

**SEASONAL SHIFT**

**The Highs and Lows of Home Comfort**

**C**ooling your home can take quite a bit of your cold, hard cash. And the air conditioner itself – based on its age, condition and energy-efficiency rating – has a lot to do with whether you're spending more or less.

Central air conditioners are not created equal, and you see the differences in the SEER, a rating standard for "seasonal energy efficiency ratio". The higher the SEER, the better the energy efficiency.

Air conditioners are significant investments for any home. Plus, there's the operational costs. Overall, you'll want to look for a balanced investment – comparing the air conditioner's cost with your monthly operational savings. Here's your range of options:

- **High/Low** – Yes, they cost more upfront, but they also save more. Many homeowners prefer the logic of a higher upfront cost that saves them months after on their energy dollars. For high-efficiency central air conditioners, you'll look for 16 to 23 SEER.

- **Mid** – When you see SEER 14.5 to 17, you're in mid-range efficiency for central air conditioners. They're priced a little lower than the higher efficiency units and have a few less benefits. If you're replacing an air conditioner that's more than 12 to 15 years old, this would seem like top of the line by comparison.
- **Low/High** – Minimum energy efficiency comes in a 13 to 14.5 SEER air conditioner. The lower initial cost won't bring as high a level of savings on the operational costs, but many homeowners on a tight budget will consider this to be a good value.

**What's right for your home?**

Give us a call or email us at [pyro@pyro-heating.com](mailto:pyro@pyro-heating.com) to get our free report *Maximizing Energy Efficiency*. As a customer of **Pyro Heating & Cooling**, we'd also be glad to come out and give you a free Energy Survey. Just give us a call.

**MY WORD**

**The Future**

By David Schmidt

Hello Friends,  
Do you ever get the feeling that real life sometimes seems a little more like science fiction?



Our smartphones are smarter than we are. Our cars tell us where to go – and will even caution us if we've made a turn they didn't recommend. Wherever we go, we can carry as many books with us as we want, without breaking a sweat, thanks to eBook readers. Yes, time and technology marches on. In a lot of ways, that's a good thing.

In this business, for example, we have seen incredible advances in home comfort systems over the years. For someone like me, who truly appreciates equipment that is the top of its kind, I'm impressed all the time by improvements in energy efficiency, convenience and comfort. And I love to see the faces of happy customers when they first "feel" this difference in their own homes.

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- **Could This Machine Save You Hundreds in Energy Bills?**



## Is a Deck in the Cards?

**A**dding a deck to your home can be a great addition – offering a way to relax with your family and entertain friends, while adding value to your home. As with any significant project, however, it's important to plan ahead. You can start by asking several questions:

### ► **Location and Access** –

Where will you place the deck and how will it be accessed? Will the area be shaded? If the deck's in full sun, it may be too uncomfortable to enjoy. Also, does the location offer enough privacy?

► **Size and Scope** – How large will your deck be? Will it accommodate the activities you see taking place? For example, will you need room for grilling and a dining area?

► **Design and Materials** – Will the deck's design fit with the design of your home? Will the quality of the materials make it a worthwhile investment?

To help with these questions, you can always hire a professional for a complete deck-building solution. Or if you're a true do-it-yourselfer, you can check with home improvement stores for design stations and deck-building kits.

## MONEYWISE

### Home Improvements That Pay Off (or Turn Off)

**H**ome values have slumped and the stock market is a rocky ride, but some investments can still increase value while enriching your quality of life. Certain home improvements are likely to improve the value of your home – and, hopefully, make it more attractive to a buyer down the road. But strategy helps – because some home improvements don't improve home value and can even lessen the ability to sell.

**Some home improvements don't improve home value and can even less the ability to sell.**

So where's the payoff and what's the turn off? Most experts say making changes in the kitchen and bathroom are a “go” and can earn homeowners an 80% and upward return on investment for remodeling projects.

**Kitchen Remodeling** – The kitchen is the center of family activity and the most-used room in the house. Some of the areas where you can give attention are new plumbing fixtures, energy-efficient appliances, solid surface countertops, tile flooring and recessed lighting.

**Bathroom Remodeling** – Investments in a bathroom remodel are also viewed favorably. You can start with the plumbing where it is and replace outdated fixtures, maybe tub and toilet too. Other areas include updated lighting, tile floors and vanity.

**Outdoors** – Adding a deck or patio yields a good return – a covered patio in particular.

Landscaping is still a great bet too. It adds value and can be done with limited budget. Also, landscaping in the front adds that ever-attractive “curb appeal” that will impress your friends and neighbors and entice a future buyer.

Some areas of improvement, however, don't tend to yield a good return on investment. What areas are a “no”? A swimming pool could deter a significant pool of future buyers.

Also, while an outdoor kitchen is attractive and enjoyable, it's not the way to cook up a higher home value. Look for the “home value” caution flag in these areas too: converting a garage into a family room and converting a spare bedroom to an office.

Another upside of making home improvements now is that the cost may be less, starting with a low interest rate on a home equity line of credit. Additionally, contractors that aren't as busy as they once were may offer a discounted price, and home building materials that aren't as much in demand may be available at a better price.

### “Quotable”

*“If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.”*

– Anne Bradstreet

## Could This Machine Save You Hundreds in Energy Bills?

Not likely, it is more likely to save you.....*thousands!*

This machine is called a “Blower Door” and is used to test homes. Does your home have any of these issues?

