

The Comfort Courier



DEITER BROS!

Published for the 012920 customers and friends of Deiter Brothers.



4 Seasons Security
A Division of Deiter Bros.



Authorized Dealer
Security Pro

1226 Stefko Blvd., Bethlehem, PA 18017 • 610-868-8566 • www.dbrothers.com

Who's Who in the Lehigh Valley's #1 Ranked Heating & Cooling Service Company for the 19th Year.

WINTER 2005

Personally Speaking

Coldest Winter in Decade Is Predicted by Accu-Weather

We'll Be Ready For It

A recent report in the newspaper noted that, "this winter will be the coldest in more than a decade, according to a long-term AccuWeather forecast." The article went on to predict that the Lehigh Valley will experience

temperatures 2-3 degrees below our average December-January-February temperature of 29.7 degrees.

When you've been in the business of keeping families warm through every winter—including some real doozies—for over 75 years, you're always ready. And, yes, we are prepared for whatever weather nature can dish out.

If indeed we do experience some record cold in the coming months, I have a prediction of my own. You'll see some unfortunate folks scrambling for fuel and/or emergency heating service... and they won't be Deiter Bros. customers. There are suppliers out there who talk a good game when the sun is shining but have not invested in the personnel, equipment and inventory to deliver when the tough weather comes. Because Deiter Bros. has always kept our service resources strong, when those winter storms roll in, our full-service reputation shines. Rest assured you have invested wisely in your full-service relationship with Deiter Bros... and that your family's warmth is the #1 priority for our family.



Personally Speaking

Holidays Are A Time to Be Thankful

We can get a bit overwhelmed with the rush of the holiday season. But when you take a few moments for quiet reflection, I think we all know in our hearts that there's much to be thankful for.

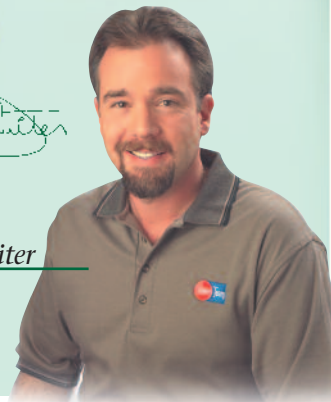
The companionship of loved ones. Chances to make a difference for those less fortunate than us. Hope for the future. The strength to turn those hopes into realities.

Like most families, we here at Deiter Bros. have many blessings worth counting. Near the top of the list is the opportunity to serve customers like you for yet another year. Many thanks for your continued loyalty and friendship. We will continue to work hard to honor the trust you have placed in us.

*Happiest Holidays
from
Our Family to Yours!*



James G. Deiter



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New Online Reminder Service Helps You Remember To CHANGE YOUR AIR FILTER

Homeowners with warm air furnaces and central air systems can cut fuel bills with a simple change of their air filters. It's an easy, fast and inexpensive way to save money. NOW is the time to do it and our NEW ONLINE REMINDER SERVICE can help you remember to do it in the future. To sign up for this free courtesy service, visit www.dbrothers.com and find the tab for "Online Services." Click it and go to "Reminders."



Is There A Surprise Gift of FREE HEATING OIL Awaiting You In This Issue?

Ten lucky customers will get a gift of free heating oil for the holidays! As in every issue of *The Comfort Courier*, there are 10 customer account numbers hidden throughout this issue. (Hint: not all are in the articles!) If one of these numbers is yours, you're an INSTANT WINNER of 20 gallons of free heating oil from Deiter Bros.

We all have too many numbers to remember as it is ... so, as a convenience, we've printed your customer account number near your name and address on the mailing label of this issue. Get it now, read this issue for those 10 tricky numbers, and if one of them is yours, give us a call. We'll immediately credit your account with 20 free gallons.

