

# Purchasing a heat pump?

## Questions to ask your contractor:

- What is your training on the type of heat pump (ductless, multi-split or central) you plan to install?**  
Ask about their technical qualifications, if they regularly install heat pumps and if they are trained on the type of system they plan to install. Ideally a contractor would be trained by the heat pump manufacturer. A reputable contractor would be able to provide proof of their training.
- Will you complete a heat load calculation to determine the right size heat pump for my home?**  
Sizing is crucial to the unit's efficiency. An oversized heat pump will need more energy to operate and will impact the unit's life expectancy. An undersized unit will run continuously and work harder to achieve the set temperature.
- Will all the heat pump conduit line penetrations to my home's envelope be sealed as part of the installation?**  
A thin conduit line connects the outdoor heat pump unit and the indoor head(s) fixed in your home. The penetration(s) for the conduit line(s), if left unsealed will lead to heat loss and also provide an entry point for pests.

## For outdoor units

- Will the outdoor unit be mounted in a manner to account for build-up of ice, snow and moisture from seasonal changes?**  
Concrete pads tend to corrode and crack from water absorption and freeze-thaw cycles as the seasons change. Using spacers or rails to raise the unit from the pad can prevent ice damage and increase clearance from snow.
- Will the outdoor unit be anchored to keep it from toppling over?**
- Will the outdoor unit be installed in a location with adequate clearance?**  
The unit must have access to sufficient air flow to function optimally.
- Will the refrigerant lines from the outdoor unit be insulated and covered with UV-resistant material to prevent deterioration?**

## For central ducted heat pumps

- Has a duct size calculation been done? Will the existing ductwork need to be modified or repaired to ensure that the heat pump is able to heat/cool the home adequately and keep me comfortable?**  
Ducting for traditional furnaces tends to be smaller than for central heat pumps. Undersized ducting can cause the heat pump to work harder to achieve the desired temperature, thus affecting the life of the unit. A ductless heat pump may be a solution for homes where the ductwork is poor, sizing is limited or the expense to upgrade would be prohibitive.
- Will the system have a combined thermostat to control both the heat pump and the backup heat source?**  
It's ideal to use a multi-stage combined control for both the heat pump and the back-up heating source. This should be set up to use the heat pump preferentially.

## For ductless and multi-split heat pumps

- Will the indoor head be installed in a place that is optimal for airflow, heat distribution and maintenance?**  
For best heating efficiency, install a floor-mounted console to allow heat to circulate in the room. Hot air rises, so it's good to release heated air to warm the floor. For wall mounted-heads mount them at least 12" to 18" down from the ceiling.
- Will you install a separate wall thermostat or will I need to use the thermostat built into the head?**  
Since indoor heads tend to be closer to the ceiling, the temperature near the unit will read as higher than the ambient room temperature. We suggest a wall thermostat mounted at normal height, away from drafts, sunlight and heating sources.