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# HVAC ZONING

## *What are your options?*

Most homes use one thermostat that serves the entire house. As simple and easy as this system is to set up and maintain, it results in uncomfortable areas of your home. Wherever the thermostat is, there too will be your comfort (unless you're turning it up or down to compensate for some other part of your house that's struggling).

If you're tired of shivering in your bed while the living room remains the most comfortable room, here are some ways to introduce zone control into your home.

### DAMPERS IN DUCTWORK

In most furnace systems, one thermostat controls the furnace and the air is distributed throughout the ductwork without any variations in airflow to suit the needs of individual spaces. Adding dampers to branches and having each damper open and close according to the needs of each zone thermostat will allow for greater control in each area. Depending on your ductwork, you can have one damper serving each floor of your home.

### CONTROL VALVES WITH THERMOSTATS

For hot water heating systems, each radiator can have a control valve that opens and closes when the space thermostat calls for heat. You can also group radiators in a given space and connect them to a thermostat that serves that common area.

### SUPPLEMENTAL HEAT IN CRITICAL ROOMS

If dampers aren't practical for your home's system (due to duct design for example), adding supplemental heat to a space that typically doesn't get enough might be the best solution. You may have a situation where one room or area is colder while the rest of your home remains comfortable. Adding another source of heat in this one space will allow you to only use what you need, so you don't have to overheat the rest of your home to stay comfortable.

### MULTIPLE SMALLER UNITS

A decentralized system allows for control in each zone with individual thermostats controlling each piece of equipment. For example, multiple heat pumps serving separate rooms or groups of rooms will run as needed to serve each zone. This is not a common system but you can discuss it with a professional to see if it works for you.

*(CONT. P2)*

# HVAC ZONING

## What are your options? (CONT.)

### BOOSTED AIR CIRCULATION

If some areas of your home are susceptible to air stratification, where hot air stays at the top near the ceiling and cooler air sinks, giving you the chills, you may benefit from improved air circulation to take care of this zone. Rather than modify your entire home's system to improve comfort in this problem area, a targeted solution will give proper control and comfort throughout your home.

If you need help making your house more comfortable with the right zone control, give us a call.

## Tic-Tac-Toe

Can you win 2 out of 3?

## Why You Need to Try MINIMALISM

It's easy to go through life accumulating stuff you needed at one time, thought you needed or thought you might need some day. It stays in your home, either cluttering visible space or tucked into a hidden corner, unseen and unused. They become hidden burdens that affect you with their mental "noise".

Here are some reasons to try minimalism (you don't have to commit right away but you may want to!):