WEATHER FORECASTS

Deiter Bros. may have been around since 1929 but we're babies compared to the Old Farmer's Almanac, published every year since 1762. According to this venerable source, we're in for some colder and snowier weather in January, 2006 with generally below-average temperatures and more rain toward mid-year. Here's a look at what the Almanac's prognosticators predict weatherwise for our Lehigh Valley area:

January



Bundle up for average monthly temperature of 26 degrees (7 degrees below average). It will be sunny and seasonable from New Year's to midmonth, with 014581 light snow. Then we'll get slammed with heavy snow and bitter cold until the 20th. Very cold temps stay until the 26th when heavy snows return to finish out the month.

February

The Love Month lives up to its rep. Average temps climb to 40 degrees (7 degrees above average). Seasonable temps and some snow come early then mild weather with trade-offs between rainy and sunny days round out the month.

March

Temperatures are 1 degree below the average of 42 with precipitation 1" above. February's warmth turns cold in early March with rain and snow, continuing with 308158 chilly weather and lots of rain. Look for a sunny and mild break from the 19th to 24th, then back to chilly and rainy toward month's end.



April

The mercury stays 2 degrees below the average of 50 with precipitation 1.5" above the average. April Fool's to mid-month is sunny and cool with intermittent rain, turning very warm with thunderstorms until the 21st. The month ends with April showers, sunny days and cooler temps.

May



Temperatures are a half-degree below the 61.5 average with rain 1" above average. Showers and warm temps begin the month then break from the 11th to 18th with sunnier, cooler May Days. Warmer temps with scattered thunderstorms into Memorial Day.

June

Nice weather with temperatures averaging 70.5 degrees and rain below average. Sunny and warm days with cool nights with just a smattering of thunderstorms to dampen the last week of a lovely month.

Smart, Yet Simple Conservation Moves Can Drive Down Home Energy Costs

Even though winter is here, it's not too late to get serious about making some moves to conserve energy. These simple efforts can add up to big bucks saved during the cold months. If you have any questions, give us a call...we're always happy to help.

1 PROGRAM YOUR THERMOSTAT: Programmable thermostats are easy to install and operate, and they save money by turning down the heat when you need it least. You can set it to keep you 403552 comfortably warm during your waking hours at home AND save money by automatically lowering the setting when you're asleep, at work or away from home.

2 FLUORESCENT BULBS SAVE MONEY: You know how incandescent bulbs get hot while fluorescents do not? That heat is energy being wasted and you're paying for it. Fact is, fluorescent bulbs save 75% more energy than incandescents. Figure how many lights you have in your home and you can see how that can add up.

3 LET THE SUN DO ITS JOB: Open blinds and curtains on sunny days. You'll be surprised how effective the passive solar heat can be in warming your home and cutting back on fuel use.

4 WHAT IS YOUR HOT WATER COSTING YOU? Few homeowners know it, but heating domestic water can comprise 30% of your home's energy bill, depending on your family size and habits. You can save by setting your hot water heater to a lower temperature. Install water-flow restrictors to lower your water bill and the energy costs to heat it. Or, if your hot water heater is more than 10 years old, consider replacing it with a newer, more energy-efficient model.

Remember: the OVERALL life expectancy of an electric hot water heater is 14 years...gas water heaters are even shorter at 12 years. Years of hard use coat heating surfaces with energy-robbing mineral scale, cutting down exchange efficiency. Plus, the units made over a decade ago are nowhere near as efficient as today's technology. If you are interested in learning more about saving money with these new generation hot water heaters, there are many options open to you. Give us a call today to discuss them.

Program to Help Low-Income Families Stay Warm This Winter

Deiter Bros. participates in a state-sponsored program to help keep low-income families warm in winter. **LIHEAP** (Low Income Heating Economic Assistance Program) has been a program of the Commonwealth for decades and is also open to users of natural gas and electric heat. Interested candidates for this program can apply online at www.dbrothers.com. On our homepage, click on the "Heating & Cooling Services" tab, then click on "Energy Assistance" for the application forms. You can then print the forms and fill out or apply online.

