

As Heating Aid Season Opens, Albuquerque HVAC Company Says High Bills Aren't Always About Home Heating Gas Prices

With HEAT New Mexico applications open again and winter shutoff protections starting November 15, Tru Mechanical explains how a struggling furnace can raise heating costs and why a high bill doesn't always mean a new system.



Albuquerque, New Mexico Oct 31, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - Albuquerque's heating-assistance season is underway, and Tru Mechanical Heating & Cooling, a family-owned HVAC company based in Albuquerque, wants homeowners to understand one part of the heating-cost picture that assistance programs can't fix: how well the furnace turns fuel into heat.

New Mexico Gas Company paused applications for its HEAT New Mexico assistance fund in April and resumed processing them in October. The fund helps income-qualifying customers pay their natural gas heating bills and works alongside the state's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, known as LIHEAP. According to New Mexico Gas Company, certain low-income customers who qualify for LIHEAP will not have their gas shut off for nonpayment between November 15 and March 15, as long as they are current on their bill or making payments on an installment agreement.

The city's annual HEATS ON event, a partnership between the Department of Senior Affairs and plumbers and pipefitters Local 412, has spent more than three decades starting furnaces and checking carbon monoxide safety for older adults and residents with disabilities each fall. Tru Mechanical, which is not part of that effort, points to it as a reminder of how much a working heating system matters to households on a tight budget.

"When the heating bill goes up, most people assume it's the gas price, or that the furnace is dying and they need a new one," said David Trujillo, co-owner of Tru Mechanical Heating & Cooling. "Sometimes that's true. But a lot of the time the furnace is fine and something smaller is making it work harder than it should. Assistance can help you pay the bill. It can't fix a system that's burning fuel and not getting the heat into your rooms."

A home's heating cost depends on three things: the price of gas, how much the furnace burns, and how much of that heat reaches the living space. Assistance programs help with the first. The other two are equipment and airflow problems, and Trujillo says they are often the cheapest to address.

The signs worth paying attention to are a furnace that runs noticeably longer than it did last winter, rooms that never warm up even when the system runs, and a bill that climbs without the weather getting colder.

The most common causes are not a failing furnace. A clogged air filter is the biggest one. It chokes the airflow, makes the system run longer, and can cause the furnace to overheat and shut itself off as a safety measure, then restart over and over. Closed or blocked supply vents and furniture sitting on return grilles do the same thing. A dirty flame sensor can make a furnace light, shut off, and try again repeatedly. Thermostats with dead batteries or old schedules can run the heat when no one is home. Loose duct connections in attics and crawlspaces can also send heated air into spaces nobody lives in.

"A filter is a few dollars. A flame sensor cleaning is a short service call. Those are worth ruling out before anyone talks about replacing equipment," Trujillo said. "We'd rather tell someone their furnace is fine than sell them one they don't need."

Tru Mechanical also urges households trying to cut costs not to use unsafe workarounds. Using a gas oven or stove to heat a home can produce carbon monoxide, and every home with gas appliances should have a working carbon monoxide alarm.

Households that need help paying heating bills can find information on LIHEAP and HEAT New Mexico through New Mexico Gas Company at nmgco.com or by calling 1-888-664-2726. Tru Mechanical does not administer these programs or determine eligibility.

Tru Mechanical Heating & Cooling has been family-owned and operated in Albuquerque since 2012, with more than 30 years of combined experience between David and Ray Trujillo. The company holds New Mexico Mechanical License #376701 and provides furnace installation and replacement, furnace repair, swamp cooler to refrigerated air conversions, and ductless mini-split service. It operates a full in-house sheet metal shop with plasma cutting and custom ductwork fabrication.

Albuquerque-area homeowners with questions about a furnace that is running longer than it should can contact Tru Mechanical Heating & Cooling at (505) 328-0743 or visit trumechanicalllc.com.

About Tru Mechanical Heating & Cooling

Tru Mechanical Heating & Cooling is a family-owned and operated HVAC company based in Albuquerque, serving Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Los Lunas, Santa Fe, and surrounding New Mexico communities since 2012. The company is a PNM Rebate Partner and operates a full in-house sheet metal shop for custom ductwork fabrication.

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