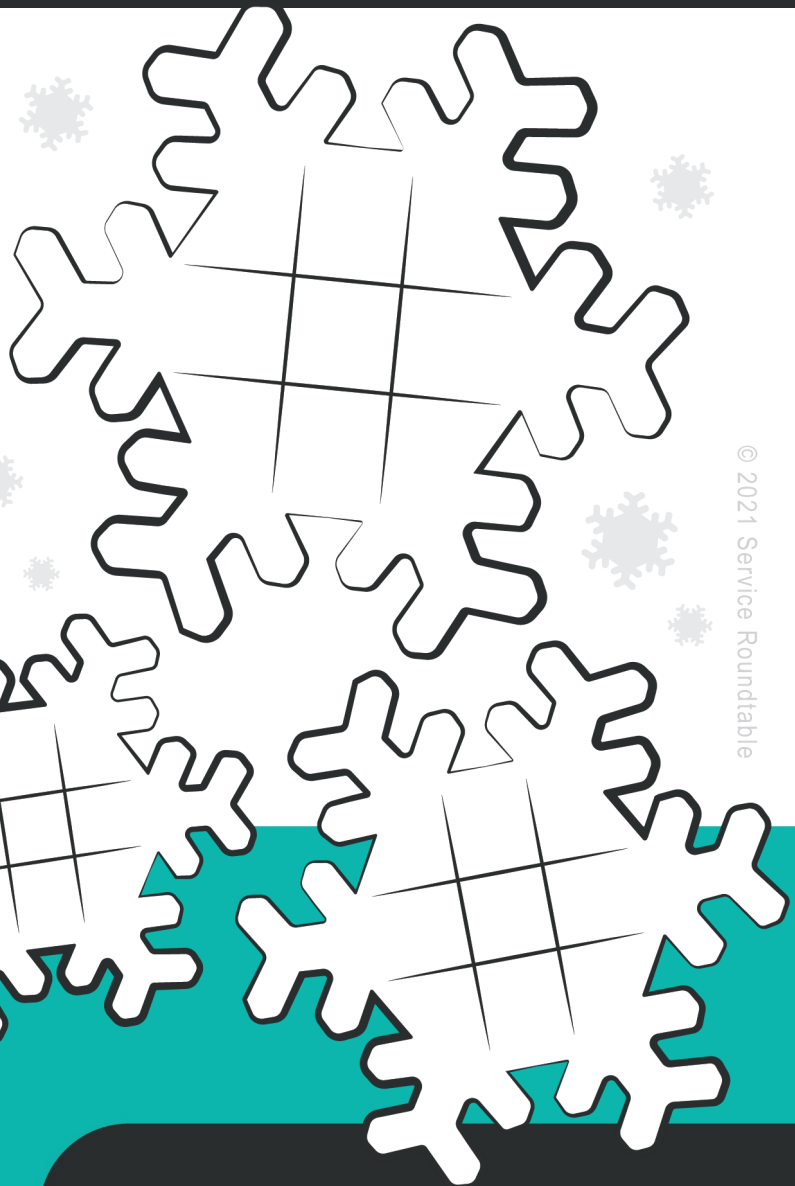
### REDUCE STRESS

Clutter has the ability to raise your stress levels without you even knowing it. Piles of paper, boxes filled with miscellaneous items, and crowded rooms bombard your mind with messages. Some of these messages are connected to undone tasks, some are more obvious, like guilt about not having a tidy space. Or you may have a tidy space and your cupboards and drawers are filled to the brim. Clearing it out silences those messages, those "voices" and lowers your stress level.

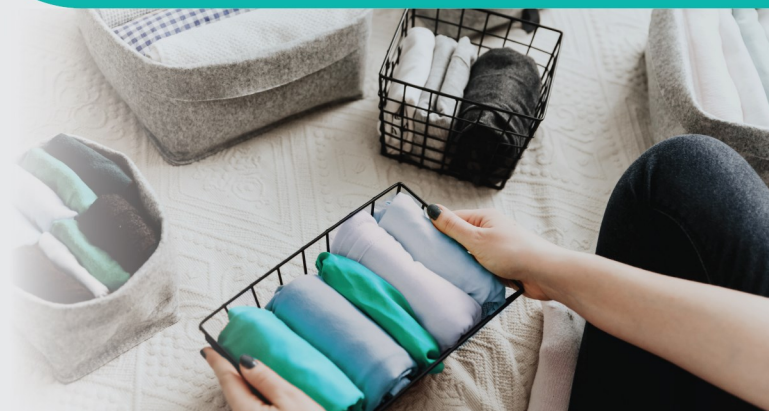
(CONT. P3)

What do you call a  
snowman with a six-pack?  
*An abdominal snowman!*

Today's not the day to be making  
jokes about the weather.  
*It's snow joke outside!*



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# Why You Need to Try MINIMALISM (CONT.)

## LET OTHERS BENEFIT FROM THE STUFF YOU DON'T USE

Clothes that no longer fit or utensils packed away in the basement don't serve anyone. You don't benefit in any way from holding on to it. If you're worried about needing something in the future and you've held on to it for a decade because it hasn't fit your lifestyle at any point (and still doesn't), let it go to someone who will use it now.

## YOUR HOME WILL FEEL BIGGER

Everything in your house takes up room. It's something most people don't consider when they buy something new to bring it into

their home: where will this item "live"? If you don't have the room for it, then you end up using space that you would otherwise have available. Getting rid of excess clutter automatically makes your home more spacious.

## REDUCE YOUR TASK LIST

Speaking of a tidy home, it takes work to keep it that way. Even if you manage to put everything away at the end of every day, having fewer items to deal with would shorten this task and make it easier. Cleaning is also quicker if you don't have to push items around to get to the surfaces that need cleaning. You'll have less to manage overall, freeing you up to focus on what's important.

Even if you think minimalism isn't for you, consider taking steps to declutter your home of the items you definitely don't need as a starting point. If you're fed up of stepping over and around piles of stuff, want to breathe easier and accomplish more, minimalism is the way to go.



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# Dry air in the house?

## Humidifiers can improve how you feel

Ah, the warmth of being inside when it's cold and blowing outdoors. Coming in from a wet, snowy day and curling up under a blanket on the couch watching a movie is the best feeling.

