

# Spring Tune Up for Residential Air Conditioning

With summer right around the corner, you'll want to make sure that your air conditioner is running properly to ensure your family's comfort in the hot months ahead. This makes it essential that you schedule a spring tune-up for your home's air conditioner to ensure that you do not encounter problems with your HVAC system when you need it most.

Unfortunately, many homeowners underestimate the importance of annual air conditioning maintenance, and they believe that they don't need to schedule a tune-up unless they encounter a problem with their HVAC system. However, this can put you at risk of having your air conditioner break down unexpectedly, leaving you sweltering in the dead of summer waiting for an HVAC technician to arrive. Investing in a pre-season HVAC tune-up can then save you a lot of trouble later on by ensuring that your air conditioner is ready to run at peak performance all summer long.

If you have been putting off scheduling your spring HVAC tune-up, doing so now is essential in ensuring your comfort and safety this summer. Keep reading as we take a deeper look at why spring air conditioner maintenance is important, what your tune-up should include, and the best time to have your system serviced.

## The Importance of Spring AC Maintenance

Many homeowners assume that they don't need AC maintenance as long as their system is running. However, regular HVAC maintenance is essential to ensure that your system is running efficiently, and it allows your HVAC technician to spot and repair any minor issues before they turn into more costly repairs down the road. If you've been putting off having your air conditioner serviced, here are just a few of the reasons why it's crucial that you schedule a spring tune-up.

### Reduced Energy Bills

Even if your HVAC system seems to run fine without annual maintenance, it's likely that your system is not running as efficiently as it could be if it hasn't been serviced in a while. While you may assume that your HVAC system is energy efficient due to the ENERGY STAR rating it received, these efficiency ratings are based on the assumption that the owner is having annual maintenance performed.

When you fail to have your air conditioner serviced as recommended by the manufacturer, the first thing that's going to suffer is your unit's energy efficiency, resulting in higher operating costs. This is because, without proper maintenance, your air conditioner will have to work harder to cool your home, which can lead to a significant increase in energy consumption. Your

spring air conditioning tune-up can then end up paying for itself by ensuring your air conditioner runs as efficiently as possible.

## Avoid Costly Repairs

As we previously mentioned, an air conditioner that is not properly maintained will have to work harder to cool your home. Not only can this mean higher energy bills, but it can also lead to potentially costly repairs. Since your air conditioner will have to work harder and run more frequently to maintain a consistent temperature, this can mean additional wear and tear on your system's components that can lead to costly repairs. Preventative HVAC maintenance can then save you a significant amount of money over the life of your system, as many costly HVAC repairs could have been avoided with regular maintenance.

## Improve Indoor Comfort

In addition to lowering your energy bills and operating costs, annual air conditioning maintenance is also essential to ensure your comfort. If your air conditioner is not performing properly, you may notice that it doesn't cool your home as effectively as it once did. In fact, ineffective cooling is one of the biggest signs that your air conditioner is overdue for a tune-up. Considering that the last thing you want is to be kept up on a hot summer night because your air conditioner isn't cooling your home properly, it's essential that you invest in HVAC maintenance this spring. This will ensure that your air conditioner runs at peak performance and is able to keep you and your family comfortable all summer long.

## Maintain Your Warranty

Purchasing a new HVAC system is a significant investment in your home, and the last thing you want is to encounter problems with your new air conditioner. Unfortunately, even if you do everything right by buying a high-quality HVAC system and having it installed by a certified technician, defects and malfunctions can cause your system to need repairs sooner than expected. Luckily, you'll have your system's warranty to protect you in such instances, right? However, what you may be surprised to learn is that many manufacturers require proof that annual maintenance was performed on the unit by a qualified technician as part of the warranty's terms. If you fail to invest in annual maintenance, the warranty could be void, and you'd have to pay for any necessary repairs out-of-pocket. This makes it essential that you invest in annual air conditioning maintenance to ensure that you will have warranty coverage should a covered problem arise.

## Extend Your System's Lifespan

Recent years have seen astounding improvements in HVAC technology. Not only do these systems run more efficiently than ever, but they can also last 15 to 20 years or more with proper

maintenance. However, if you do not take the proper steps to maintain your system, including investing in annual tune-ups, you may find yourself needing to have your system replaced in as little as 10 to 12 years. The fact is that your HVAC system will have to work harder to cool your home if it's not properly maintained, which can cause its components to wear out much quicker than expected, potentially causing your system to fail prematurely. Investing in annual air conditioner maintenance is then essential as it can extend your system's lifespan and protect one of your home's most valuable assets.

