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News Release

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NMCC to offer heat pump installer training and certification courses

Aroostook County - Heat pump units have become the system of choice or an excellent supplemental method for heating and cooling requirements in many areas due to their increased efficiencies and adaptability. With this in mind, Northern Maine Community College will be offering a series of training sessions that will prepare individuals to install and service these heat pumps locally.

“These courses are designed to teach the current electrical, heating and plumbing professionals how to properly install and service this new technology,” said Leah Buck, assistant dean of continuing education. “The EPA 608 certification is critical so these technicians can charge and evacuate refrigerants. The heat pump basics course will be a hands-on opportunity to properly install and troubleshoot these units and learn key features for maximizing efficiency, as well as keys to vital homeowner education after the installation.”

Like your refrigerator, heat pumps use electricity to move heat from a cool space to a warm space, making the cool space cooler and the warm space warmer. During the heating season, heat pumps move heat from the cool outdoors into your warm house and during the cooling season, heat pumps move heat from your cool house into the warm outdoors. Because they move heat rather than generate it, heat pumps can provide up to four times the amount of energy they consume.

Ductless, mini-split-system heat pumps make good retrofit add-ons to houses with "non-ducted" heating systems and can also be a good choice for room additions where extending or installing distribution ductwork is not feasible. Since the mini splits have no ducts, the energy losses associated with the ductwork of central forced air systems is avoided. Energy and money is also saved by the flexibility for zoning or heating and cooling individual rooms.

Professional installers who plan to install heat pumps commercially must first have the proper certification to handle refrigerants. NMCC will offer an EPA 608 Certification Prep Course on February 19 & 26, from 5:30 – 9:30 p.m., to discuss safety and the handling of refrigerants and basic principles of refrigeration and to prepare participants for the EPA 608 certification exam. The exam will be administered at the end of the course. The cost of the course is \$89, which includes books, materials and testing fees. The course will be offered again on May 7 & 14.

Also being offered in the series is a Heat Pump Basics class that will run on Monday evenings from April 15 – May 20. The course will provide attendees with a basic understanding of heat pump theory, installation procedures, service techniques and troubleshooting methods. Content for the course includes basic principles of refrigeration, system components, air flow, balance point, electric heat, control wiring, refrigerant piping and charging. The cost for the course is \$275.

NMCC will offer a Fujitsu Installer Certification Course during which industry experts from Fujitsu will provide training at NMCC to teach participants specific skills to install and troubleshoot Fujitsu mini-split systems. This opportunity is brought to you by a new partnership with Fujitsu, Sid Harvey's and NMCC. The course will be coming up later this spring.

For more information or to register for any of these courses, contact NMCC's continuing education division at 768-2845.

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