

Consumers Digest

OCTOBER 2006



Best Buys in Gas and Oil Furnaces, Heat Pumps, and Gas and Oil Boilers

Best Buy Categories:

- [P]=Premium selection;
- [M]=Midrange selection;
- [E]=Economy selection.

Best Buys for furnaces, boilers and heat pumps were selected on the basis of energy efficiency, noise levels, features and the manufacturer's reputation for reliability. Best Buys are for series of furnaces with the exception of the Monitor FCX boiler, a single-sized unit. List prices are estimates based on input from distributors and other nonmanufacturer sources; manufacturers do not divulge prices. For furnaces and boilers, these prices reflect units with output capacities around 100,000 BTU. For heat pumps, the prices reflect heating capacities around 3 tons. Prices do not include installation costs or options such as thermostats. Furnaces and boilers are labeled with the peak energy-efficiency rating AFUE (annual fuel utilization efficiency), while heat pumps are rated in SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio). The ratings are taken from Department of Energy tests. Manufacturers say single units might produce higher ratings under certain conditions.

Gas-Fired Furnaces

[P] Bryant Evolution Plus 95i or Plus 90i

List: \$2,800-\$3,000

A two-stage system, it operates at 60 percent capacity during milder weather but moves up to 100 percent when an extra boost of heat is needed. The thermostat's LED screen provides preventative maintenance reminders. An option with the control lets you change temperatures remotely over the telephone or through the Internet.

Features:

- * Output: 40,000 to 120,000 BTU
- * Peak efficiency: 96.6 percent AFUE
- * Warranty: 5-yr. limited, limited lifetime on the heat exchanger

[M] Rheem Prestige 90 Plus RGF

[E] Comfort-Aire Conquest 90 GL Series

Oil-Fired Furnaces

[P] Lennox Elite Series O25

[M] Thermo Pride OH6 Highboy

[E] Comfort-Aire Patriot 80

Heat Pumps

[P] Bryant Evolution 288A

List: \$4,200

This ultra-efficient unit achieves ratings near the industry high. Two-stage operation in both heating and cooling mode and a variable-speed blower motor are automatically adjusted by the thermostat to meet temperature conditions outdoors. Four-wire hookup to the outdoor compressor speeds installation.

Features:

- * Heating capacity: 2 to 5 tons
- * Peak efficiency: 18 SEER
- * Warranty: 5-yr. limited, 10-yr. limited on the compressor

[M] Lennox Elite Series XP16

[E] Rheem Classic Series RPPB

Gas-Fired Boilers

[P] Monitor MZ Series

[M] Burnham Revolution Series

[E] Lennox Conservator Series



Bryant Evolution Plus 90i furnace

Oil-Fired Boilers

[P] Monitor FCX

[M] Weil-McLain Ultra Oil

[E] New Yorker CLW Series



Bryant Evolution 288A Heat Pump

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