Campbell
MECHANICAL SERVICES

Innovative ▪ Proactive ▪ Professional

HVAC FACT CHECK

Are these common misconceptions costing you money?

Top Five HVAC Myths

1. Set It and Forget It for Savings

2. When the Weather's Nice, Turn It Off

3. If It's Not Broke, Don't Fix It

4. Anyone Can Change a Filter

5. Service Contracts Are a Waste of Money

Myth 1

“Set It and Forget It for Savings”

This is a good one to tackle first and get out of the way. Some people (even some who should know better) think if you stop heating or cooling your building to the perfect temp, getting it back to the perfect temp costs too much energy. The fact is, keeping a space at the ideal temperature is always using energy. Sustaining your ideal temperature when you don’t need to likely costs more – maybe a lot more – than getting the building back to ideal temp. A Campbell HVAC engineer can calculate that tipping point for you and help you save energy with that knowledge.

The Truth

Matching HVAC settings to how spaces are used optimizes energy efficiency. Notice we didn’t say turning your HVAC off when you don’t need it is a great move, which leads into our next myth…

Myth 2

“When the Weather’s Nice, Turn It Off”

Don’t disregard the V in HVAC. Ventilation is an important part of the system. Your indoor air quality directly depends on the number of air changes in your facility. HVAC systems also control the humidity, a key comfort factor. Improper ventilation can increase your risk of mold growth, encourage bacteria and virus transmission, and increase the particulate count inside, including allergens.

Leading Experts Have Said:

“Inadequate ventilation can increase indoor pollutant levels... High temperature and humidity levels can also increase concentrations of some pollutants.”[1] (EPA)

“Improper operation and maintenance of HVAC systems is one of the most common problems that impact workplace indoor environmental quality (IEQ).”[2] (CDC)

The Truth

Airflow is necessary for good Indoor Air Quality or IAQ. Keeping the air we share moving is important for everyone’s health and has been shown to impact productivity.

Can better ventilation have positive effects on productivity?

Yes. After significantly improving air quality, subjects scored much higher in cognitive tests like:

- Information Usage (299%)[3]
- Strategy (288%)[4]

Myth 3

“If It’s Not Broke, Don’t Fix It”

Waiting for a part to break pretty much guarantees more damage is done throughout your system than if you’d just fixed the problem earlier. It’s also a pretty safe bet the system has been wasting energy, running inefficiently to make up for whatever’s going wrong. Those are two hefty premiums you’re paying to delay maintenance on that part. Not to mention that proactive maintenance could have extended the life of that part, so that’s three ways you’re paying for it. Now consider that the repair’s costs are likely larger, and the productivity you’ve lost from the system going offline… you get the picture.

The Truth

Proactive and preventive maintenance avoids excess costs from inefficiency, breakdown, and excessive wear.

Myth 4

“Anyone Can Change a Filter”

Maybe you change your own filters at home. “How hard can it be?” you ask, and you’re right, in that it’s not the most exciting challenge HVAC technicians face. But an improperly placed filter damages the asset, cuts your efficiency, and puts your indoor air quality at risk. And think about this: how often do you forget to change your filter at home?

Maybe the biggest risk to treating a filter change like a filter change is opportunity cost. Just banging open a panel, switching a filter, and checking a box wastes a lot of concrete data. A qualified technician uses a filter change to discover issues before they become issues you’ll have to deal with.

And like a lot of tasks today, a filter change isn’t just a filter change. Making sure the schedule is kept, efficiently managing the filter change with other tasks, making sure documentation is done and all the administrative boxes are checked, that’s all part of it. For instance, using the proper filter (and not arbitrarily going for a cheaper one) may be required by a building’s LEED certification. A well-managed, professional process goes beyond filter changes. Devoting time and expertise to real preventive maintenance pays off.

The Truth

Your HVAC performance depends on the people that help you care for it.

Both a one-time checkup and full preventive maintenance still require great technicians to provide the best outcomes for your business.

To avoid reducing cost in one area, only to find it increases costs in another, look for a service provider with:

- Measurable results
- Custom solutions for your business goals
- Experienced professionals

Great facility service providers are easy to spot: they’re the companies that have taken the time to build a great team.

Myth 5

“Service Contracts Are a Waste of Money”

When elevator inspectors don’t find anything wrong, were those inspections a waste of money? HVAC systems aren’t at risk of plummeting to the basement, but poor maintenance risks unhealthy air, surprise capital costs, excess utility spend, repair bills… not to mention lost productivity and all the headaches and budget nightmares.

Service contracts look like an expense, but ask any engineer, and they’ll tell you the opposite is true. They’re an asset with great KPI: saving future costs, mitigating risk, extending the life of capital spending, cutting energy spend plus... you’ll face fewer headaches and nightmare budget reviews.

In fact, we’re so sure of the value of a service contract, that Linc Service offers agreements that replace units that fail during the life a guaranteed lifetime protection.

If you’re still doubting the value of preventive maintenance, talk to Campbell. As a Linc team that believes in it so much, we will take on the cost of asset replacement.

Don’t let myths keep you from real savings and safety. Talk to Campbell today! We build real value for clients.

Sources

1. https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/introduction-indoor-air-quality
2. https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/indoorenv/buildingventilation.html
3. Allen, Joseph G et al. “Associations of Cognitive Function Scores with Carbon Dioxide, Ventilation, and Volatile Organic Compound Exposures in Office Workers: A Controlled Exposure Study of Green and Conventional Office Environments.” Environmental health perspectives vol. 124, 6 (2016): 805-12. doi:10.1289/ehp.1510037
4. Allen, Joseph G et al. “Associations of Cognitive Function Scores with Carbon Dioxide, Ventilation, and Volatile Organic Compound Exposures in Office Workers: A Controlled Exposure Study of Green and Conventional Office Environments.” Environmental health perspectives vol. 124, 6 (2016): 805-12. doi:10.1289/ehp.1510037