LIHEAP

It's Home Humidifier Season: IS YOURS READY?

The dry months of our Lehigh Valley winters can dry out more than skin. Low humidity can also crack walls, wooden furniture and make our throats more vulnerable to bacteria. The smart way to fight these 404367 conditions is with a home humidifier. We've installed quite a few home humidifiers in our day and here are a few tips we share with homeowners to ensure that these comfortmakers perform well throughout the winter:

- Make sure the saddle valve is fully open.
- Make sure the bypass damper is open during the winter and closed during the summer.
- Make sure the drain is free of clogs.
- Make sure water runs freely and the water line is open.
- Change the evaporative element every year.
- And lastly, if your unit has a power cord... make sure it is plugged in.

New Federal Air Conditioning Ratings Go Into Effect January 23, 2006

An important change mandated by the Federal government goes into effect early 2006 and as a Deiter Bros. customer, we want to keep you informed. It centers around the efficiency of central air conditioning units as determined by the Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating, or **SEER**. Today's standard air conditioning unit has a minimum SEER rating of 10. After January 23, 2006, the minimum standard that can be manufactured is 13 SEER.

The good news is that 13 SEER uses 25% less energy than the current 10 standard. Unfortunately, this energy efficiency comes with a considerably higher price tag. And the units we have been installing in recent years are already in the 10 to 12 SEER efficiency range... which is still very good. So what 305790 happens to customers who have had new central air systems installed in recent years? Here's an overview:

- As stated, most recent installations have been 10 and 12 SEER systems. All are well-engineered systems that have many years of energy-efficient service ahead of them. Our view is that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." We have been assured by manufacturers that parts will be available for the life of these systems. And you can always count on Deiter Bros. to repair them right.
- 13 SEER units are larger than previous units. This may be a concern if your present air conditioner is snugly fitted into a special portal or other inlet in your home or business. Because the exterior dimensions of the 13 SEER units are larger, additional carpentry may be required when it comes time to upgrade your central air conditioning.

Thanks for Noticing:

Deiter's Customer Service Rated "Exceptional"

We try very hard to deliver excellent customer service throughout the year. But we consider it all a part of our job. It's rare when doing our job winds up being lauded by the local media but that was the case with a recent article in the *Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal*. Written by columnist Steve Coscia, the item stated:

Lehigh Valley residents are fortunate that Deiter Brothers is an HVAC company that epitomizes exceptional customer service. A fine example of such service arose this summer when Scott Weidner, Deiter Brothers' commercial division project manager received an urgent telephone call from a customer.

"One morning, I received a critical phone call from the head of maintenance at a Bethlehem nursing home. Their second and third floor air conditioning units had stopped working properly," says Weidner. The nursing home administrators temporarily transferred some patients to other areas of the facility as Weidner and his team sprung into action.

The story continues with 004875 ways we provided both interim and long-term solutions for this customer, and how our Deiter team "worked on the roof and endured the oppressive heat as ominous thunderclouds loomed overhead."

It was all in a day's work for our dedicated service team. But it's nice when a job well done gets showcased by our local media. Thanks for noticing.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning: A VERY REAL DANGER

When we button up our homes for winter by sealing for draft leaks and other conservation moves, we may also be sealing in the silent killer: carbon monoxide. Because of higher fuel prices, some homeowners turn to 207085 alternative heating sources to cut bills. But they may not be aware of the higher levels of carbon monoxide these may generate. Here are some life-saving guidelines to help prevent a carbon monoxide tragedy.

KNOW THE SYMPTOMS: Carbon monoxide is known as the silent killer because it is colorless, odorless and kills without warning. Symptoms of CO poisoning include:

- Headaches
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Disorientation
- Unusually red cheeks (CO replaces oxygen in your blood...flushed cheeks are a sign of this.)

