand can cause serious problems if they end up where they're not intended.

Following these guidelines from the Home Safety Council can help keep your family and your pets safe:

- **Read the labels of products you buy and keep in your home.** If you see the words, "Caution," "Warning," "Danger," "Poison" or "Keep Out of Reach of Children," be very careful.
- **Store poisons in a place where children cannot see or touch them.** Use child safety locks. Products you should keep locked up include: pesticides, automotive fluids, charcoal lighter, paint thinner, antifreeze and turpentine. Ideally, hazardous products should be stored in a locking cabinet.
- **Keep products in the container they came in.** Do not put them in a different bottle or jar.
- **Do not mix products together** because their contents could react together with dangerous results.
- **Gasoline is very dangerous inside a home or garage.** Gasoline vapors can explode with just a tiny spark. Never bring or use gasoline indoors. Use it as motor fuel only. If you must keep gasoline at home, use a special safety container.
- When using harsh products, **follow directions.** For example, use gloves, eye goggles and masks if the label says so.
- Pesticides to kill bugs, mice and rats are extremely dangerous. If possible, **have a professional help you.**
- **Mix insect sprays outdoors, away from areas used by your family and pets.**
- **Pool chemicals are poisonous and can catch on fire.** Store and use pool chemicals according to the manufacturer's directions. Keep them tightly covered in the containers they came in. Keep them dry and away from other chemicals and products.

DID YOU KNOW?

- *The phrase "sleep tight" derives from the fact that early mattresses were each filled with straw and held up with rope stretched across the bedframe. A tight sleep was a comfortable sleep.*
- *The liquid inside young coconuts can be used as substitute for blood plasma.*
- *A raisin dropped in a fresh glass of soda will bounce up and down continually from the bottom of the glass to the top.*
- *An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.*



Has Your Home Passed a Radon Test?

You can't see it, smell it or taste it, but it can create a really big health risk. Radon is a poisonous gas that comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe. Breathing air that contains radon is a serious matter – because it's the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking.

Any home may have a radon problem, yet testing can be inexpensive and easy, only taking a few minutes of your time. You can test your home yourself by picking up a radon test kit at a hardware or home improvement store. Or you can order one by calling the National Radon Hotline at 1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236).

Short-term tests take between 2 and 90 days. Long-term tests take more than 90 days. Start with a short-term test and follow your kit's instructions.

MY WORD (...from page 1)

If your system is showing signs of age, we'll be glad to talk with you about some terrific options. Just give us a call.

In the meantime, we're committed to helping you keep your current system op-

erating at its best – and regular tune-ups

are the best way we can help make that happen. If

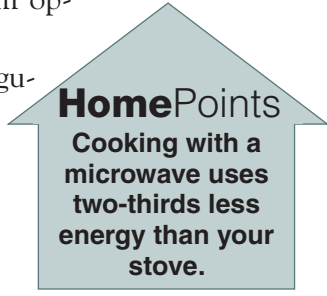
you'll call and schedule your spring tune-up, we'll get someone out and help you get ready for the warmer days that are on their way.

Best wishes for an enjoyable season. Looking forward to hearing from you soon.



Kevin Kappl

P.S. Don't forget to check out the special offers on this page. If you're not able to use them, feel free to pass them on to a friend or neighbor.



HomePoints
Cooking with a microwave uses two-thirds less energy than your stove.

Tell Your Thermostat When You'll Be Home!

Why keep your home comfortable when no one's there? Let your programmable thermostat keep the temperature just right, whenever you'd like.

Let us program your "ideal" temperature for comfort and savings. Then let the programmable thermostat adjust the temperature for the times when you're home, when you're away, or when you're asleep.

It saves time, energy and trouble. Call **Kappl Heating & Air Conditioning** at 818-772-6215 today.

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At **Kappl Heating & Air Conditioning**, we enjoy providing superior service and value to friends like you. And we'd like to offer the same expertise to your friends and family. Just call **Kappl Heating & Air Conditioning** today at 818-772-6215 to let us know you're sending another friendly face our way, and we'll take **\$20 off** your next service. Just our way of saying thank you! (Expires June 1, 2011)

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The Best Deal Around Year in, Year Out

When it comes to regular maintenance of your heating and cooling system, you won't find a better deal than our Comfort Club. Just look at these benefits:

- **Two pre-season tune-ups a year**
- **Energy savings from improved efficiency**
- **Better indoor air quality**
- **Longer equipment life**

- **Discounts on repairs, every time**
- **Priority service at no extra charge, even during the busiest season**

With discounts and energy savings, you'll soon find that club membership can pay for itself – while keeping you comfortable year after year. Join today! Call **Kappl Heating & Air Conditioning** today at 818-772-6215.

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HOMESENSE