

Replacing Your Home Thermostat- DIY or Call a Pro?



By Tim De Stasio

In recent years, many new home HVAC thermostats have come out on the market with some very appealing features. For example, the Nest Learning Thermostat allows remote wifi accessibility and energy usage reports. These are just some of the abilities homeowners can take advantage of. Many people have been able to replace their thermostat themselves with great results. Other times, what seemed like an easy project at the start results in a service call to a professional when it doesn't go as well as planned. So should you try to replace your home thermostat? Here are a few things to consider.

Understand your HVAC System

The type of thermostat you will need to purchase and how it will need to be configured depends on the type of HVAC system you have. Do you have a gas furnace or a heat pump? Is it a conventional or hybrid dual fuel? Is it multi stage or single stage? Is it zoned? If you can confidently answer these questions, then you *may* be able to replace your thermostat yourself. If not, it is best to call a professional.

Choosing a Thermostat

Some thermostats are simple to use and program, others have a lot of nice features that, if configured properly, can save energy and give the user more information. It is best to either speak to a professional and explain what your needs and interests are, or do research yourself on which one is right for you.

A programmable thermostat can save a lot of energy and money by being programmed to use less heating and cooling when you are away from home during the day. If you have a consistent work schedule this is highly recommended.

Wifi thermostats such as the Nest allow you to remotely make temperature and schedule adjustments from your mobile device, as long as your thermostat is connected to your home wifi. This is useful for small businesses, vacation homes and rental homes especially so you can keep an eye on the temperature without having to be there in person. People who like technology are typically drawn to these thermostats. And they accent the home wonderfully because of their modern look and feel.

Installing the Thermostat

It is important to always turn the HVAC systems off at their circuit breakers to ensure no power is present at the thermostat. Not doing so can result in electric shock and/ or damage to the HVAC system. The damage may not be covered by a warranty because it was not installed by a professional. If you are unsure how to correctly wire or configure the menu of the new thermostat, do not attempt to install it. Ask for help or call a Professional.

Professionally Installed with a Guarantee

A NATE certified technician will check operation in all modes once the new thermostat is installed to verify everything works correctly. They should guarantee their work so if anything goes wrong, you are covered. The thermostat only turns on and off the HVAC system, so it is also important to keep your system properly serviced in spring and fall. This ensures the thermostat can give you maximum savings.

While replacing your home thermostat yourself can save money over calling a professional, sometimes the risk of improperly installing and doing further damage to your HVAC system is not worth it. Today's modern HVAC systems require continuous training. When properly installed, a modern thermostat can accent the house while saving you energy and money.