

**The**



**Herald**

Summer 2003

## Changes In The Oil Heat Industry

If you heat with oil or propane, and have for some time, you've undoubtedly noticed changes in the way your oil supplier does business. The most obvious change, of course, is the price of fuel. It just keeps going up. But, changes have been occurring in the maintenance services fuel dealers offer as well.

Service changes also involve money. It's costing more to have your fuel dealer service your equipment.

The reason for this change is that dealers used to be able to use profits from the sale of fuel to subsidize their service departments. That only made good sense. If your furnace is running well, you'll keep it running more, which means you'll buy more oil. And, you won't switch to another fuel source because you are dissatisfied with the dealer's service.

In the new paradigm, the price of fuel oil and propane is very competitive. Sure the price of fuel continues to go up, but not as much as it would if kept competition weren't causing dealers to absorb some of those increases. Consequently, your dealer can't afford to subsidize service anymore.



In fact, some dealers have subcontracted their service out to companies like Halco to save the overhead of maintaining a service department.

Even if your dealer does still offer service, it would be in your best interest to "shop" around. Get a price from an independent HVAC contractor like us, and compare it to your dealer.

On page two, you will read about seven of our service technicians

taking special training and becoming certified in oil heat service. Three of these technicians, plus a fourth took additional, specific training on one of the brands of oil burners that we handle.

Here at Halco, our commitment to customer service is paramount. Because so much of our service area is rural and outside natural gas service areas, we place as much emphasis on training our technicians to work on oil and propane furnaces as on gas furnaces.

If you want the maximum value for your heating dollar, be sure your oil or propane furnace is cleaned and serviced once a year. This is even more important with oil and propane than with other fuels since the fuel is in a liquid form at some point in the process, and this can lead to carbon build-up and fouling, especially at injector tips.



**Serving the Finger Lakes & Central New York Since 1984**

## Continuing Education For Our Staff



*Dave Adam*



*Steve Andrews*



*Rob Tweedie*

HVAC technology changes so rapidly that ongoing training is essential for a company like ours to truly serve its customers.

Since our last newsletter, each of the people pictured here has taken one or more continuing education course.

To support our commitment to oil heat, Todd Martin, Dan McConnon, Rob Tweedie, Ralph Cronenberg, Steve Andrews, Ed Jansen and Dave Adam traveled to Albany for a seminar and certification exam conducted by the National Oil Research Alliance (NORA).

Dave Adam, Rob Tweedie and Dan McConnon also took an oil heat course at Business Analysis and Training Center in Clyde. They were joined by John Tweedie. This seminar on Riello oil burners was conducted by Darrin Rice, owner/director of the Business Analysis and Training Center.

Todd Martin and Paul Smith went to Syracuse for a Carrier customer service school. This was a required course for all Carrier Authorized Dealers. We like to think that our customer service is of such high quality that we could have taught the course.

Finally, Hal Smith took a four day course in backflow prevention at the Monroe County Water Authority in Rochester. Plumbers and HVAC contractors are required to use certified backflow prevention people to design and install certain components. This is to prevent water from leaking back into the public water supply. We are fortunate to have several certified people on staff.



*Ralph Cronenberg*



*Ed Jansen*



*Todd Martin*



*Dan McConnon*



*Blake Park*



*Hal Smith*



*Paul Smith*



*John Tweedie*

## HVAC Veteran Joins Halco



*Steve Beniamino*

Stephen Beniamino has joined Halco as mechanical department project manager. He will be responsible for the design, estimating and management of commercial heating and air conditioning projects.

For 11 years, Steve was a partner in Interstate Heating in Geneva. Before that, he worked in dairy refrigeration for 10 years. He is also a licensed HVAC technician in Auburn and Ithaca.

Steve is a graduate of Finger Lakes Community College's heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) course, and has studied pneumatics, blueprint reading and attended the McClean water school.

Steve lives in Geneva with his wife Annette. They have two grown children and three grandchildren.

## Mold & IAQ

A great deal of attention is being paid to mold's effect on indoor air quality. If mold is a problem in your house, call us for a consultation on mold management, as well as solutions to all of your indoor air quality problems.

# Halco Brings New Comfort To Home Remodeling & Expansion Project



*The finishing touches are still being done to the Ritchie's remodeling project...*



*...but the inside is nice and comfortable, as we can see from the new kitchen.*



*Scott Ritchie stands between his new boiler and water heater.*



*The manifold system - four zones plus a spare for future expansion.*

The Ritchie family – Scott, Jaymi and 10 year old Cody – bought a home in Ovid in January, 2003. Before moving in, however, they launched a major renovation and expansion project that nearly doubled the space.

