

News and Information from Your Home Comfort Team

Kosco Comfort



Serving Columbia, Dutchess, Ulster, and Greene Counties



When Does “Duck” Cleaning Make Sense?

Duct cleaning has always been a point of controversy amongst homeowners with hot air or central air conditioning systems in their houses. Melissa Ricci, a duct cleaning specialist at Kosco, the area’s leading home comfort and heating company offered some insight.

There are several factors that help determine if the duct system should be cleaned.

One major factor is mold growth that is visible inside hard surface ducts or on other components of your system. Be aware that although a substance may look like mold, it may not be. If you have a problem with water in your ducts, this may result in mold growth in the duct. In this situation, solve the water problem first, clean and disinfect the ducts where mold growth has occurred, and have the rest of the ducting system cleaned as well. In some cases, it may be necessary to replace the affected duct areas. Only a laboratory analysis can tell you whether a sample is mold or simply a substance that resembles it. If the air duct insulation is moldy it should be removed and replaced and the cause of the growth corrected before the cleaning occurs.

If you are moving into a newly constructed house, and have doubts about the diligence of the construction crew, duct cleaning can be useful. Drywall dust, fiberglass pieces, and sawdust have no place in ducts. Duct cleaning will also catch the odd occurrence where lunch bags or soft drink cans have fallen or been swept into ducting. For similar reasons, duct cleaning may be advisable for older houses following major renovations.

If you are having trouble with furnace airflow, a duct cleaning could reveal significant blockages. Have the ducts cleaned before you embark on more expensive duct replacement or rerouting to solve an airflow problem. Cleaning of furnace and air conditioning components (e.g. furnace fan blower, air conditioning coil, humidifier, furnace heat exchanger, etc.) has been shown to make some difference in duct air flow.

If you look in the supply and return air registers and see an accumulation of debris in the duct below, you may want to have it removed. Rodent or insect infestation can clog a system and may release contaminants into the home through the registers. Return air ducts, which are relatively big and have slow moving air, are generally far dirtier than the supply ducts. Households with hairy pets or young children that may drop miscellaneous items into the ducts may find it necessary to inspect their return air ducts more frequently. In general, do not expect any difference in airflow after this cleaning.

How Should Your Ducts Be Cleaned?

There are various duct cleaning procedures available. Reputable duct cleaners like Kosco, will be familiar with different techniques and their effectiveness. "Kosco always offer's references from satisfied customers", says Ricci. Kosco also offers the homeowner before and after inspections. Homeowners can visually inspect the ducts after their work, either through duct access panels that they cut into the sheet metal or by in-duct cameras. This allows proof of the effectiveness of the cleaning.

A proper duct cleaning job is done with a commercial vacuum equipped with a whip like devise that reaches all areas of the duct and acts like a scrub bush on the ductwork interior. The vacuum exhausts the captured debris and air outdoors.

So... To Clean or Not To Clean?

This choice is up to you. Duct cleaning can improve air quality of houses in cases where serious moisture, debris, allergens, dust, or blockage problems exist in the ducting. A comprehensive cleaning of all heating and cooling system components (furnace fan blower, furnace heat exchange, air conditioning coil, humidifier, ducts, etc.) may help air movement within the house. Some people will choose to have their ducts cleaned simply because they prefer to have any accumulation of dust and dirt within the house removed regularly.



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