Air Conditioners

Why is my indoor A/C coil/pipes/compressor covered with ice?

A frozen indoor coil indicates that the refrigerant level is low, or the air filter is clogged. In either case, the coil will get colder & colder until the condensation on the coil turns to ice. This condition can be very harmful to the air conditioner, and is a common cause of bad compressors.

In the event of a freeze-up, turn the system off. Check the air filter. If the filter is not clogged, the air conditioner probably needs service.

Does my air conditioner use freon? Is freon "illegal?"

The current law prevents the use of R-22 in NEW systems after 2010. The law also caps production of R-22, and will result in higher prices as supply tightens. R-22 should be available to service your air conditioner for a long time to come.

What can be done to fix "hot spots" in my house?

Temperature variations from room to room result when duct work is incorrectly sized. In some cases, our technicians are able to rework the duct system to improve airflow. Another solution may be to replace the windows in a hot room with Low-E glass or have the existing windows tinted. The reduced sun load will cool the room and save energy.

My air conditioner has just been diagnosed with a bad compressor. Should I repair the system or just get a new air conditioner?

Compressors fail for a number of reasons. One of the most common is "burnout." In this situation, acid and burnt varnish are distributed throughout the system contaminating the indoor and outdoor coils and the refrigerant piping. This acidic oil is very difficult and costly to clean-up and will contaminate and shorten the life of the new compressor. In a burnout situation, we recommend replacing the entire air conditioner (indoor, outdoor, and piping) to insure long life and reliability of the new system.

If the compressor failure is due to broken valves, lightning strike, etc., compressor replacement is a feasible option. A homeowner should then consider the current age of the system, the energy saved by a new high-efficiency A/C, and benefits of a new system warranty.

Furnaces

How often does my furnace need a check-up?

All manufacturers recommend annual maintenance by a trained service technician. On a gas furnace, this helps ensure safe and efficient operation. If you have an oil furnace, yearly tune-ups are a must due to the dirty fuel and a more sensitive burn cycle. A modern oil furnace that is not maintained can drop efficiency from 80% to 50-60% in just two years. Clogged fuel filters can lead to fuel pump failure. A dirty burner can cause soot buildup in the heat exchanger and chimney, requiring an expensive chimney cleaning. An annual tune-up can keep your oil furnace at peak efficiency and help avoid these costly problems.

Can a propane furnace be converted for use with natural gas?

Yes. Most furnaces are shipped for use with natural gas and are field-converted to propane by the installers. The natural gas components are typically stored in the furnace in case natural gas is available in the future. If the required parts are missing, they can be ordered. The cost for conversion is generally $200-$300.

What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is an odorless poison gas produced in small amounts by any gas or propane appliance. CO (Carbon monOxide) produced by a furnace is removed from the house by the chimney. CO from a gas cook stove is normally produced in small quantities and should not cause a safety issue. CO becomes a problem when an appliance malfunctions. A bird could get stuck in a chimney and within minutes a furnace or water heater could fill a house with CO. Any house with gas or propane appliances should have a CO detector. We have personally seen cases were a furnace malfunctioned and the CO detector awoke the family and saved lives. Carbon monoxide detectors are inexpensive and can be purchased at any home store. They're just as important as smoke detectors!

How do I light the pilot on my furnace?

The method for re-lighting a pilot varies from one furnace to another and instructions should be printed on the furnace door. Occasionally a pilot light can be blown out by a strong down draft. However, a blown pilot is usually caused by a dirty pilot burner or a bad thermocouple. For safety reasons, these repairs should be completed by a technician. Modern furnaces do not have standing pilots, and attempting to manually light a furnace can be very dangerous. Newer furnaces have either an automatic spark to relight the pilot, or an electronic ignition system (hot surface ignitor), and cannot be manually lit.

Air Cleaners

I thought pollution was outside. Why should I be worried about my air indoors?

We spend 90% of our time every day indoors. Plus, today's efficient, airtight homes are excellent at conserving energy, but that also makes them better at trapping potentially irritating particles inside the home. With the rising number of people who suffer from allergies and asthma, indoor air quality has become more and more important to our general health and well-being.

What does Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) mean?

Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) is recognized by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a fair and objective measure of various air cleaner technologies. CADR provides the number of cubic feet of clean air a unit delivers each minute. A higher CADR means a greater amount of clean air is being delivered to your home.

I keep my home very clean. Could the air in my home still not be clean?

Yes. Consider that the average home generates 40 pounds of dust for every 1500 square feet of space. While regular home cleaning is an excellent measure to reduce exposure to irritants and pollutants, it's simply impossible to remove enough of the material by hand to make your home's air as comfortable as it can be.

What can Trane do to help make my home's air cleaner?

The best thing you can do is to remove as many of the particles from your home's air as you can. That's why we've introduced the revolutionary new TRANE CleanEffects™ air filtration system. It works as part of your total home comfort system to remove up to an industry-leading 99.98% of the airborne allergens from your home's filtered air. There is no other system you can buy that matches the effectiveness of TRANE CleanEffects.