

Commercial Connection

Laugh a little, learn a little & take a break from the daily grind!

Summer 2007

Ignition...We Have Liftoff!

What are the odds of NASA doing ongoing maintenance on its launch pad equipment, or Mass General regularly servicing its operating room instrumentation? Pretty good, we'll bet. Why, then, would someone not perform maintenance on their heating and air conditioning equipment? Totally different league, you say? Try telling that to the unfortunate individuals who suffered Legionnaires' Disease back in 1976 due to faulty HVAC equipment. Extreme, maybe, but to some extent it's an investment that should not be overlooked.

We all know that we can pay our auto mechanics a little now for routine service, or pay them a whole lot more down the road for a major repair. The same idea holds true for your air conditioning and heating system. **If you don't service your system regularly, you'll find yourself not only uncomfortable, but, in most cases, a little lighter in the pocket.**

Think about it: Your HVAC system is most likely the single biggest use of energy in your building. In commercial applications, huge amounts of energy are used. In fact, more than one-third of the energy used in the United States is used to heat and cool buildings.

Without regular maintenance, an air conditioner loses about 5% of its origi-

nal efficiency each year of operation. This means that the 12 SEER unit you bought just a few years ago may be functioning like a 9 SEER unit today!

The good news is that you can recover most of that lost efficiency through regular maintenance. Studies show that with regular tune-ups, a unit will maintain up to 95% of its original efficiency. This means that the cost of an annual tune-up is recovered very quickly in savings on your monthly electric bill and reduced repair costs. A properly serviced air conditioner will also do a better job of dehumidifying your environment.

According to the Consortium of Energy Efficiency (CEE), **up to 50% more energy can be saved with proper installation, sizing and maintenance of commercial air conditioning.** Although the CEE study did not measure residential systems, a compelling case can be made that proper maintenance can save homeowners up to 50% as well.

The old, but true, cliché, "**out of sight, out of mind,**" is often the reason for neglected maintenance guidelines for your HVAC system. HVAC systems are usually installed where they aren't seen, such as in a section of the basement, a closet, on rooftops or in mechanical rooms, making them easy to ignore. The



Jojo checking the freon at the YMCA of Burlington County.

systems are simply taken for granted... until they fail. Decreased efficiency, excess utility costs, discomfort, loss of productivity, eventual premature replacement and higher repair costs are the result.

Just because your HVAC system is out of sight does not mean it can be neglected. Getting your HVAC system checked quarterly is just as important as changing the oil in your car every 3,000 miles!

What should you expect from your service provider during a PMA visit?

- Check system functions, safety controls, and adjust the operating sequence, where appropriate.
- Inspect electrical components and connections and repair/replace/tighten as required.
- Ensure proper airflow and change/clean dirty air filters.
- Inspect pumps, lubricate, and check flow rates, where appropriate.
- Clean and lubricate motors as required.

continued on page 4



Brian Crispin tunes up the boiler at Slack Inc.

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Mechanical Services

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Ignition... *continued from page 1*

- Examine belts, adjust and align as required.
- Inspect, clean and balance blowers as required.
- Thoroughly clean and wash condenser coils.
- Clean and inspect condensate drain lines and fittings.
- Clean, level and calibrate thermostat.
- Adjust and thoroughly clean blower motor and fan assembly.
- Test all controls, switches, relays, transformers, contactors, motors and fans.
- Monitor refrigerant (Freon) pressures and temperatures. (According to many equipment manufacturers, a 10% refrigerant loss will result in a 20% decrease in system efficiency!)
- Complete and present full written report and make any necessary recommendations.
- Clean the burner assembly.
- Remove soot from fireside of burner.
- Clean and check operation of humidifier.
- Visually or with remote camera, inspect heat exchanger for cracks.

What's the bottom line?

- **Savings** - PMAs more than pay for themselves through higher efficiency, lower utility costs and contractor discounts. Contract customers receive a discount on all parts and service performed during the entire year.
- **Peace of Mind** - Predictive maintenance will mean fewer system failures and a longer life for your HVAC equipment.
- **Priority Service** - Should a system failure occur during the heat of the summer or the cold of the winter, customers with PMAs generally receive priority service.
- **Continuity** - **Hutchinson Mechanical Services** typically assigns technicians to specific customers. That way, you get to see and know the same service technician, and he or she becomes more familiar with you and your equipment.

Hutchinson News...

Congratulations and welcome to Robin Piatkowski, who recently joined the commercial sales staff here at . Robin will be responsible for



Robin Piatkowski

new business development, particularly HVAC Planned Maintenance Agreements and service relationships with commercial, industrial and

institutional clients. She has a broad background in our industry and has had a long and successful career in the customer service field. We wish Robin the best of luck in her new position.

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