

**EXPECT MORE. GET MORE.**

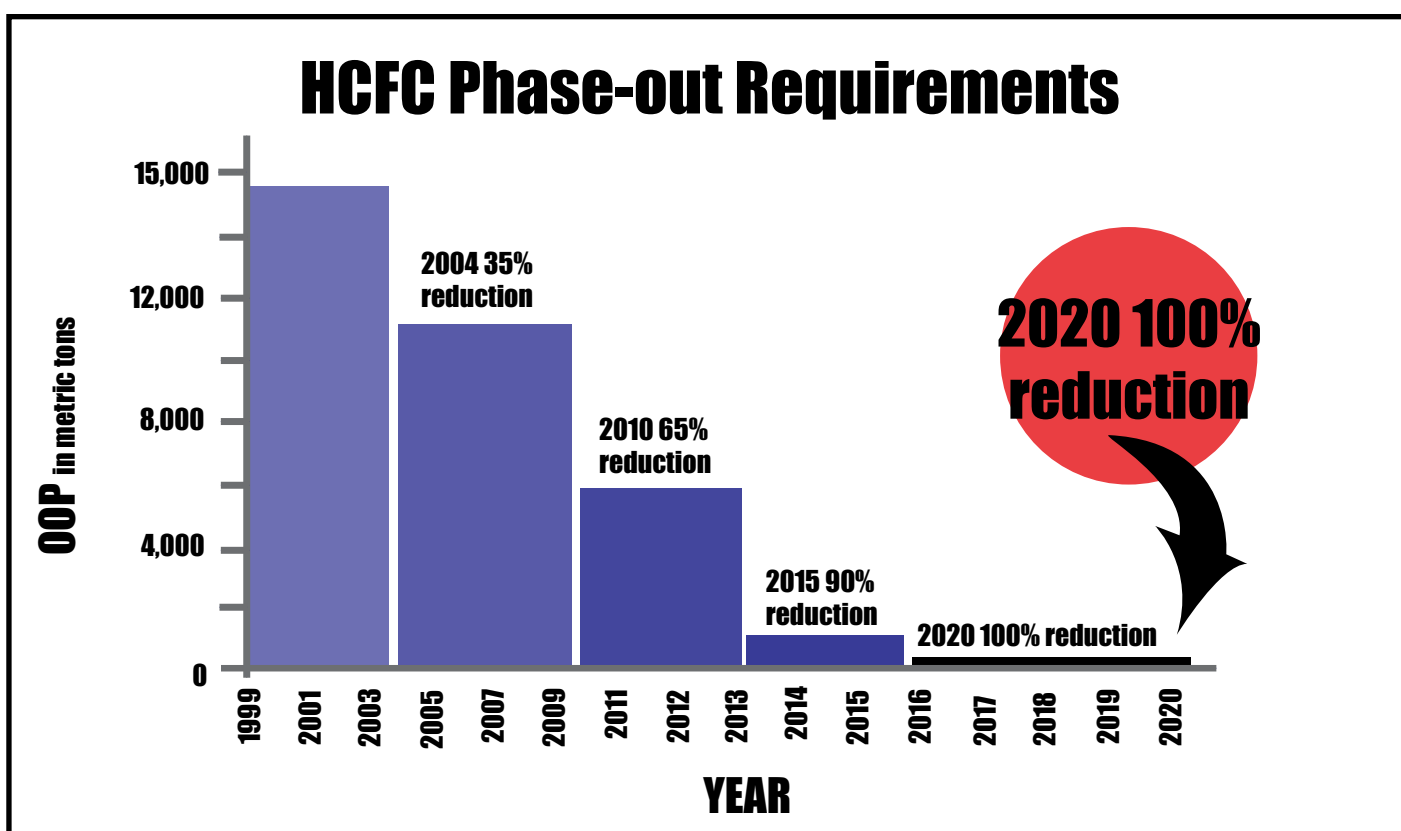
Winter 2008

T H I S M O N T H

**COMMERCIAL**  
**RESIDENTIAL**  
**AIR CONDITIONING**  
**HEATING**  
**SERVICE**  
**INSTALLATION**  
**INSULATION**

# The End Is Near!

It has been seventeen years since Congress passed the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 which set a timetable in place for the elimination of R-22 refrigerant (Freon) in air conditioning systems. Most people didn't pay attention then, and haven't thought about it since. With the first deadline less than 2 years away, now is the time to begin thinking about the potential impact of this change to your business or home.



