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Air Filters

Almost all residences have filters of some kind.

In winter, homes with forced air heat need to have the filters changed at least every other month (more often is better). This will allow more even distribution of heat throughout the house, help keep the system in good condition, and save on energy costs.

In summer, your air conditioning unit filters must be changed on a regular basis as well. Installing new ones will increase the efficiency of the unit, will keep you cooler, and will help cut down on service calls on hot days.

But most important, by changing the filters you will save money.

How to: Most filters are in the return vent for your furnace/air conditioner. You can find it by feeling vents when the blower is on. If air is coming out, it is not the return. Most returns can be opened by turning a couple of screw latches on the frame. Remove the old filter, noting the size on the side of the paper side supports. Replace it with the same sized filter, which can be purchased at hardware stores for a small amount. Close the frame and turn the screws to latch it in place. If you don't find the filter this way, it is in the main unit itself. You can usually open it and find the filter on top. Again replace it with another filter of the same size. Filters in window units can be cleaned or replaced. With the unit turned off, remove the front of the unit, take out the filter (usually foam), clean it or take it to the hardware and find a replacement that is the same size. Reinstall the filter, put the front cover on, and you're ready to go.

Fireplaces

- 1. Open the flue before starting the fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool enough to touch.
- 2. Roll up a piece of newspaper, light it, and hold it up the chimney. That will start the chimney drawing. Then light the fire.
- 3. Close the fireplace screen or door when the fireplace is in use to keep sparks from flying out.
- 4. Do not put anything, including paper and kindling, closer than three feet from the fireplace while it is in use.
- 5. Never leave a fire unattended.
- 6. Burn only dry, seasoned hardwood. Do not use green wood, treated lumber, painted wood, or rolled paper.
- 7. Never use combustible liquids such as kerosene, turpentine, lighter fluid, or gasoline to start or accelerate the fire.
- 8. Do not stuff scrap paper, gift wrapping paper, or old Christmas trees into the fireplace. Loose paper could fly out and ignite the roof. Gift wrapping paper may emit toxic fumes.
- 9. Do not use excessive amounts of paper or wood to create a roaring fire. A roaring fire may ignite creosote, a toxic chemical that accumulates on fireplace walls.
- 10. Do not dispose of burnt logs or ashes until they cool completely. Dispose of cooled ashes in a metal container.
- 11. Notify Management of any problem with the fireplace, such as smoke backing into the room or the flue not working.