But the warm air inside our homes in the winter can be dry - and dry air tends to suck up any moisture it can for itself - from your house and its contents and even you!

Dry air in the house can lead to sore throats, bloody noses and dry skin. Dry air can irritate the airways of people with lung diseases, according to the American Lung Association. This can lead to wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath. It can also cause bronchitis, sinusitis and asthma issues. Dry air also carries the dust, pollen and other allergens that can irritate your airways.

Viruses and bacteria also like dry air. They can linger in the dry air longer after someone coughs or sneezes. Dry air can also lower your body's immune response as it dries out your nasal cavities making airborne viruses and airborne bacteria transmission more likely.

Dehydration is also its own set of problems, and then instead of water which is good, we are often drinking more coffee and tea which have caffeine that can further dehydrate us.

All of these things are about us, then there is the house itself.

Dry air can hurt your home's structure. It can result in cracked wood and harm your home's wood furnishings including musical instruments, wood tables and wood floors. Those things can break leading to stress and headaches.

How miserable!

Optimal humidity within a home is between 40-60 percent. During the winter months, it can drop to 15 percent. What can you do?

The obvious answer is add moisture. The "old-fashioned" way is to set bowls of water about the house to evaporate into the air. This isn't always easy to keep up with nor is it pretty.

There are portable humidifier units. They provide humidity in the room they're set in. They too must be kept up with, and the units are not very attractive.

Or you can get a whole-house humidifier. Problem solved. The automatic control allows the homeowner to "set it and forget it."

A whole-house humidifier is the size of a large gift box connected to your air ducts out of sight. A thin water-line is attached for keeping vapor moisture consistently flowing into your home's air at the rate you choose.

Additionally, every 4 percent increase in humidity lets you decrease your home's thermostat by one degree. For example, if your home's humidity levels are at 26 percent and you adjust it to 50 percent, you can subsequently lower your thermostat by 6 degrees.

For more information about how a humidifier can help in your home, call Gary & Sons at 814-371-4885.



*No matter how long the winter, **SPRING** is sure to follow.*

## **Get ready now for next season.**

While spring seems a long way off, it will be here before we know it. During the days we are inside, it's a good time to make plans.

### **GARDENING**

The seed catalogs arrived before Christmas decorations were taken down. Pull them out and start making your plans for next year's harvest. Stick to native varieties, and look into heirloom fruits and vegetables. Heirlooms are rarer and are hardier and better quality than hybrids. They are passed down from generation to generation, and many have been lost.

Map out your spring garden. Rotate crop locations, and think about where you can put container crops outside of the garden plot.

Even on the coldest day, you can think of spring gardening by "visiting" other gardens online from around the world. It may give you ideas of what you want to plant.

Look around for a new garden ornament or

make one yourself. There are many on Etsy for sale or many to make on Pinterest.

And it always pays to have the right tools. Be sure your garden tools are clean, sharpened and ready to go when you are.

### **OUTDOOR LIVING**

Decks, porches, patios and the backyard are now being used as an extension of the home. Making them comfortable living spaces isn't just a trend in warmer climates.

If you don't have an outdoor area already carved out for hosting family and friends, look for a spot that would work for you. Think about space for dining or lounging, maybe a firepit and a spot for a grill. Outdoor areas are now including sinks, countertops and small refrigerators, but just having a place to organize on a small table is good.

If you do have an outdoor area, think about how to give it new life this year. Plan to pressure wash bricks and decking, and reseal or paint wooden decks. Built-in BBQ

grills and wood-burning ovens are all the rage, but just cleaning and updating your family grill also suffices. Now is the time to look into what you may want to do.

**STOP!** HGTV says to reduce potentially slippery hazards, use organic kitty litter as an alternative to salt. Since salt can wash into your flower beds and sterilize the soil, non-chemical kitty litter will provide traction without being hazardous to nearby plantings. Look for kitty litter that contains vermiculite or pumice. As an added benefit, staying on paths or sidewalks keeps you out of the soggy soil.



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# Do programmable thermostats save you money?

Most of us like technology that makes our lives easier. There are tons of gadgets and gizmos on the market. And when those products promise to save us money and energy, they have our attention!

That is the idea behind programmable thermostats - it can be the gadget that saves you 10 percent or more on your energy bills, according to touted reports..

A programmable thermostat is a digital thermostat that is used to control the temperature of your home. It can control both heat and air-conditioning temperatures - just like any other thermostat.