Here are a few questions designed to help you understand how you will be affected.



### How long do we have until R-22 is no longer available?

On January 1, 2010, it will be unlawful to produce equipment which uses R-22. Although R-22 will continue to be produced until 2020, production must be reduced by 90% by 2015.

### What is going to take the place of R-22?

A refrigerant called R-410A was introduced in 1996. You may have heard it marketed as Puron, although there are other varieties available. R-410A meets all the standards established by the government in 1990 and has proven to be a safe and reliable replacement for R-22.

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A S K T H E P R O F E S S I O N A L S

## **Solving** Common Heating & Cooling Problems

**Q.** The temperature in our offices seems to fluctuate too much from hot to cold during the day. Is there an easy solution to this problem?

**A.** There are several possible solutions to this problem, ranging from a faulty thermostat to inadequate amounts of return air to poor insulation. Before you spend money on the wrong solution, be sure to have a professional take a look to determine the real culprit.

**Q.** As soon as we began running our gas heater this winter several employees reported having headaches. Could their headaches be related to our heating system?

**A.** Gas furnaces and unit heaters which are operating improperly can produce carbon monoxide, and carbon monoxide can lead to headaches, or worse. It is very important that you have this problem checked out immediately. Carbon monoxide is a safety and health hazard.

**Q.** The furniture in our home is constantly covered with a fine dust which begins to reappear within hours after dusting. We don't have a lot of activity in our home. What could be causing this problem?

**A.** Dirty ductwork, inadequate filtration, attic air infiltration and leaky ductwork are all potential causes of this problem. Try replacing the air filter in your air conditioning system with a pleated filter. If that doesn't stop the problem, call a professional who can inspect your ductwork for dirt and leaks.



**Kevin Warren**

Service Manager

### **GOT QUESTIONS for Kevin??**

If you have a question for Kevin Warren, call him at (972) 254-7888 or email him at [kevin.warren@tomsmechanical.com](mailto:kevin.warren@tomsmechanical.com)

Also visit [www.TomsMechanical.com](http://www.TomsMechanical.com) for more Frequently Asked Questions & Answers.

## **Our Most Recent Customer Comments**

*"My mother is 95 and I was so impressed that your technician included her in the discussions about needed repairs. He was so compassionate and caring."*

*"37 years of excellent service!"*

*"We have used Tom's for 27 years and have never had a complaint."*

*"It will be our pleasure to recommend Tom's Mechanical to all who seek suggestions on how to save on energy costs."*

## **Employees Provide Thanksgiving for Area Families**

It has become a tradition for the employees of Tom's Mechanical to make the holidays a little more special for the area's neediest families. This year they provided Thanksgiving dinners to 30 families who recently "graduated" from the Arlington Life Shelter.

The Arlington Life Shelter is a 20 year old charitable organization with a mission to return homeless families to lives of self-sufficiency. Their program begins with a strict 9-week program within the shelter which includes education on budgeting and parenting as well as job skills training. Amazingly, 85% of the families who complete the course are placed in housing and obtain jobs. During 2007 the Shelter assisted approximately 1,500 men, women and children.

More than 80% of Tom's employees contributed food items which made Thanksgiving dinners possible for these important families. The company is proud of its association with The Arlington Life Shelter and its valuable programs.



*Dinners being delivered to the Arlington Life Shelter*

**For the latest weather conditions & forecast information, call Weatherline toll free @ (214) 787-1111**

# The Facts About Saving Energy Dollars

2007 was a mild weather year, so much of the impact of energy price increases was not realized in homeowner utility bills. However, the price of oil increased dramatically during the second half of the year. If we return to normal hot summer weather in 2008, homeowners will be screaming bloody murder when they see their energy bills! Much has been written and said about investments which will lower utility bills, but much of what has been offered should be taken with a grain of salt. Here are three suggestions, listed in order of financial benefit to offset the price of energy:

**Maintain your heating and cooling system regularly.**

This low-cost solution will pay immediate dividends. Simply have your system tuned up by a professional in the spring and fall. (Preventive maintenance agreements from Tom's cost as little as \$115 per year.) In between tune-ups, change your air conditioning filter regularly. A well maintained system is cheaper to operate, breaks down less often and will last much longer.

