

# Homeowner Engagement Toolkit for Contractors:

## Communicating about Heat Pumps with Homeowners



### Answering Common Heat Pump Questions

A heat pump is an energy efficient system that both heats and cools your home. In the summer, it works like an air conditioner, pulling heat out of the house. In the winter, it reverses direction, pulling heat from the outdoor air and bringing it inside. Cold climate heat pumps are built to work reliably even in subzero Midwest temperatures.

#### Why Families Love Them:

- **Year-Round Comfort:** One system handles both heating and cooling.
- **Lower Energy Use:** High efficiency means reducing potentially wasted energy.
- **Quiet Operation:** No noisy blasts of air, just steady, consistent comfort.



### Heat Pump Value Proposition for All Families

A heat pump is a modern, energy efficient system that provides both heating and cooling using electricity. In the summer, it works just like an air conditioner, removing heat from inside your home. In the cooler months, it reverses direction and pulls heat from the outside air to warm your home, even when temperatures drop.

For families in the lower Midwest, where winters are typically milder, a heat pump can provide year-round comfort, potential energy savings, all in one quiet, reliable unit. Even in much colder parts of the northern Midwest, cold climate heat pumps can successfully keep homes warm during subzero temperatures. These systems are specifically engineered to perform efficiently in extreme cold, making them more than capable for the milder winters of the lower Midwest. It's a smart solution that keeps your home comfortable while saving you money.



**MIDWEST  
COLLABORATIVE**

## Common FAQ's

**Q:** Can a heat pump really handle Midwest winters?

**A:** Yes, cold climate ASHPs are specifically designed to perform in subzero temperatures. Many homeowners pair them with a backup system like a furnace for extremely cold days, and for energy flexibility.

**Q:** What size system do I need?

**A:** Your contractor will size the system based on your home's square footage, insulation, layout, and climate zone. Correct sizing is key to comfort and efficiency.

**Q:** Will it replace my furnace completely?

**A:** It depends on your home and comfort preferences. Many homes use dual fuel or a hybrid setup, where the heat pump runs most of the time and the furnace or alternate heating system kicks in when needed.

**Q:** What about air conditioning?

**A:** A heat pump is an air conditioner, too. It can fully replace your central A/C.

**Q:** How long do heat pumps last?

**A:** With proper maintenance, expect 15–20 years. Annual service helps maximize performance and longevity.

**Q:** Is there financial help?

**A:** Yes! Federal tax credits, state and local rebates, and low-interest financing can significantly lower upfront costs. I (your contractor) can help you find and maximize available incentives.

## Post-Installation & FAQs

### 1. Keep It Clear

Clear snow, leaves, or debris from around the outdoor unit, especially in winter.

### 2. Let It Run

Don't constantly adjust the thermostat. Heat pumps work best maintaining steady temperatures.

### 3. Change Filters Regularly

Dirty filters reduce efficiency. Check and replace filters per your contractor's recommendations.

### 4. Schedule Regular Service

Annual check-ups keep your system efficient and reliable. Many warranties require it.

### 5. Learn Your Controls

Some thermostats have specific settings for heat pumps — ask your installer to walk you through it.

### 6. Be Patient in Cold Weather

Heat pumps work differently than furnaces. They may run longer or feel cooler, but that's normal, they're pulling heat slowly and efficiently.

## Quick-Reference FAQ: Operation

### Summer Use

Operates like a traditional A/C.

Run times may be longer but more efficient.

Filters out humidity to improve comfort.

### Winter Use

Cold climate models operate efficiently well below freezing.

Back-up systems may kick in only on the coldest days.

Expect longer, quieter heating cycles.

### What Should I Watch For?

Ice buildup on outdoor unit? That's normal in winter; it will auto defrost.

Strange noises or no heat? Call your installer for a check-up.