



Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Think Spring

Many people don't remember single digit temperatures anymore. They used to be common but it seems like the last 15 or so years, we barely see anything under 20°. This is common sense but I'll say it anyway. The colder it gets outside, the more heat your system needs to provide to keep the temperature constant inside. Add in some wind and the heat is stripped from your house even faster. The point I'm getting at is that you may notice some comfort problems arising when it is brutally cold outside. There are a few simple precautions you can take to prevent pipes from freezing. Open the doors to any cabinet that has water pipes inside and is on an outside wall. If you know of a particular faucet that is prone to pipes freezing, let it drip overnight. Not running water but just a steady drip. Don't turn the heat below 55° in any area of your home. If it cycles too infrequently and you have hydronic (hot water) heat, you risk having a pipe freeze during a long off cycle.

No matter what kind of heat you have, don't turn it off just because it seems to be working too hard or blowing cool air. Heat pumps seem to blow cool air but even though 85° seems cool, it will heat your home. When you turn off a system it produces no heat at all and will only make comfort matters worse. You can use a supplemental electric heater if you are cold but using it in the same room as your thermostat can cause the central system not to run and pipes may freeze. It's also not a good idea to set the temperature back during the coldest weather. The temperature may not recover for several hours and in some cases not until it warms up outside. These cold days are called design days by heating geeks. They are the days when the output of a system matches the amount of heat required. We typically see only 7 to 10 design days in a winter. Normal design criteria for a heating system is to hold the space at 68° when it is 10° outside. This also means that when it goes below 10° you may not be able to hold 68° inside. It is temporary and not something you need to call a service company about.

Every heating system is designed to operate non-stop. They don't need a break and there is no harm letting them run constantly. Just conserve the warmth inside your home by not opening doors or running kitchen exhaust hoods. Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

Recycling Center

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WM's investments in new recycling facilities, including the Grand Central Recycling Center, are intended to:

- Increase overall recycling capacity
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