- **Costs too much to heat**
- **High energy bills... period**
- **Hot rooms in summer**
- **Cold rooms in winter**
- **Drafty rooms dry indoor air in winter**
- **Uneven heating or cooling**
- **Ice damns**
- **Mold, mildew, musty odors**
- **Moisture on windows**



You can start simple with a “Home Performance Survey” or for more significant long-term savings, choose the “Comprehensive Home Assessment”.

A *Building Performance Institute Certified (BPI)* contractor will come to your home and using the latest building science, analyze your home’s energy efficiency needs, health and safety issues and make recommendations that can literally save you thousands of energy

dollars. It can make your home more efficient and comfortable for life, and there are utility rebates of up to \$3500 available.

For more information, go to [www.consumersenergy.com](http://www.consumersenergy.com) or call **Pyro Heating & Cooling Inc.** – your local BPI certified contractor.

[www.pyro-heating.com](http://www.pyro-heating.com)

517-548-2114 / 810-229-4328

810-632-7976

e-mail: [pyro-heating.com](mailto:pyro-heating.com)

Those are all signs that your home simply is NOT functioning efficiently or comfortably, and it can directly affect your family’s health and quality of life. That’s why it pays to look into *Home Performance with ENERGY STAR*®.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The phrase “sleep tight” derives from the fact that early mattresses were filled with straw and held up with rope stretched across the bedframe. A tight sleep was a comfortable sleep.
- The liquid inside young coconuts can be used as substitute for blood plasma.
- A raisin dropped in a fresh glass of soda will bounce up and down continually from the bottom of the glass to the top.
- An ostrich’s eye is bigger than its brain.



## Has Your Home Passed a Radon Test?

You can’t see it, smell it or taste it, but it can create a really big health risk. Radon is a poisonous gas that comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe. Breathing air that contains radon is a serious matter – because it’s the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking.

Any home may have a radon problem, yet testing can be inexpensive and easy, only taking a few minutes of your time. You can test your home yourself by picking up a radon test kit at a hardware or home improvement store. Or you can order one by calling the National Radon Hotline at 1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236).

Short-term tests take between 2 and 90 days. Long-term tests take more than 90 days. Start with a short-term test and follow your kit’s instructions.

## MY WORD (...from page 1)

If your system is showing signs of age, we'll be glad to talk with you about some terrific options. Just give us a call.

In the meantime, we're committed to helping you keep your current system

operating at its best – and regular tune-ups are the best way we can help make that happen.

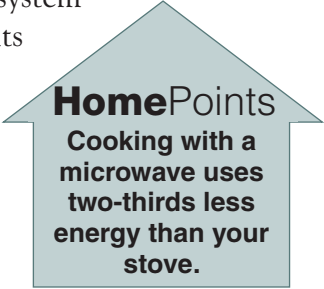
If you'll call and schedule your spring tune-up, we'll get someone out and help you get ready for the warmer days that are on their way.

Best wishes for an enjoyable season. Looking forward to hearing from you soon.



David Schmidt

P.S. Don't forget to check out the special offers on this page. If you're not able to use them, feel free to pass them on to a friend or neighbor.



**HomePoints**  
Cooking with a microwave uses two-thirds less energy than your stove.

## Get \$192 of Smart Home Value for just \$89

Just like a car, your home's cooling system requires maintenance to run well. If your system isn't tuned regularly, you pay big – with wasted energy, more repairs and *less comfort*. But here's the smartest fix to that problem: Our **Ultimate Tune-Up** that includes:

- **Complete cleaning and 19-point adjustment** to factory specs. It's worth every penny of our normal \$104 price.
- **Repair-Free Guarantee.** If you need any repairs this summer, I'll refund every single penny of your tune-up!
- **Water Heater Safety Check** for your family's safety and unit reliability is normally \$59.
- **Safety Check of your Dryer Vent** to ensure optimum performance and safety from overheating: a \$29 value!

**That's \$192 of value for only \$89. But we're not dumb... this offer ends May 14th.** Summer will be on it's way, with no reason to discount. So call **517-548-2114** now to get guaranteed value with our **19-point Ultimate Tune-Up**.

### Of the top 5 reasons to join the Comfort Club, which one would you rather skip?

- Savings on energy through improved efficiency
- Longer life for your system through continued care and maintenance
- Discounts on repairs (if they're ever even needed)
- Priority service, thanks to the "rise to the top" member perk
- A membership that pays for itself, thanks to all of the above

Call **Pyro Heating & Cooling** today at **517-548-2114**, and we'll sign you up right away.

### "Miss the Tax Credit?"


You can still save up to \$2,410 on a new furnace and air conditioning system!

- Federal government will still credit up to \$500
- Consumers Energy Utility Company will pay you up to \$810
- State of Michigan will still credit you up to \$150
- Pyro Heating will still pay you \$500 trade in for your old furnace and \$500 trade in for your old air conditioner.
- You can get a 10-year worry-free warranty covering both the furnace and air conditioner parts and labor!

Call us at **517-548-2114** and schedule a FREE home energy survey!

See [www.pyro-heating.com](http://www.pyro-heating.com) for certain term & limitations.

Comfort • Health • Safety • Efficiency  
772 McPherson Park Drive • Howell, MI 48843  
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If your mailing address is not correct, please call us!

# HOMESENSE