

HOUSE WARMERS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Every couple of months, we at OSI Comfort Specialists like to touch base with you. In these communications, we want to be informative and to give you money saving ideas. Throughout this current issue of "Housewarmers" we will be sharing rebate information, Mickey's "truth to the myths" and introducing you to our new and improved website.

As this holiday season concludes, my brother Richie and I would like to thank each and every one of you for your business. We love to hear from you. We like to hear both the good and the bad. Hearing the positive allows us to commend those who made it possible, and encourages us to keep up the good work. Hearing the negative allows us to try to do better in the future.

Many of the calls that I personally receive from our customers deal with energy prices. You ask me what I think the future holds. I wish I knew what prices will be in the future. Because of the uncertainty of energy prices 20 years ago, we started the GAP program. Since then we have been able to extend to you the lowest possible prices.

If you recall, last winter some of your neighbors got locked into fixed prices with other heating companies. They paid over \$4.00 per gallon all winter, while you paid half of that! To add insult to injury, cancellation of those other fixed contracts can have costly penalties.

We would like to thank our staff (many of them with us for decades) for their dedication to their jobs and their devotion to you, our customers. Our expert

professional staff allows us to provide you with the highest quality service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year! Whenever you call, there is always a staff member available to answer your call.

We at OSI Comfort Specialists would like to share some of our New Years Resolutions with you. We resolve to improve our technical skills by continuing education for our service technicians and supervisors. We resolve to continue to offer you the latest and most efficient equipment on the market. We also resolve to keep you, our dear customers, informed about the latest technologies, pricing and much more on our new and improved website www.osicomfort.com.

Once again, we would like to thank you for your loyalty, trust and continued support. Here at OSI Comfort Specialists, we would like to wish you all a happy, healthy and wonderful New Year.

Marty

MYTHS, TRUTHS & THE EXPERTS

I was out on a service call with one of my technicians; the homeowner was a single woman who just purchased the home and was a new customer. We were there to check out the system for her to make sure everything was operational. As a new homeowner, she had a lot of questions regarding the heating and cooling system. I was more than happy to oblige, after all if any of you have talked to me at your home or on the phone, you know I like to talk, and I am not ashamed of it. Anyway, she began asking questions about the system. The bad part was that after every question, she would give me an answer that she had gotten from friends and family. It frustrated me but it also seemed to frustrate her because she had gotten so much contradictory information. I could see that she really wanted to find out what the facts were. The thing is that she had some really good questions.



There are a lot of experts these days, wouldn't you agree? It seems that everywhere you turn you find someone who heard it from a friend, who heard it from a friend. Well you get the idea. But truth does matter, it always has, which has led me to my topic this month. I'm going to take this customers' questions and put some "truth to the myths" that are out there regarding your HVAC system.

Myth - It's cold outside and your heat is off. Wouldn't setting the thermostat to the highest setting heat the house quicker?

Truth - Turning the thermostat to a warmer setting than normal is counterproductive, yes counterproductive! Because it will heat to a warmer temperature than you need and will use more energy in the process. Plus, the room will not heat any faster. The setting on the thermostat does NOT determine the temperature that is coming out of the vents. It is the same temperature whether the thermostat is set at 72°, or at 60°. *(Continued on next page)*

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PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR CONDITIONING

Myth - You use a ceiling fan to help reduce your utility bill. Does it matter which way the fan is turning? Isn't it there to just keep the air circulated?

Truth - Yes (with a caveat). Generally, ceiling fans move counter-clockwise to provide a breeze that cools and, in the process, can make 78° temperature feel like 72°. A fan in the clockwise position allows for the air in the bottom of the room to be “scooped” up into the upper part of the room. We all know that heat rises and cool air falls, so you could put it in this position to keep the warm air towards the ceiling instead of in the lower area of the room. By utilizing a ceiling fan, it will help lower utility bills (or runtime of your HVAC system) while, even at high speed, using little more energy than needed for a 100-watt light bulb. However in the heating season the movement of air will make you feel cooler, and therefore is not recommended (unless of course you raised the thermostat to the highest setting when you first got home – just kidding).

Myth - You are ready to replace your heating or cooling system. Wouldn't the largest size system get you the best kind of heating and cooling? And wouldn't it heat and cool the house quicker, thus saving energy?

Truth - Does a glove that is too large keep your hand warmer in the winter? No, by the same token, if your air conditioner is too large, it would always be turning on and off, or “short-cycling”, to adjust the temperature just right in your home. You may have heard this, but an air conditioner is a large “de-humidifier.” Thus, if an over-sized air conditioner is short cycling to maintain temperature, then it will NOT run long enough cycles to remove the excess humidity in the air that makes the air warmer in the first place. In the heating season, a furnace will short-cycle also if it is designed too large for the home. The unfortunate result would be that the furnace would not run long enough to dissipate the heat on the heat exchanger (the metal “fire” box inside the furnace that separates the flames and noxious and hazardous gases from entering the air going into your home) and therefore make it brittle and susceptible to cracks and holes. These constant “short-cycles” throughout the day and night will also cost more to operate than if the system were the right size for the home.

