

- Why "Going Green" is the Way to Go
- 5 Easy Ways to Save Money on Gasoline
- Fight Fires With Safety Facts

Unique Indoor Comfort's

# HOMESense

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Time saving, money saving and energy savings tips for your home.

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\$3.00



## MyWord

By Stephen Ignoffo

Hello Friends,

I have learned many things about people in this business and one thing I know for sure is that most people want to have a choice when it becomes necessary to replace their heating system. Those choices are about to be limited. Starting in 2013, the Federal Government has mandated new energy guidelines for furnaces. What does this mean for you as a consumer? No more 80% efficiency furnaces! You will only be able to get a 90% efficiency or higher furnace. Although these new furnaces will save you money on utility bills, in some cases it's not always the best choice.

These new mandates have brought on much discussion amongst fellow contractors in this industry and I was appalled when I overheard them saying how great it will be to charge more for installing these high efficiency furnaces next year.

The 80% units that are soon to be phased out have several advantages:



## 9 Top Energy-Saving Tips to Keep Your Money Where It Belongs!

During the warm months, air conditioning can account for up to 70% of your utility bill. Don't just watch your hard-earned dollars evaporate into thin (climate-controlled) air. Follow these tips to save energy dollars:

### 1) Get a cooling system tune-up.

This simple maintenance can spot "energy robbers", poor performance and avoid costly repairs.

### 2) Set the thermostat to 78°

when you're at home and at 80 - 83° when you're away. An electronic thermostat can do this automatically. Call to find out more.



### 3) Keep your windows and doors tightly closed when running the air conditioner.

Replace weather stripping and caulking around windows, doors, and other areas. Fewer drafts mean more savings.

**4) Change air filters monthly.** This is the easiest, least expensive energy saver you've got! (We can leave you extras with your tune-up.)

**5) Close blinds and drapes during the day,** especially on the sunny sides of the house. Turn window blinds up instead of down, and use white blinds instead of darker colors to reflect the heat instead of absorbing it.

**6) Check ductwork for holes, cracks, and leaks.** Repair them right away! This is an energy drain,

plus it can draw moldy air into your home. Call if you suspect a problem.

**7) Run your dishwasher and clothes dryer in the evening**

(when the house

is cooler) to reduce strain on the air conditioning system.<sup>0</sup>

**8) Use fans to circulate cool air.**

A gentle breeze costs just pennies a day to run continuously. Get the most out of your cooling dollar!

**9) Add insulation to your attic** and make sure your attic is properly ventilated.

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## Why “Going Green” is the Way to Go

# HOMESMART

We’ve all heard the term “going green,” but have you ever actually wondered what it takes to go green? With phenomena such as global warming and air pollution constantly making headlines, industries have tried to make more environmentally friendly products. Now you have the chance to save the environment (and money!) with these easy tips:

- **Use a high-efficiency showerhead** – this will save up to 3,000 gallons of water a year, as well as reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1,000 pounds.

- **Compost** – Buy a compost bin. Depositing food and lawn wastes in a compost bin will create nutrient-rich soil perfect for spring planting.



- **Increase the efficiency of your water heater** – we all love hot water, and now you can reduce your carbon emissions and energy bills by 25% or more. Set your water temperature to 120° and wrap the heater in a water heater insulating blanket. Insulating the first 6 feet of your pipes will also reduce energy costs.

- **Replace Current Lights with Compact Fluorescents** – Buying compact fluorescents may be more expensive; however, they pay for themselves in less than two years. Compact fluorescents last longer than normal light bulbs, and can significantly reduce your energy costs.

## 5 Easy Ways to Save Money on Gasoline

# MONEYWISE

We all hate seeing the dollar ticker increase as we wait for our gas tank to fill. So, enjoy these quick tips that will help you save money the next time you fill up:

- ▶ **Combine trips.** Every time you start your car, you’re using a lot of gas. To avoid starting your car several times a day, just combine your errands.

- ▶ **Premium isn’t always best.** Avoid paying for “premium” and “high-octane” gas unless your

car requires it. For most cars, the cheapest gas will work just as efficiently.

- ▶ **Keep your trunk clean.** Remember that 11<sup>th</sup> grade physics course that you never paid attention in? Here’s a quick refresher: the heavier an object is, the more energy it will take to move. While having your prized cinderblock collection in your trunk at all times “just in case,” may seem like a great idea, you’d be better off taking it out.

The lighter the car, the more fuel efficient it will be.

- ▶ **Seek out the cheapest prices.** While this may sound pretty simple, we sometimes choose convenience over logic. Gas stations often change their prices around noon, so try to fill up in the morning if possible.

- ▶ **There’s an app for that.** Apps like GasBuddy or [www.GasPriceWatch.com](http://www.GasPriceWatch.com) search your location for the cheapest gas around.

## Fight Fires With Safety Facts

Some things are too hot to handle, and home fires are one of them. They pose a very real threat to homeowners – yet, like many things, fire safety isn't thought about until it's too late. Since statistics show that over 3,500 Americans die each year in fires, that's a dangerous mentality. So what can you do to keep your family safe in the event of a home fire?

### Have an evacuation plan.

No, this is not a “Hey, let's just meet somewhere outside in case of a fire” plan. Have a real plan, where you have contingencies for each room in case of a blocked exit. Every member of the family should be aware of the plan and know what to do in case of a fire.

### Leave the possessions

**behind.** We know that there are important items in your home that you would want to save,

but is that so important that you would sacrifice your life for them? The number one priority in case of a fire is to get out of the house as safely and as quickly as possible.



### Stay low to avoid the

**smoke.** Also, never open a door that is hot to the touch. Use your hand to feel the doorknob or gap between the door and door frame. If it is hot, use your secondary escape route.

### Designate a meeting place.

Creating a specific place to meet after your escape is essential to a fire safety plan. Everyone knows where to go and it will be easier to see who has made it out of the house safely.

### Keep your dryer vents clean and safe!

Over 20,000 home fires per year are caused by lint build-up that blocks the air flow and catches fire in your dryer vent. The National Fire Protection Association recommends having your dryer vent cleaned by a professional annually.

**Detectors save lives.** Check your smoke detector at least once a month for dead batteries. Placing a smoke detector on every floor of your house dramatically increases your chances of survival.

- The average coach airline meal costs the airline \$4.00. The average first class meal: \$50.
- In 30 minutes, the average body gives off enough combined heat to bring a half gallon of water to boil.
- An earthquake on Dec. 16, 1811 caused parts of the Mississippi River to flow backwards.
- The symbol on the 'pound' key (#) is called an octothorpe.
- In Ancient Egypt, some people paid their taxes in honey.

*Did You Know?*



# MyWord

continued from page 1

- Fitting to your existing ductwork and a/c systems are easier
- They use the existing flue system.
- Less initial cost, in fact, the cost to install will be about \$1000-\$1500 less to install.

What is the solution to this soon to be problem?

Well if your unit is more than about 12 years old, now is the best time to have our system engineers take a look at your heating system and let you know your options before they are gone.

Sincerely,

Stephen Ignoffo

P.S. I want to encourage you to get the word out to your friends before its too late!

**HomePoints**

System maintenance combined with thermostat settings and recommended insulation can cut your energy use for heating and cooling by 20%-50%.

**RECOMMENDED BY**

# FIRE DEPARTMENTS

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