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## How Winter Affects Your Ventilation System

Ventilation is critical at any time of year, but winter is particularly challenging. You probably spend more time indoors hiding from the chill so opening a window isn't an option. Between the flu season, regular allergies, and just the need to breathe fresh air, ventilation is hyper critical during winter. Here are six considerations for your ventilation system at this time of year.

### Cold and Flu Season

Because winter is nearly synonymous with sniffles and sneezes, ventilation plays a major role in keeping your family healthy during this time. Recirculated air keeps the germs inside, spreads it to everyone and reduces your body's ability to fight it off. You might get

away with a less than robust system in the summer when you can open windows but winter illness requires better ventilation.

### Temperature of Outside Air

Depending on where you live, the fresh air coming in could range from chilly to Arctic cold. This air needs to be heated, of course, so the place where it enters your house matters. If your ventilation system consists of exhaust fans and infiltration through your home's construction, you'll have to endure these lower temperatures to get the fresh air you need.

### Humidity

When outdoor air is heated without the addition of moisture, the relative humidity drops. This, in turn, dries



## How Winter Affects Your Ventilation System (Cont.)

out your indoor air further. High humidity issues are well known, but low humidity has its own problems. You'll experience dry mucus membranes (increasing susceptibility to colds and flus), static buildup, and possible damage to electronics.

### Energy Consumption

Outdoor air requires energy to heat and humidify. The energy consumed is highest for air that's directly heated, whether ducted to your furnace or entering through construction gaps. Energy recovery

allows you to reap the benefits of fresh air without the cost of excessive energy consumption.

### Vulnerable Family Members

If you're concerned about energy costs, then aim for an energy recovery system rather than attempt to avoid ventilation, altogether. It may be tempting to keep exhaust fans off and find ways to prevent or minimize ventilation but you'll pay for it in other ways, especially if you have family members with allergies or who are prone to illness at this time of year.

### Dust

You might think of dust as a summer problem for your ventilation but particulates can cause problems during winter as well. Ensure that you have the right filtration in place for your ventilation system and maintain it. Change filters regularly, and monitor the source of your outside air. If you need help with your home's ventilation system this winter, give us a call and we can help you keep your air clear.

## JOKE SECTION

This one time I got into an argument with my furnace.

You could say things got a little heated.

I like jokes about air conditioners, but jokes about heaters?

Not cool.

## Reduce Your Risk of Overwhelm

In this crazy modern world, feeling overwhelmed seems to be just a part of life. Life can get out of hand, leaving you struggling to keep your head above water. So how do you prevent this from happening? Everyone's experience is different, but there are steps you can take to reduce your chances of becoming overwhelmed and, worse, completely burnt out.

### Prioritize

When you think about your to-do list, everything seems important. Worse yet, everything seems urgent. But there are often items you can ignore, delegate or legitimately postpone. In the

same way you make budgeting decisions about your money, you need to budget your time and energy. Do a brain dump of all your projects and daily tasks, then pick the priority items for each month, week, and day. Base your decisions on what's important to you. Know your limits, and don't be afraid to delegate or delete extras.

### Tale Care of Yourself

Without the fundamentals in place, even the smallest challenges can become overbearing. You're human. You need sleep, exercise, nourishment, recreation, a sense of accomplishment, and love. Neglecting any of these for too long can cause burnout before you even





Reduce Your Risk of Overwhelm (Cont.)

know what’s going on. There will be times when deadlines loom, and you have to put in the extra hours. Just make sure those times don’t last months or years at a time.

Get Help

You don’t have to do everything yourself. If you have people in your life who can help, even if their version of the task is different, ask for (and accept) their assistance. You may have to get your children more involved with chores, or you may even have to outsource tasks.

Do what you need to do to reduce your risk of overwhelm..

Let Things Go

Sometimes the only thing you can do is walk away. When that dream career turns into a nightmare, or the cost of keeping your beautiful house means you don’t get a break, you may have to reconsider whether it’s worth holding on to. It takes deep contemplation and discussion, especially if it affects others. You might also let go of excess clutter in your home, take a sabbatical from

night classes (or your job) or reduce time spent on social media. Once you determine your priorities, you’ll be able to make this decision. Feeling overwhelmed isn’t inevitable, but it’s also not completely avoidable. Set yourself up for success by leaving room in your life to handle challenges, and remember that no matter what happens, this too shall pass.

Coupon Corner

\$22 OFF

Heating Repair

SINGLE USE ONLY. CANNOT BE PAIRED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER. CALL FOR MOR DETAILS EXPIRES FEBRUARY-28-2023

\$222 OFF

Heater Replacement

SINGLE USE ONLY. CANNOT BE PAIRED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER. CALL FOR MOR DETAILS EXPIRES FEBRUARY-28-2023

HVAC Word Find

How many HVAC words can you find?

V E N T I L A T I O N N E R  
B T Y O A V G E T S W H O A  
F P I P E S D J S L I X R C  
U B A P K Q U A A D N M U O  
R C H E A T I N G S T N E P  
N F G R A K R D A S E W L P  
A I L S B E A T L E R Q D E  
C P D U C T H O F I L T E R  
E T I N S U L A T I O N O A

- GAS
- HEATING
- FURNACE
- PIPES
- COPPER
- FILTER
- DUCT
- VENTILATION
- WINTER
- INSULATION



## Skillet Brownie (8 Servings)

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/skillet-brownies-recipe-2102471>

### Ingredients:

- 1/4 pounds (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 4 ounces plus 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips, divided
- 1 1/2 ounces, unsweetened chocolate
- 2 extra large eggs
- 2 teaspoons instant coffee granules
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon all purpose flour divided
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 pint vanilla ice cream

### Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Melt the butter, 4 ounces of chocolate chips, and the unsweetened chocolate together in a medium bowl set over simmering water. Set aside for 15 minutes. In a large bowl, stir (do not beat) together the eggs, coffee, vanilla and sugar. Stir the chocolate mixture into the egg mixture and allow to cool to room temperature. In a medium bowl, sift together 1/4 cup of the flour, the baking powder and salt and add to the chocolate mixture. Toss together the remaining 1/2 cup of chocolate chips and one tablespoon of flour in a medium bowl and add them to the chocolate mixture. Spoon the mixture into five 3 1/2 inch cast iron skillets and place them on a sheet pan. Bake for 25 minutes. Don't over bake! Serve warm with a scoop of ice cream on top.

