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Dave Windsor's 'Alaska Real Estate'

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Time To Start Thinking Heat

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Every homeowner should have an HVAC inspection once a year, and now is the perfect time.

Whether you have a boiler with a hot-water baseboard system, forced air, or even in-floor radiant heat, a professional is well worth the one hour fee to make sure all is well before winter sets in. The inspection should also include water heaters and garage unit heater.

Baseboard heat is the simplest to inspect because it is just a boiler heating water, but the various plumbing attachments and zone valves need to be kept an eye on.

If you have forced air, I hope that you have been replacing filters every 6 months - but at least yearly. Dirty filters block the flow of air and lead to overheating of the heat exchanger. If the heat exchanger cracks you risk serious injury or death from carbon monoxide leakage. Always have a CO detector in your garage or proximate to the furnace (or boiler) in the house.

Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless and anywhere there is combustion, including your gas range or even smoking a cigarette, some carbon monoxide is produced. A few years back, a family in Bear Valley just never woke up in the morning due to a poorly ventilated indoor boiler room and this triggered action at the Municipality.

Code now requires CO detectors as well as smoke detectors throughout the home (email me for the precise code requirements) but the garage is often overlooked. I have even had clients who sometimes let the children sleep in there but a CO detector is a must for anyone in the garage conducting any activity when, in winter, the garage doors are closed.

Besides having your heating systems checked here is another critical item for homeowners with battery operated thermostats. Change the batteries out now. If you are sunning in Hawaii and those batteries go out, guess what - no heat!

In fact, change out all batteries in thermostats, CO and smoke detectors throughout the home in the Fall and put your mind at ease for the Winter. Take a look at the mountain peaks East of Anchorage and start thinking 'HEAT'.

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