**Add attic insulation.** The local recommendation is that you should have up to 18" of blown fiberglass insulation in your attic. This amount of insulation provides R-49 protection. Under normal circumstances, the cost of attic insulation will be repaid through energy savings in less than 3 years. In many cases the payback is much quicker.

**Check for leaks.** Leaky windows, doors and ductwork are major sources of energy loss. Ductwork can be repaired inexpensively and weatherstripping can be upgraded by most homeowners. Window replacements can be costly, but can also pay great energy-saving dividends.



Once these items are addressed, there are many other energy saving ideas, but none will pay back your investment as rapidly as the three listed above. Condenser covers, radiant barrier insulation, attic enclosures, tankless water heaters and many more are all worth investigating.

Many of the solutions listed here can be performed by Tom's Mechanical. If we don't actually do the work, we can certainly recommend professionals who will be happy to meet with you. Simply call Brian Lackey at (972) 254-7888 for free advice and analysis.

## Tom's Announces Promotions

It is always easier to grow a management team from within the company and Tom's is proud to announce that two of its outstanding employees have been promoted to new levels of responsibility. Residential Replacement salesman Brian Lackey has assumed management of the Residential Retrofit Division and Residential Service Technician Josh Wallace has been elevated to Residential Service Supervisor.



Brian Lackey

Brian Lackey joined Tom's in 2000, soon after graduating from the University of Texas at Arlington. He grew up in his family's south Texas air conditioning business and was well prepared to market residential systems. During the past 7 years he has developed into one of the top air conditioning salesmen in the Dallas Fort Worth marketplace. About two years ago he began assuming more and more responsibility for daily operations of the Retrofit division and as of January 1st he officially became Division Manager.



Josh Wallace

Josh Wallace is known to many of Tom's residential service customers as "their technician." He came to Tom's fresh from a technical school and, because of his unique blend of humility and technical skills became an immediate favorite of customers. Josh is as well-liked inside the company as he is outside and commands the respect of his fellow technicians. He will work with Service Manager Kevin Warren on several initiatives to improve customer service while ensuring that technicians receive the skills training they need.

*Our philosophy is simple - "Do the right thing for your customer and the money will take care of itself."*

*(continued from Page 1)*

### ***Why is R-22 being phased out?***

R-22 contains hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC's) which have been shown to damage the earth's Ozone layer. The action in the U.S. parallels worldwide recommendations contained in the Montreal Protocol of 1987.

### ***Can my existing air conditioning system be adapted to accept the new refrigerant?***

Unfortunately, the answer is no. The oil bases of the two refrigerant types are different and are not compatible, plus a different compressor is needed for R-410A.

### ***Is equipment which uses R-410A readily available? Is it more expensive than comparable R-22 equipment?***

Most equipment manufacturers now produce R-410A systems in a variety of sizes for residential use. Commercial equipment is not as available, but several manufacturers produce rooftop units up to 25 tons which use R-410A. On average, systems which use R-410A cost about five percent more than R-22 systems.

### ***I don't want to be a "guinea pig." How do I know that an R-410A system is right for me?***

R-410A systems have been installed across the United States for more than ten years. There are nearly 3 million systems in place today and homeowners are very satisfied.

### ***Does the new refrigerant have any effect on energy efficiency or reliability?***

Actually, R-410A has been shown to be 5 - 6% more efficient than R-22 and at least one manufacturer (Carrier) can document that its line of Puron systems is its most reliable product line.

### ***I had a new R-22 system installed only 5 years ago. What are my options?***

Based on industry averages, your system should last another seven years, at least. Unless you want to move up to a more efficient system to take advantage of energy savings, you should simply have your system professionally maintained to prolong its life.

### ***What is going to happen to the price of R-22 between now and 2020?***

The inevitable price increases have already begun as production has been reduced. Not only will supplies of R-22 continue to shrink, the cost of producing it will rise as production equipment ages and requires more maintenance. (When R-12, the refrigerant used in automobiles was phased out in the mid-90's, its price increased ten-fold in just 10 years.)

### ***What if my R-22 system only requires a component replacement, like the condensing unit. Should I replace the entire system?***

The correct answer to this question will depend on a variety of factors including the age, condition and efficiency of your existing system and your financial situation. Be sure to consult with an expert before making such an important decision.



