



Home Tips®



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 1003 STAR COURT, NORCROSS, GEORGIA 30093, (770) 925-8518 • JULY 1993 •

Q & A

Heat Pump vs. Gas Furnace?

I'm planning on replacing my furnace this summer and I would like to know which type of furnace is more economical to operate a heat pump or gas furnace?

Think of a heat pump as a two-way air conditioner. During the summer it can remove heat from the inside of the house and exhaust it outdoors and during the winter it can remove heat from the outside and distribute it inside, even if the outside temperature is lower than the air temperature inside the house. A heat pump supplements your furnace; it doesn't replace it. If the outside temperature drops below somewhere around 40°, then the heat pump is no longer efficient and the resistance heat kicks in.

The cost of a heat pump system will be more expensive than a gas furnace system even when you add in the cost of replacing the air conditioning system with the gas furnace. A rough estimate of a heat pump system, installed, is around \$4,500.00 and a gas furnace system with air conditioning is around \$3,600.00. The operating cost of a gas furnace is also less than the heat pump. One advantage of the heat pump, however, is the rebate that is sometimes offered by the utility company for going total electric. Another is that heat pumps tend to go twice as long as central air conditioners before needing major repairs, like replacing a compressor. So factor that into your cost analysis. If gas is not available in your area, then by all means, consider a heat pump.

Basement Bathrooms

Our basement lies below the sewer line running from the house. We'd like to add a basement bathroom, but how can we get the waste to run uphill?

You will need a pump. The waste and vent piping are installed just as it would be for any bathroom in your house, but it must empty into a tank located underneath the concrete floor. A sewage ejector pump is installed inside the tank, with a float to control the water level. The pump discharges the sewage into the main waste pipe through a check valve, which prevents backflow into the tank. The unit normally requires a separate vent pipe that must extend through the roof. This will probably be the most difficult part to

accomplish. Check with your plumber to see how difficult the vent will be to install. The average cost of installing a sewage ejector system is around \$1,500.00.

Best Home Improvement Project?

We would like to know which home improvement projects are the best investment and will increase our home's value?

First of all ask your Realtor. They are the experts in the field for what is in demand and what the buyers are looking for. They know exactly what items will help to sell a house and which ones will make the resale difficult.

The January issue of Home Tips ran the 1992 Cost vs. Value Report for the Atlanta area, published by Remodeling Magazine. Here are the figures again:

| Project | Cost Recouped |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Minor Kitchen Remodeling: | 136% |
| Master Bedroom Suite | 106% |
| Bath Addition | 103% |
| Attic Bedroom | 101% |
| Major Kitchen Remodeling | 93% |
| Deck Addition | 89% |
| Bath Remodeling | 86% |
| Family Room Addition | 83% |
| Replacement Windows | 82% |
| Sun Room Addition | 66% |
| Replace Siding | 61% |

For a reprint of the entire article, write to Remodeling Reprints, 655 15th Street, N.W., Suite 475, Washington, D.C. 20005, Attn. Kris Rechin.

Painting Kitchen Cabinets

I have 20 year old cabinets that have a dark walnut stained finish. I want to paint them white. How do I paint over the clear finish that is on them now?

It is a great idea to paint kitchen cabinets. It's like getting all new cabinets for the cost of a little paint and sandpaper. It's not hard to do, but there are definitely a few tricks.

Take all of the doors off and wash the wood with a non-filming cleanser like Soilex. When dry, sand thoroughly with 120-grit sandpaper.

Prime the surface with a shellac-base, pigmented primer/sealer, like BIN or First Coat Primer. You can buy

