



Elite Service Company

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HEATING ♦ AIR CONDITIONING ♦ DUCT CLEANING ♦ AIR BALANCING

Learn What to Look for When Choosing a Contractor

When replacing or upgrading your homes comfort system choose the right company to do the job.

A good contractor can help you make the right choices and give you the best value for your money. Choosing a reliable contractor is more important than the brand of equipment because, no matter how well-made a furnace or air conditioning unit is or who manufactures it, the comfort, reliability and energy-efficiency that furnace or air conditioning unit provides is in the hands of the company doing the installation.

If you know a good HVAC contractor, that is an excellent place to start. If you don't ask your friends or neighbors for recommendations. What they charge is less important than what kind of a job they do, how honest they are and how they treat their customers.

Some prefer to get several estimates. That isn't a bad-idea, but don't consider lowest price the main reason for selecting a contractor. What should you look for?

- Avoid any company offering you an estimate without coming out and looking at the job. Such firms may not be interested in a good installation or correcting existing problems, just in getting in and out — with your money.
- A qualified estimator will do a survey and provide a heat-load calculation for your home. Many existing furnaces aren't properly sized, and better contractors provide equipment that exactly meets your homes load requirements. This can be less expensive and a more comfortable installation.
- A good company will supply you a written proposal clearly outlining the work to be done and the price agreed upon.
- A reliable contractor will usually provide more than one furnace choice and give you an annual operating cost for your home for each option. Know the costs, quality and savings of the furnace and/or accessories you're buying.
- An estimator for a reliable company should ask about heating and cooling problems experienced with your old equipment, then offer understandable solutions.
- A good company will usually have a financing plan. Most reliable contractors offer extended warranties when you purchase your comfort system.
- A well trained, up-to-date contractor won't try to discourage you from purchasing high-efficiency equipment. If he does, get a second opinion.
- A good contractor is professional. Their people are prompt; they meet appointments; they are courteous, neat and well-groomed. This neatness should be reflected in their vehicles and offices.
- They should have an office/shop facility and not be ashamed to have you visit it.
- A history of business problems or customer complaints may spell trouble.
- Many less qualified companies don't provide employees proper training. Rather than keep current with the latest technology, some discourage selling new designs.
- Your assurance of a satisfactory installation may depend on whether that company stays in business for the first year of warranty. Those who have an office/shop are far more likely to be in business in the future. You don't have to take the first price that comes along; if a company is questionable, get quotes until you find one that meets your standards. Demand quality.

What About Price?

Pricing is determined by several factors including: the added costs of correcting venting or ductwork problems; difficulty in installing the furnace in the selected location; code, licensing or inspection requirements; local labor costs; the quality of the job; etc.

Better companies usually charge more but offer greater value.

While one price may look better on paper, the important consideration is your satisfaction with the end result.

If you have any questions, ask another company for a quote, then choose the best value.