



What are the benefits of a higher efficiency system? SEER 101

If you're looking at replacing your air conditioner, high efficiency systems are worth serious consideration. Efficiency is measured by SEER, or Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio. When comparing air conditioners, the SEER rating will tell you how efficient one is compared to another. Higher SEER numbers indicate higher efficiency. The minimum SEER rating is 13, with a rating above 16 considered high efficiency. You should consider a high efficiency system for the following reasons:

1. **Lower Utility Bills** – High efficiency systems with higher SEER ratings use less energy, which translates to less money you spend on energy bills. In fact, switching from an old 8 SEER unit to a 16 SEER one can save you 50% on your energy bill. Bottom line: higher efficiency = lower bills.
2. **Incentives and Rebates** – There are many potential ways to save through government incentives or manufacturers' rebates. By taking advantage of these offers, a high efficiency system might end up costing roughly the same as a standard unit. A good place to find what's available to you is www.dsireusa.org.
3. **Environmental Impact** – Because high efficiency systems use less energy they contribute to fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Less electricity means fewer fossil fuels being burned. This is good for your wallet and good for the environment.
4. **Humidity** – High efficiency systems not only help keep the air at the preferred temperature, but can more effectively remove moisture from the air. Modulated systems run longer cycles at lower pressures, helping to cool the air comfortably. Air that cools too fast without proper moisture removal can lead to mold and other airborne problems.

In addition to the above, a home with a high efficiency air conditioning system can be attractive to a potential buyer if you're looking to sell. You'll be passing on the monthly savings to them!

Our Recommendation

While we are advocates of higher efficiency systems that use less energy, save you money, and provide better humidity control, we don't want you to just buy the biggest, highest SEER-rated unit possible. It's important to work with a reputable contractor who can properly size a system that's the best fit for your home. You can find quality contractors on sites such as www.angieslist.com or www.acca.org.

We'd love to hear from you if you're contemplating a switch to a high efficiency system.