***Whatever your situation, you can rely on honest, professional advice from the knowledgeable representatives of Tom's Mechanical. To schedule an appointment to discuss the details of the Freon phaseout please call***

***Brian Lackey at  
(972) 254-7888***

**Call Tom's today for all your service needs! (972) 254-7888**

**EXPECT MORE. GET MORE.**

# Take Advantage of Winter Equipment Specials

Everyone knows that the best time to purchase a new heating and cooling system is during the winter, when business for manufacturers and service companies is slow. 2008 is no exception. Tom's will be offering manufacturer's rebates up to \$1,200 for purchasers of high efficiency systems before the end of May. These rebates, coupled with Tom's special off-season pricing will likely offer the best pricing opportunities of the year.

**Call Brian Lackey or Matt Byrd to schedule a free, no-obligation appointment and learn the details about our offers. Start the new year with lower energy bills, improved indoor comfort and trouble-free operations provided by a new heating and cooling system. (972) 254-7888. ♦**



## Is a **Planned Service Agreement** Right for Your Business?

Are you one of those managers who believes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it?" If so, there are some facts you should consider when it comes to maintaining your heating and cooling systems. It doesn't take long for short-term savings to become long-term problems. Here are a few of the benefits of preventive maintenance as provided by a Planned Service Agreement:

**1. Maintain efficient operation** - Today's utility rates are too high to waste energy. Plain and simple, a well maintained system costs less to operate.



**2. Extend equipment life** - Most heating and cooling systems die prematurely due to neglect. Why pay for an expensive replacement system when a well-maintained system will last longer - sometimes much longer?

**3. Minimize downtime** - What happens to productivity of your workforce when the air conditioner quits working during the summer? Systems which receive regular maintenance break down less often. Compare the low cost of a preventive maintenance visit to the cost of the loss of a single day of productivity.

**4. Reduce the cost of service calls** - Customers who sign Planned Service Agreements do not pay service charges and receive a ten percent (10%) discount on all repair parts. For some customers, these savings alone pay the cost of the agreement.

**5. Protect equipment warranties** - Even if your heating and cooling equipment is new, routine maintenance is required to keep warranties intact. You routinely change the oil on your new car, don't you? The same policy applies to your air conditioning system.

To get the details about Planned Service for your building call Andrew Ray at (972) 254-7888. Andrew will schedule a convenient time to analyze your needs and visit about the logic of preventive maintenance for your business. ♦

Look us up on the web at:  
**[www.tomsmechanical.com](http://www.tomsmechanical.com)**



# Tom's Goes Back to College

As Tom's has grown, so has its appetite for experienced, professional salespeople. Unfortunately, such people are in short supply in the air conditioning industry. As a result, Tom's has begun an exciting new effort to recruit graduates of the Industrial Distribution (ID) program at Texas A & M University. The Industrial Distribution major, which is part of the College of Engineering is designed to familiarize students with principles of engineering, sales, supply chain management and general business principles. Historically, 70% of ID graduates choose sales careers, often with equipment manufacturers like Trane and Carrier.

On October 30th a team of Tom's representatives hosted a lunch for ID students and faculty members on the A & M campus. The exposure was very beneficial, as many of the students had never before considered a career with a service company like Tom's. In fact, several students expressed interest in full time employment and others have applied for a newly designed summer intern program which will begin in 2008.

Don't be surprised if the next salesman you meet from Tom's looks a bit younger and is wearing an Aggie ring. It could be the wave of the future! ♦



Aggie students enjoy a barbecue lunch.



Jerry Brown and Rich Ashton visit with student

## Employee News...

Recently hired employees include Receptionist **Jennifer Headlee**, Service Technicians **Daryl Crowder** and **Randy Hardrick** and Installer **David Johnson** . . . Residential Service Technician **Dan Hoang** recently celebrated 5 years of excellent service with Tom's . . . Service Manager **Kevin Warren** looks younger and much slimmer after losing 60 pounds by participating in the NutriSystem weight-loss program . . . Everybody won at blackjack during the company Christmas party, but the big winners were **Woody Ponthieux** and **Donnie Ervin**, each of whom won \$800 in Christmas cash . . .

**TOM'S**  
MECHANICAL, INC.  
heating & cooling

Call us for all your heating & air conditioning needs!

**(972) 254-7888**

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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