

## Heat Pumps

Heat pumps are another form of central heating, similar to furnaces. The difference between a heat pump and other types of heating systems is that a heat pump doesn't create heat, it pulls existing heat from the surrounding air. While this type of heating still uses electricity, the amount of electricity used is much less than a furnace or electric resistance heating because it is not creating new heat. Heat pumps can be used in the summer for cooling, as well, pulling the heat from inside the house and depositing it outdoors.

Heat pumps come in two varieties: ducted heat pumps and ductless heat pumps (mini split systems). Ducted heat pumps have an inside and outside unit, and use ductwork to pump the air throughout the house like other types of central heating. For this reason, it is very easy to convert a furnace based system into a ducted heat pump system. Ductless heat pumps are a little different and do not heat your home centrally. Smaller units, called mini splits, are installed in multiple rooms of the home with coordinating units installed outside. These two units work together to heat individual areas of the home.

	Heat Pump
<b>Typical yearly cost</b>	\$700-800
<b>Life expectancy</b>	15 years
<b>Pros</b>	Provides heating and cooling; low cost to heat; very energy efficient
<b>Cons</b>	Can be expensive to install; ductless heat pumps require zoned heating

While heat pumps are very energy efficient, you can continue to lower your energy bill by following the same changes as listed for central heating.

1. *Lower your thermostat when you are away from home or sleeping*
2. *Insulate your ductwork*
3. *Change your air filter*