INSPECT FOR SOURCES OF CO: Carefully inspect your home or workplace for common CO sources. Any appliance or device burning a fuel or any internal combustion engine could be a source.

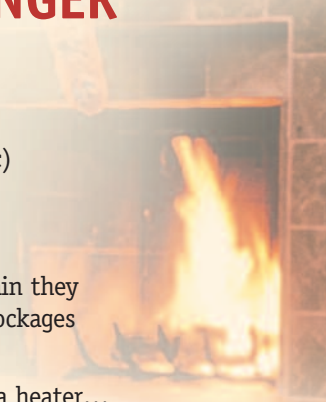
CAREFULLY CHECK ALL...

- Furnaces
- Fireplaces
- Space heaters (other than electric)
- Gas-fired appliances, including stoves or grills
- Hot water heaters
- Chimneys and flues to make certain they are clear of bird nests or other blockages

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER:

- NEVER use your kitchen stove as a heater... even in emergencies
- NEVER grill indoors with charcoal or propane
- NEVER run an internal combustion engine inside a closed area without venting the exhaust outside.

INSTALL CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS NOW: Buy only detector units that are warranted and UL approved. The costs range from \$20 to \$70... money well spent. Don't forget to install them in the garage and workshop as well as your home.





4 Seasons Security

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Safeguarding Your Privacy: Protect Yourself from Identity Theft

It used to be that we had to worry about protecting our possessions from thieves. But the technology explosion has created a new type of thief that starts by stealing information...and then your material wealth, possessions and peace-of-mind. These criminals rob identities.

Identity thieves start by stealing vital data about you, such as your Social Security number, credit card account number, or the number on those blank "balance transfer" checks the credit card companies bombard us with. According to Laura Mazzarella, an attorney with the Federal Trade Commission, identity theft was the #1 consumer complaint to the FTC last year. Her advice: "Take steps now to protect your privacy and limit the amount of information you give out. Also, take advantage of every opportunity to limit what companies can share about you.

To help our customers protect their identities, the experts at Deiter Bros.' Four Seasons Security Division, offers these important steps:

1 SHRED SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS

Identity thieves rummage through trash cans looking for credit card statements and other financial information. In the wrong hands, these waste papers can cost you dearly...yet a shredder can cost as little as \$25.

2 BEWARE OF ONLINE SCAM ARTISTS

Never reply to any e-mail asking you to verify personal data such as your Social Security number or passwords. These may look official but are phony set-ups looking to get into your wallet. If you're concerned about an account, call the business directly and ask them to verify the e-mail request.

3 SHOP ONLY ON SECURE WEBSITES

If you shop online, always make sure that the page where you input credit card info says "https" in the URL address. That "s" stands for secure. It verifies that the website is using encoded safety precautions to prevent data interception.

4 CHECK YOUR CREDIT REPORT REGULARLY

Federal law now allows you a free copy of your credit report each year from three major credit reporting agencies. It's an excellent way to catch unauthorized purchases, changes to personal information or fraudulent accounts. Visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228 to get yours.

5 KEEP YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER A SECRET

Okay, some situations warrant sharing it. But others do not. Do not issue this number 001920 freely or within earshot of others, say, in a bank teller line. It's not necessary. Also, avoid carrying your card in your wallet. If the wallet is stolen, so is your identity. Social security numbers can be used to open up fraudulent accounts.

6 SCRUTINIZE WARRANTY CARDS

In many cases, you may not need to send in the warranty card to be eligible for coverage. Call the manufacturer to find out and keep receipts as proof of purchase. The info you issue on written cards is the data you don't want "out there."

THE BOTTOM LINE: "Anytime you exchange information with a business, you should treat your data like money," says Robert Gelman, a Washington, DC-based privacy consultant. If you do give up data, you'd better be receiving something of value in return.

NEW WEBSITE NOW UP!

Our exciting new website is now at work. Check it out and explore the exciting new features, conveniences and links that await you!

www.4seasonssecurity.com

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