## What is Included in an Air Conditioning Tune-Up?

During a routine AC tune-up, your HVAC technician will evaluate your system's condition and performance to make sure that everything is running properly. They will also perform basic maintenance tasks to ensure that your system runs efficiently, and they will thoroughly inspect your system's components to see if any repairs are needed. While multiple steps are involved in an air conditioning tune-up, some of the most important tasks your technician will perform include:

- Checking refrigerant levels and making sure that there aren't any leaks
- Lubricating all moving parts to prevent wear and tear
- Safety testing all controls to ensure proper operation
- Checking to make sure all parts have secure physical connections
- Inspecting the start and run capacitors and relays for bulges, rust, and leaks
- Tightening and safety testing all wiring and connections
- Testing the blower motor for proper function
- Checking meter voltage and amperage in all motors
- Cleaning the outdoor condenser coil
- Testing and calibrating the thermostat to ensure accuracy and proper operation
- Flushing the condensate drain and treating it with anti-algae
- Inspection of the fan blade for potential damage
- Measuring the supply/return temperature differential
- And inspecting the ductwork for energy loss

A good HVAC technician will take their time to thoroughly inspect your HVAC system and make sure that all components are in good operating condition before summer arrives. If they detect any issues with your air conditioner, your HVAC technician should explain the problem to you and provide options for repairing your air conditioner or replacing the system if necessary. Make sure to tell your HVAC technician if you have any specific concerns about your system, such as if you have been hearing any unusual noises during operation.

## When Should I Schedule HVAC Maintenance?

So when is the best time to have your HVAC system serviced? Ideally, you should schedule tune-ups twice a year; once in the fall for your furnace, and once in the spring for your air conditioner. Aim to schedule your air conditioner tune-up as early in the spring as possible, as there is a high demand for tune-ups during this time, which can lead to long waits later in the season. Having your air conditioner inspected and serviced now will ensure that it is looked at before the weather heats up, ensuring you can feel confident knowing that your system will be up to the challenge of keeping you cool when summer arrives.

## DIY Air Conditioner Maintenance Tips

While having your air conditioner professionally serviced should be at the top of your to-do list this spring, there are also DIY maintenance steps that you should take to ensure that your HVAC system is ready for summer. To ensure that your HVAC system maintains peak performance between tune-ups, here are some essential things that you should be doing:

### Replace Your Air Filter

Perhaps the most important thing that you should be doing to maintain your HVAC system year-round is to make sure that you replace your air filter regularly. While replacing an HVAC system's filter is easy to do, it's also a task that can be easy to forget. However, if you go too long without replacing your air filter, not only can this reduce the air quality in your home, but it can also restrict airflow through your HVAC system. This will then cause your HVAC system to have to work harder to heat/cool your home, leading to increased energy costs and unnecessary strain on your system that could reduce its lifespan.

To ensure optimal performance, it's then essential that you check your air filter monthly and replace it if necessary (most air filters need to be replaced every 1-3 months). Consider getting in the habit of checking your air filter on the first of every month so that you do not forget this important HVAC maintenance task.

### Check Your Condensate Drain

You should also get in the habit of periodically checking your air conditioner's condensate drain pipe and pan for signs of a leak or a clog. Over time, your condensate drain can become damaged and develop a leak, or it can become clogged with dirt, algae, and other debris, causing your drain pan to overflow. Either scenario can result in water damage to your home and/or HVAC system, making it essential that you inspect your condensate drain regularly. If you discover any problems with your condensate drain line, it's essential that you have a technician perform necessary repairs as soon as possible to prevent potential damage.

## Remove Obstructions From The Exterior Condenser Unit

Every few weeks, you should also make a point of checking your condenser to make sure that it is free of obstructions that could reduce airflow. It's common for your exterior unit to become clogged with sticks, leaves, or grass clippings, and weeds may even start to grow along its sides. Unfortunately, such obstructions can limit ventilation, potentially causing your HVAC system to overheat and require expensive repairs. It's then essential that you keep the area around your condenser clear of obstructions and that you rinse it off occasionally with a garden hose to remove any debris that could block airflow.

## Schedule an HVAC Tune-Up Today

With summer right around the corner, it's essential that you schedule your HVAC tune-up as soon as possible. This will ensure that you're able to have your system serviced before the summer rush, and it will give you peace of mind knowing that your air conditioner is ready to keep you and your family comfortable during the hot months ahead.

Feel free to call us today to learn about how our experienced technicians can help ensure your comfort year-round, as well as to schedule a spring tune-up on your home's air conditioning system.