Myth - If no one's in your home for eight or nine hours during the day, wouldn't it save money to keep your heating and cooling system off during that time?

Truth - Yes and No! I have always said to customers that they should invest in a programmable thermostat for just this purpose (not to mention up to 10% energy savings). But I would never

tell a customer to turn their system off completely. A programmable thermostat will offset your “normal” temperature when you are in the home, to a lower or higher (seasonal) temperature during the 8-9 hour time when you are away. When you are away from the home for a long period, (such as at work) if the system is “off”, when you get home you have to turn the system back “on”, then wait around for 1-2 hours until the house is back to your normal temperature. A programmable thermostat will reduce the amount of system run-time during the workday. It will turn “itself” on before you come home. When you walk in the door the temperature is already where you want. No waiting! There are other variables to factor in, such as the outside temperature, pets living in the home, water pipes, computer equipment, musical instruments, wood furnishings, etc that are susceptible to temperature and humidity levels. I never recommend turning the system off completely. There is no significant energy savings above and beyond the offsetting of the temperature, to override the inconvenience of having to “wait” for the house to return to normal temperature.

Myth - I don't use my heating and cooling system very much, so then I don't need to have maintenance done every year, do I?

Truth - The point is that you use it, even if it's not as much as other customers do. You may not drive your car very much, but you still do routine oil changes and tune-ups on your car. On average in the Long Island area, your heating and cooling system runs about 2,000 hours of operation a year. If I were to get in my car and drive 2,000 hours going 60 MPH, then I would travel 120,000 miles. You would never consider driving that long without an oil change. Let alone half that distance. You don't want the car to break down. You want to make sure the car will get you from point A to point B without any trouble, and that it will operate at all times to its maximum capability and fuel-efficiency. Most of us will NEVER drive 120,000 miles in one year. Yet, we will take advantage of our heating and cooling system year after year and not get it routinely checked out by a professional HVAC company. Then we get angry because the system breaks down in summer, or the refrigerant leaks out and causes a water leak, or it costs us an arm and a leg to heat and cool the house. All of this can be corrected with routine maintenance.

These are just some of the myths we hear all the time, and trust me there are many more out there. If you hear one or just have a question (about plumbing, heating, air conditioning or solar hot water) feel free to contact us.

Hoping you have a good winter, *Mickey*

OUR NEW WEBSITE

We have been designing a new website for our customers to use with more information, helpful tips, and easy to use payment options with many new features.

We would like to obtain our customers email addresses to allow us to have the capability to send news alerts and eventually to be able to send our Housewarmers issues directly to your computer (another way to go green!) You will also be able to receive coupons to use towards OSI Comfort Specialists services.

The new website has features such as: check the current price of fuel oil or natural gas for the day, contests and promotions, request service, request oil deliveries or even see your local weather. You can check before and after photos of the work we do here, learn about the products you have (or could have) in your homes. You can find many more helpful ideas we have developed to make your lives a little easier and your homes more energy efficient and comfortable.

If you sign up for our website within the next three months and leave us your email address, we will credit your

account for \$15.00 towards any OSI Comfort Specialists service or installation. Please include your account number (if possible) with your email to help obtain your credit. This offer is limited to one per household. Please help the environment by saving paper. Do not hesitate to call or email us to ask us about our new website, or just sign-up at www.osicomfort.com.

Thanks Again,
Michael Jared Levi

For your rebate, go to “Contests & Promotions” on the website, and fill in the required fields.



We Love Hearing from You!

Dear Mr. Levi,

I am writing to let you know about our recent experience with OSI. We are presently under contract with another oil company, so when it came time that we needed a new oil tank; we naturally went to them for pricing. Feeling they were not offering the best plan for the job (welding a new tank together in the basement), or the best pricing, we contacted OSI. From my first meeting with Bob Rubin, I had a good feeling about OSI. In addition to providing better pricing, Bob suggested a slightly smaller tank so that we would be able to get it down our narrow basement steps without hassle. After many measurements, Bob assured me that everything would be done perfectly, and as promised, the end result of this project far exceeded any expectations we had.

Vadym and Dimetri, your service technicians were excellent! They were professional and friendly, and their ability to drain, cut up and remove the oil tank, and then install a new one with absolutely no mess or damage to our home, was a feat that was no less than amazing! They were even able to save the clean oil from the old tank and pump it back into the new one. Not a drop of oil was spilled anywhere throughout this entire process. If only all home improvements went so smoothly.