The Ritchie's new home was finally ready for occupancy on May 1, although the finishing touches are still being completed.

The boiler that heats the home's baseboard heating system was due for replacement as part of the renovation process. Besides, a larger boiler was needed to heat the extra space. Addi-

tionally, the Ritchie family wanted central air conditioning, which had to be installed from scratch. The house had never had A/C before.

Scott, who is a New York State Park Police officer, says they checked the Yellow Pages and began calling HVAC contractors. One was Halco. Scott's boss knew Paul Smith and had experience with Halco. He suggested that Scott take a good look at the Halco proposal.

When he met with Paul Smith, Scott said, his search for an HVAC contractor was over. He said, "We liked Paul

right from the start. He offered good ideas, and was honest. We were happy with everything Halco did."

Scott explained that Paul, Ben and Gary were very accommodating when some work had to be rescheduled. They also took in stride the challenges of installing air conditioning ductwork in the original attic and that of the addition.

Because the hot water heating system uses radiators instead of registers, the outside air conditioning compressor is connected to an air handler in the attic, which distributes the conditioned air to ceiling outlets via flexible ductwork.

The Ritchies are able to adjust their heating comfort through four different zones. A fifth zone was also added for further expansion, or in case additional zoning was needed.

The boiler and air conditioning compressor are both built by Carrier and the water heater is a Bradford-White.

## Where We Are

Call any of our local phone numbers listed below and a service or installation team will be dispatched from right nearby to take care of your problems quickly.

<u>Community</u>	<u>Number</u>
Phelps	315.946.6200
	800.533.3367
Fax	315.946.6676
Newark	315.331.3912
Geneva	315.781.0556
Canandaigua	716.396.2668
Penn Yan	315.536.0633
Auburn	315.253.7939
Rochester	716.271.4330
Ithaca	607.277.3154
Elmira	607.733.0420

# Air Conditioning FAQs



We are frequently asked questions about air conditioning; maybe even more often than about heating. So, we will answer some here.

**Q.** We don't have ducts in our house, but would like air conditioning. What can we do?

**A.** As you will see from the article on page 3, existing ductwork isn't necessary. The solution we used in the Ritchie family's home is just one way to install air conditioning in a house heated with hot water or steam. There are also systems that are installed directly through the wall. Whatever the challenge, we're up to it.

**Q.** Why does an air conditioner have to be cleaned and tuned each year?

**A.** Like a furnace, components in an air conditioning system are exposed to dust and dirt. These need to be cleaned. The refrigerant should be checked each year to be sure that it is at the correct level. Low coolant can cause seals and other parts to dry out when

not properly lubricated by the coolant. A poorly operating system also increases your electric bill while not cooling your house as efficiently as you would like. It is also important to have a clean filter, so we will change that during the cleaning and tuning process.

**Q.** I'm so confused by all the numbers associated with various air conditioning systems, particularly the SEER number.

**A.** You aren't the only one. SEER is a measure of the system's efficiency. Believe it or not, the highest SEER number isn't always the most efficient for every home. So, our people will

recommend the SEER rating, as well as the size and capacity, to provide maximum comfort and efficiency.

**Q.** Why do I need air conditioning. We can just open the window and breathe clean, country air.

**A.** Clean, country air may not be as clean as you think that crisp air may be loaded with allergens. And, what about those sweltering summer nights? Besides cooling, air conditioning also reduces "mugginess". Add to this the value air conditioning adds to your house at sale time and you'll see that it is an investment that pays you back in several ways.

## Commercial Update

Our commercial installations continue to grow. They now include:

- **Community Computers.** We are doing the HVAC work for this Auburn company's expansion.
- **Park Presbyterian Church.** We are adding air conditioning to this Newark church.
- **Penn Yan First Baptist Church.** We are beginning the plumbing and HVAC work on this expansion.

- **Downing Corp.** We are doing the HVAC and plumbing work on modular classrooms for Suffolk County Community College for this Ontario, New York manufacturer. While 90 percent of the work will be done locally, a Halco crew will be going to Long Island to make the HVAC connections when the classrooms are installed.

Visit Us at  
[www.halcoheating.com](http://www.halcoheating.com)



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**Return Service Requested**