

Answers for rising cost of natural gas

I was reading *RoofLines* a couple months ago and came across an article about the rising cost of natural gas and for properties to take appropriate measures for fuel savings. I knew this would mean a lot of phone calls from many of my customers but to my surprise I only received a dozen or so. I inquired with some of our customers that I had not heard from to ask what measures they had taken and most replied 'none'. They felt that they were stuck with the 50% to 70% increase and there was little or nothing that could be done. Those conversations prompted me to write this note to the apartment industry to let you know that there is nothing further from the truth and there are plenty of measures that can be taken in fuel conservation. The first thing that I recommend can be done in house, is the least expensive and the biggest energy and water saver. Walk all of your units and repair all running fixtures. This always makes the maintenance staff cringe but is a must do.

Another thing that can be done on property, if you have the Mix-et brand of tub and shower valves, is to replace the stems with the No Mix stems. This has many benefits.

If your property has hydraulic heating (chill water), a simple outdoor reset can pay for itself two to three times in the first heating month.

If your property has a boiler room and you simply walk into the room and it is extremely hot then you more than likely have an efficiency problem. This heat should be going into the water and not into the room.

There are many things that can be done in a boiler room to save energy. One is a pro-temp temperature controller to set back water temperatures during a off peak time. Two - is the replacement of old inefficient boiler equipment. Three - is using a condensing heat exchanger on new equipment to capture heat lost up the vent stack during a peak usage time. Four - is using a demand pump system to reduce heat loss on the loop dur-

ing an off peak time.

I feel comfortable saying you can save 25% on any property and upward of 65% on others by utilizing these methods.

I have one property where we simply added a pro-temp to their existing system and they are now saving 25% on fuel cost and another where we removed the old existing boilers and replaced with new units and added a pro-temp and they are reporting a 44% savings!

Please understand that each property is application sensitive.

Talk to your plumbing contractor to find out if they have a complete understanding of ALL of the components I have mentioned. If not find one that does and have your property evaluated, you will be happy you do.

I hope that I have been helpful and please call if we can be of assistance. **For further information, call Bob Thurgood, President & CEO, H2O Plumbing and Hot Water Systems, 972.359.1555. ♦**

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**Disaster security
Protecting people and property during times of crisis**

People today are all too familiar with large-scale destruction, whether it's from manmade terror or natural phenomenon. Disasters such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina brought major cities to their knees and threw their citizens into instant chaos.

Sometimes a disaster can band people together, causing virtual strangers do whatever it takes to help one another survive. But there's also a dark side to a disaster, one we have become all too familiar with lately. There are people who take advantage of others during a crisis by stealing, raping, murdering, or instilling fear into the general population. Sometimes these people are forced to commit criminal acts out of desperation or self-preservation, while other times, they do it out of spite, greed or anger. Whatever the reason, protection is required—protection for people and protection for property.

That's where disaster security comes in. When everyone else is running away, extraordinary people are needed to stay and protect. This is not a job for just anyone. It's a task for people who have the training to quickly make important decisions and who thrive off of high-adrenaline situations.

Security personnel need to be able to hit the ground running, and the decisions they make can have dire consequences. "This isn't a time to put a rookie in the field," says Walt Roberts, founder of Able Security, one of the few companies that specialize in disaster security. "Our security specialists have military and law enforcement backgrounds. This means they can handle everything from guarding against looters to protecting people who have vital emergency functions."

Disaster security is needed within hours of a catastrophic event, but this is complicated by the fact that most disasters are unplanned. After Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Able Security had people on the ground within 15 hours, even with no access by air.

When the Army Corps of Engineers couldn't get pumps into the Superdome because people were shooting at the engineers, Able Security gave them the protection they needed to do their job. When President Bush flew into New Orleans to survey the damage, disaster security personnel helped to secure the perimeter. When the police were overwhelmed with rescue operations, private retailers hired disaster security specialists to guard against looting.

According to Roberts, "New Orleans didn't need just a couple people, they needed a whole security detail. We were able to send 120 disaster security professionals within days, and we'll keep most of them there through the end of the year."

When disaster strikes, normal rules don't apply. Disaster security specialists have the training, the background, and the capacity to secure large areas, allowing others to do what they do best: rescue, restore and rebuild.

Able Security provides disaster security personnel worldwide. **For more information, contact Walt Roberts at 469.533.3331. ♦**

