

## **How to Buy a Furnace**

There are a few factors to consider when buying a new furnace. The three most important are:

### **1. Age of your Furnace**

Age is important but not the only determining factor to replace a furnace. We have seen and tested 30 year old furnaces that run great, are clean burning and could give a few more years of safe operation. These are typically furnaces that been maintained and serviced. On the flip side, I have seen 9-year-old furnace left unattended that looked and performed terribly and needed to be replaced.

### **2. What is the Condition of your Furnace**

Ok, don't be afraid to "open the hood" of your furnace. Take the front doors off and have a peek inside. If there is rust, you need to act fast and find out where the rust is coming from. Age will play a role in determining if your furnace is a keeper.

If it is dirty, but otherwise healthy looking call Afterglow and get a cleaning booked.

### **3. Amount Spent on Home Heating**

For example: a home has only a furnace and gas water heater with equal billing of \$120 / month. \$20 goes to the fixed meter charge, leaving \$100. Industry average has heating at about 75% of a gas bill, meaning \$75.00 per month. Upgrading to high efficiency where you will save from 15%-25% means you may save around \$11 to \$20 per month (\$132 to \$240 per year / \$1320 to \$2400 over 10 years)

Do the math and see how much you may save!

### **Misconception # 1 - New furnaces don't breakdown**

Unfortunately this is not true. As with any machines with moving parts, a new furnace can breakdown. What contributes to breakdowns? Lack of maintenance, the environment where the furnace is installed, duty cycles and more.

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## **Misconception # 2 - Mid-efficiency furnaces are more reliable than highs**

Apart from the secondary heat exchanger, these furnaces are very similar. Both have electronic ignition, proving switches, safeties, venting, blowers, etc.

### **If you're thinking about buying a new furnace, consider:**

**Efficiency** - 80% efficiency furnaces are no longer available. Choose something around 95%.

**Fan motor, standard or high efficiency** - Without question, go with the high efficiency fan, referred to as ECM or DC blower. At times there are government rebates to reward this upgrade

**Warranty and Service** - 5 year parts warranty is the minimum; 10 year parts is very common; consider going with 10 year parts and labour for full peace of mind. And get annual inspections / tune-ups done to ensure safe, efficient operation - it cost less than lawn maintenance.

**Installation Details** - The installation should not be rushed; proper start-up and commissioning is part of Afterglow's installation process.

**Air Filtration** - Stay away from the fibreglass filters and go with pleated, whether 1" or 4"; for families with allergies, then consider upgrading to HEPA filters.

**Humidification** - Homes in Canadian winters are drying than a desert; avoid steam humidifiers but go with a higher-end model humidifier to improve the winter comfort.

### **Should I Own or Rent?**

Renting a furnace is an option. We see it more in rental investment properties. Does it pay-off? Renting is like insurance. Spending \$79 / month for a furnace that costs \$4000 means that after 50 months of rent (4 years and 2 months) the furnace is paid off. If you rent it for 10 years = \$9480. You decide!

### **What Next?**

Call Afterglow to get more help on your decision about your water heater.