



# The HVAC&R Industry

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Advancing HVAC&R to Serve Humanity  
And Promote a Sustainable World

The HVAC&R Industry, ASHRAE's free weekly eNewsletter for HVAC&R professionals, provides relevant, timely information about industry and technology for people who create healthy, comfortable indoor environments.

## Industry News

### GE Targets Net-Zero-Energy Homes by 2015

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—GE is developing a turnkey product portfolio that will enable home builders and consumers to efficiently consume, manage and generate electricity to create net-zero-energy homes by 2015. In addition to GE's current portfolio of lighting and appliances products, GE will further develop demand response technology products and introduce residential power generation products using solar PV and wind power. Products already under development include a line of demand-response appliances that will work with utility smart meters. Also, the company is scheduled to release in 2010 the Home Energy Manager, a "central nervous system" for residential energy-use automation.

### New Method To Check Refrigerant Level in Air Conditioners

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind.—Purdue University researchers have developed a technique that saves energy and repair costs by indicating when air conditioners are low on refrigerant. The "virtual refrigerant charge sensor" helps maintain the proper refrigerant charge in a system by using sensors to monitor the temperature of refrigerant at various points along air-conditioning unit tubing. Lead researcher James E. Braun, Ph.D., Fellow ASHRAE, and colleagues created a software algorithm that interprets temperature-sensor data to estimate the amount of refrigerant in the system. Findings were presented by Braun in a session at the 2009 ASHRAE Annual Conference.

### Automakers Fight EU Car AC Refrigerant Ban

BRUSSELS, Belgium—European automakers are attempting to delay a 2011 European ban on certain refrigerants in new car air conditioners. The European Union (EU) decided in 2006 that in 2011 it would ban the use of fluorinated chemicals, such as R-134a. Automakers say they will need to invest an extra 40–200 euros (\$56–\$280) per vehicle to meet the refrigerant requirements. The European Industry Commissioner recently sent a letter to automakers affirming his commitment that the legislation will not be changed or delayed.

### U.S. DOE, Treasury To Provide Direct Payments for Renewable Projects

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Department of Energy have announced that they will provide direct payments in support of an estimated 5,000 renewable energy projects. Previously, companies could file for a tax credit to cover a portion of the renewable energy



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project's cost. Under the new program, applicants would agree to forgo tax credits in favor of an immediate reimbursement of a portion of the project's expense.

### **U.S. Commercial Construction To Decline**

WASHINGTON—Commercial construction spending in the U.S. is expected to decline 16% this year and 12% in 2010, according to the American Institute of Architects (AIA). AIA revised the forecast it made at the beginning of 2009 due to the sluggish U.S. economy. The retail construction, hotel and office building sectors are forecast to have the largest decreases in spending.

### **ASHRAE News**

#### **Changes Proposed for Standard 90.1**

Several addenda designed to improve the energy efficiency of buildings covered by ASHRAE Standard 90.1 are open for public comment. One of the proposed addenda, *bh*, would require supply air temperature reset in multiple-zone HVAC systems. Proposed addendum *bf* provides new requirements for continuous air barriers. In addition, addendum *f* would allow a number of paths to reduce building roof load. The last day of the public review periods for the Standard 90.1 addenda is Aug. 3.

### **Feature of the Week**

#### **Problems Related to Air Handler Leakage**

**By James B. Cummings**, Member ASHRAE; and **Charles Withers Jr.**

This article considers energy impacts of AHU leakage. It focuses primarily on IAQ problems and health risks caused by duct leakage, especially as they relate to the location of the AHU.

### **Product News**

#### **Desiccant Dehumidification Systems From Bry-Air**

SUNBURY, Ohio—Bry-Air offers the EcoDry line of desiccant dehumidifiers. The equipment features control technology that continuously monitors humidity loads and adjusts multiple operating parameters to optimize performance.

#### **Data Center Design and Operations Software From Future Facilities Ltd.**

LONDON—Future Facilities Ltd. introduces the 6SigmaDC Release 5 modular data center design and operations software suite. One module, 6SigmaET, addresses IT equipment cooling system design. Other modules focus on rack and cabinet configuration, room design, and overall facility management.

#### **Hydronic System Air and Dirt Separator From Thrush**

PERU, Ind.—Thrush Co. offers the Aar-O-Vent™ high-performance air and dirt separator for corrosion protection in hydronic piping systems. The device uses a stainless steel coalescing filter medium to separate the air and dirt from the water in hydronic systems that can cause damage to pumps, seals and valves.

### **Subscription Management**



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