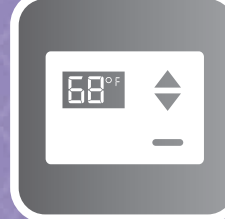


Heat pump operation and maintenance



Know your power to keep your heat pump system running at its highest efficiency level, increase its life, prevent breakdowns and decrease repair costs.

OPERATION

FIND THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD

When heating your home, find the temperature setting that's most comfortable for your household and leave it there, as opposed to letting it get too warm inside. Moving the thermostat temperature setting up even one degree in some cases can cause your heat pump's more expensive supplemental heat to kick in, using more energy and costing you more money.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR SETBACK

Your heat pump should be controlled by a programmable setback thermostat especially designed for heat pumps. By reducing the thermostat temperature setting at night or when the house isn't occupied, you can save both money and energy. However, not all setback thermostats are designed for heat pumps. Heat pump programmable thermostats use special controls to eliminate or minimize the amount of less efficient supplemental heat used during setback recovery. Limit your thermostat back to five degrees to shorten the recovery period.

AUTOMATIC SETBACK

If you have a programmable heat pump setback thermostat, the hardest part will be the initial set up. Once you have set the times and desired temperatures into the thermostat, it will automatically control the temperature and setback for you, ensuring that you get both savings and comfort.

MANUAL SETBACK

If you don't have a programmable setback thermostat designed for a heat pump, be careful about the amount of setback you use. Without special setback features, a regular thermostat may use all the energy saved during nighttime setback to recover the temperature in the morning.

NOTE THE RUNNING TIME

Heat pumps will run a good deal longer than conventional furnaces, especially when it's very cold outside. That's normal. Don't worry about excessive run time unless your heat pump runs a lot during mild temperatures. If that happens, call a service technician to investigate.

DON'T BLOCK THE AIR FLOW

Heat pumps need strong air flows through their ducts to have a long, dependable life. Restricting air flow by closing air vents in the system or covering vents with furniture or rugs will make the system work harder and may shorten heat pump life.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT DEFROSTING

Your heat pump will automatically defrost itself. Under normal defrost operation, it's not unusual to see a cloud of steam or vapor. Your heat pump's supplemental heat may kick on while the unit is defrosting – that's normal too. However, if your heat pump's outdoor unit is covered with frost and it doesn't seem to be melting off, there may be a problem with your unit's defrost. In that case, call a service technician.



MAINTENANCE

CLEAN AND REPLACE FILTERS

Proper filter maintenance is needed to prevent expensive heat pump repairs. Filters should be changed or cleaned – depending on the type – regularly. Follow the instructions in your owner’s manual to determine whether it needs to be changed or cleaned and how often. Many new thermostats will allow you to program in periodic reminders of when to clean or change the filter.

Always keep a filter in your heat pump system. It may be tempting to leave it out to avoid changing it, but don’t do it. Without a filter, dust and dirt will build up on the heat pump coil, which impedes the heat transfer, causing inefficient operation of the system and premature equipment failure.

KEEP OUTDOOR UNIT BREATHING FREE

To promote good airflow around the unit and efficient operation, keep the outdoor heat pump unit clean and free of debris, including leaves and snow. Avoid stacking firewood where it could restrict air flow to the unit, and don’t build a deck over or around the unit.

ANNUAL SERVICE

Heat pumps need to be professionally serviced at least once a year.

A professional annual maintenance should include:

- Checking the thermostat operation to ensure your heat pump will keep you comfortable when you’re home and save energy when you’re away
- Tightening all electrical connections and measuring voltage and current on all motors
- Lubricating all moving parts; parts that aren’t lubricated cause friction in motors and increase the amount of energy your heat pump uses
- Inspecting the condensate drain when your heat pump is in cooling mode; a plugged drain can cause water damage in the house and affect indoor humidity
- Cleaning evaporator and condenser coils; dirty coils reduce the system’s ability to cool your home and cause the system to run longer, increasing energy costs and reducing the life of the equipment
- Cleaning and adjusting blower components to provide proper system airflow for greater comfort levels; airflow problems can reduce your system’s efficiency up to 15 percent
- Inspecting unit for proper refrigerant charge and adjust if necessary.

For information specific to your heat pump, please consult the manufacturer or the guide that came with the equipment.

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