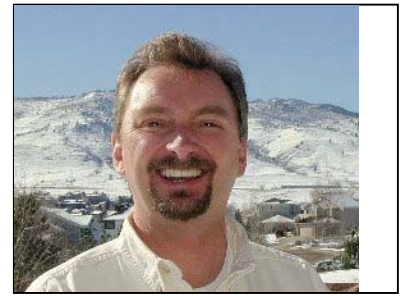


Healthy Air for your Home



By Rick Bunzel

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As we get into allergy season the quality of indoor air becomes more important to those that suffer from airborne allergens. On days when the pollen, ragweed and dust are high most who suffer will retreat to the indoors. Your heating and cooling system can help filter out the allergens if you have the correct type of filter for it.

All cooling and heating systems utilize some type of filter in their return air vents. However the standard cardboard frame filters used by most consumers are only about 15% effective in removing dust and particles from the air. They have no effect on pollen, micro-organisms, smoke or other similar pollutants.

Washable filters can be found on some furnaces and are made of foam or woven synthetic fiber. They are about as effective as inexpensive fiberglass filters. You can improve the efficiency of a foam filter by spraying it with a special filter coating; this oily/waxy spray helps the filter hold dirt better. However, a filter designed to remove allergens are a better solution

3M makes a line of hypoallergenic filters that are very effective at removing allergens. However because these filters are denser they will need to be changed more often. 3M publishes replacement guidelines and if they are not followed it will shorten the life of your furnace. These filters are readily available at retailers such as Home Depot.

Electrostatic filters are more effective than standard filters. However, as they get dirty, they quickly become less efficient. To maintain efficiency, they should be hosed off on a regular basis. Because they can be cleaned and reused, they are more economical, in the long run, than the standard throw away filters. Electronic filters from Aprilaire, Honeywell or Trane are readily available for approximately \$500-\$600 and can easily be installed by a qualified heating and air conditioning technician.

Mechanical standalone HEPA air filters produce the best results. They capture up to 95% of all airborne pollutants, including bacteria, dust, animal hair, dust mites, mildew, lint, fungus, smoke, cooking grease, bacteria and even many viruses. The best location for this unit would be in your bedroom where most people spend the most of their time when at home. You may want to have more than one of these units in your home. The HEPA filter in these units should be replaced once a year or at an interval suggested by the manufacturer.

Rick Bunzel is the Principle Inspector at Mountain View Property Inspections. If you would like to know more about your home go to **WWW.MVPinspection.com** If you have questions or comments, Rick Bunzel can be contacted at Mountain View Property Inspections @ 303-443-9063 or MVPInspection@comcast.net