However, a programmable one usually gives an option of changing temperatures at specific times that you set it for. Some are even connected to your smart phone via an app and can even be controlled remotely.

Why would you want to alter your home's temperature?

Some people like to lower the temperature when no one is home to save on heating costs (or they raise the temperature during warmer days to pay less for air conditioning.) This can pay off at about 10 percent savings if you leave your home empty for the majority of the day.

However, with many people working remotely or having varied schedules, a programmable thermostat doesn't help as much as one would want it to.

Keep in mind, every time a temperature is changed, the equipment must work harder to heat or cool to adjust back to the temperature you prefer while home. Most heating and cooling equipment was built to maintain a constant temperature, so adjusting temperatures regularly is more wear and tear than expected.

Also remember, the items in your home along with the walls, ceiling and floors hold a temperature. As your home cools to a lower temperature in the winter while you're at work, the items give off heat to maintain the former air temperature. Then, when you re-heat your home, the items, too, must attain the new temperature. This also works your heating system more than expected.

So what is the answer to the headline? Do programmable thermostats save you money? The answer is maybe - depending on how you use them. Most people raise and lower the temperatures too much to see many benefits, but they also like having the technology available.



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## Protect yourself from deadly carbon monoxide poisoning:

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is produced by furnaces, vehicles, portable generators, stoves, lanterns, gas ranges or burning wood. You can protect yourself from common sources of carbon monoxide poisoning, which can lead to serious illness or death, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Don't ever heat your house with a gas oven or burn anything in a stove or fireplace that is not vented. If your power goes out, remember to never use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove or other gasoline or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement or garage. If it is outside, be sure it is 20 feet or more from a window, door or vent.

If you suspect CO poisoning, seek prompt medical attention. Symptoms of CO poisoning include feeling dizzy, light-headed or nausea. If you have a CO detector and it sounds, leave your home immediately and call 911.





# 2021 WINNERS



The Best of Tri-County is an award contest hosted by Priority Media whose brands include Sunny 106 and Connect FM Radio, DuBois Big Deals, Priority Digital Services, and the daily news email Tri-County Insider.

This contest is a chance for Priority radio listeners, fans and followers to nominate then vote for their favorite local businesses in over 100 various categories. Under the watch of a third party, thousands of votes were cast from area residents to pick winners of either gold or silver.

This year, air conditioning services and heating services were two categories under the home and garden section of entries. When the votes were tallied, Gary & Sons Inc. were winners! Gary & Sons received awards in both air conditioning and in heating.

Thank you to all who voted! We know winning is only possible if our customers are happy, and we strive to do that every day.

## Plan now for summer and save \$ on you're A/C needs

It's not even warm weather...yet. But it is a good time to make plans for your summer comfort.

If you've ever thought about adding an air conditioning system to your home, now is the time to plan. We ordered ahead and have cooling equipment in our inventory for summer 2022. Lock in current prices by calling us now to set up an appointment with our comfort specialist.

Our comfort specialist can help you decide what equipment best meets your needs and home size. We can schedule an installation date when the weather is suitable and meets your schedule. It can be financed as low as zero percent interest, if you wish. Early decisions allow for time to plan and budget.

Don't spend another summer being TOO hot. Call us today at 814-371-4885.








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Gary & Sons, Inc., of Falls Creek, serves Jefferson, Clearfield, Elk, Cameron and Clarion counties and beyond for heating and cooling needs. Family-owned and operated since 1978.

## CHICKEN PICATTA

### *In an Extra Creamy Sauce*

Source: <https://damndelicious.net/2020/03/03/creamy-chicken-piccata/>

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 Lb. boneless and skinless chicken thighs
- Kosher salt and pepper, to taste
- 5 1/2 Tbsp ap flour, divided
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 1/4 c. chicken stock
- 1/4 c. dry white wine
- 3 Tbsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp heavy cream
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 1/4 cup capers, drained

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Season chicken with 1 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp pepper. Dredge chicken in 4 Tbsp flour until evenly coated. Heat canola oil and butter in a medium skillet over medium heat.

Working in batches, add chicken to the skillet in a single layer and cook until golden brown and cooked through, reaching temp of 165F,

about 4-5 min per side. Set aside and reduce heat to medium low. Whisk in remaining 1 1/2 Tbsp flour until lightly browned, about 1 minute.

Whisk in chicken stock, wine and lemon juice. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring until reduced and slightly thickened, about 3 min.



Stir in heavy cream, parsley and capers; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Return chicken to the skillet. Serve immediately.