Our exiting contract with the other company expires soon, and Bob provided us with a new contract for oil delivery to begin this Fall. We look forward to being long time customers of OSI, and will gladly refer you to friends and family. Thank you all for a job well done!

*Yours truly,
Jeffery and Barbara Torem*

Dear Mr. Levi,

As a long time very satisfied oil customer I wanted to let you know that our Comfort Specialists work is just as commendable.

Patrick Shannon was the man who worked on my air conditioning, corrected a serious problem and could not have been more thorough, knowledgeable and courteous. It was as a pleasure to have him here.

*Thank you
Hortese Tonner*

Dear Dear Sirs;

On October 28, 2009 your repairman, Mike Caulfield, came to my home in Far Rockaway to tune up my boiler. I was very impressed and pleased with his work. For I observed that not only was he very thorough and meticulous in removing the flue pipe, top and side of my boiler to clean out all the soot, but after replacing the flue filter and cleaning the nozzle and igniter his check out discovered that my low water cut off was not working. This could have been dangerous in addition to leaving me without heat this winter.

After Mike cleared the sediment from the cut out switch to get it working, he called the office to schedule a skimming to keep it from happening again. The next day he returned, skimmed the boiler and cleaned out the cut out switch again.

Now the water drains clean and the low water cut off works every time. So I am sure that I will have no more problems this winter. In addition Mike explained to me how to operate the system to get the best efficiency from it.

Mike is a real professional and I hope you can send him next year when my boiler needs a tune up again. You should be very proud to have an employee such as him.

*Cordially,
Fred & Gloria Strauss*

Help can be a phone call away

We understand that financial assistance might be needed by some during the economic crisis. If you qualify for financial assistance the federal Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) might be able to help. Grants are available to help low-income customers pay their energy bills. Seniors are also eligible for the program if they fall within the income requirements (call HEAP for details).

In addition, Citizens Energy is working with CITGO Petroleum offering families help as well. Customers must call 1-877-563-4645 or apply on line at www.citizensenergy.com. If qualified, you will receive a voucher for 100 gallons of free

fuel oil. Citizens Energy will begin taking applications starting January 12, 2010 and customers can apply until February 26, 2010 or until funds are exhausted.

For further information - getting help could be as easy as a phone call away:

- ☐ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
Nassau 516-227-7607 or 1-800-674-6327
- ☐ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
Suffolk 631-853-8825 or 1-800-674-6327
- ☐ Home Energy Assistance Program
(HEAP) Queens 718-471-3702
- ☐ Citizens Energy (Ask Joe) 1-877-563-4645
or www.citizensenergy.com

REBATES ARE FREE MONEY!

There are many rebates and federal and state tax credits that are currently available for you. Many customers might find the explanations and figures a bit overwhelming, so I would like to try to explain them to you.

Federal tax credits that will apply to OSI Comfort Specialists customers are for installations of oil furnaces and gas or oil hot water boilers with efficiency ratings over 90%. The rebate will get you 30% of the cost, up to \$1,500. If you install a central a/c unit with a seer rating over 16 you can receive 30% of the cost up to \$1,500. If you install a high efficiency gas hot water heater with energy factor over .82 will qualify also for 30% of the cost, up to \$1,500.

Solar Hot Water systems for radiant heating or domestic hot water are still available from the Federal Tax Credit department. They will give you 30% of

cost of installation with no cap. The State is also giving back 25% of the system cost in tax credits. Here is a little example that is typical:

**Typical Solar DHW Cost =
\$12,000 Beginning investment**

Federal Tax Credit 30% = \$3,600
State Tax Credit 25% = \$3,000
Total Tax Credits = \$6,600

**After credits =
\$5,400 Actual Final Investment**

That means the government is giving you \$6,600 towards a solar hot water system. We don't know how long this will last as the credits dropped out pretty quickly in the 1970's but there's no doubt about it this is the way we are going for the future!!

If you are one of our gas customers and doing a new installation with us, National

Grid can offer you \$1,000 for the installation of a high efficiency gas boiler over 90% efficient, \$500 for hot water boilers over 85% efficient and \$300 for a high efficiency indirect water heater if attached to a natural gas energy star boiler. National Grid can also offer you \$25 back towards

programmable thermostats up to two per household. If you are looking to add an outdoor reset control we can also get you a rebate for \$100 towards the installation.

I know that all these numbers can be overwhelming. If you are interested in taking advantage of some of the rebates and tax incentives while they are still available, please don't hesitate to call me. You can also find more information about rebates and tax incentives on www.dsireusa.org.

**Any questions please feel free to ask
Michael Jared Levi**

