

NATE

M A G A Z I N E

Partnering for Excellence

INDUSTRY LEADERS WORK WITH NATE TO MAKE THE HVACR COMMUNITY STRONGER

NATE COLLABORATES WITH MANUFACTURERS
BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIP
NATE, DISTRIBUTORS PULL TOGETHER

Digital Edition Copyright Notice

The content contained in this digital edition (“Digital Material”), as well as its selection and arrangement, is owned by Endeavor Business Media, and its affiliated companies, licensors, and suppliers, and is protected by their respective copyright, trademark and other proprietary rights.

Upon payment of the subscription price, if applicable, you are hereby authorized to view, download, copy, and print Digital Material solely for your own personal, non-commercial use, provided that by doing any of the foregoing, you acknowledge that (i) you do not and will not acquire any ownership rights of any kind in the Digital Material or any portion thereof, (ii) you must preserve all copyright and other proprietary notices included in any downloaded Digital Material, and (iii) you must comply in all respects with the use restrictions set forth below and in the Endeavor Business Media Privacy Policy and the Endeavor Business Media Terms of Use (the “Use Restrictions”), each of which is hereby incorporated by reference. Any use not in accordance with, and any failure to comply fully with, the Use Restrictions is expressly prohibited by law, and may result in severe civil and criminal penalties. Violators will be prosecuted to the maximum possible extent.

You may not modify, publish, license, transmit (including by way of email, facsimile or other electronic means), transfer, sell, reproduce (including by copying or posting on any network computer), create derivative works from, display, store, or in any way exploit, broadcast, disseminate or distribute, in any format or media of any kind, any of the Digital Material, in whole or in part, without the express prior written consent of Endeavor Business Media. To request content for commercial use or Endeavor Business Media’s approval of any other restricted activity described above, please contact the Reprints Department at (877) 652-5295. Without in any way limiting the foregoing, you may not use spiders, robots, data mining techniques or other automated techniques to catalog, download or otherwise reproduce, store or distribute any Digital Material.

NEITHER Endeavor Business Media NOR ANY THIRD PARTY CONTENT PROVIDER OR THEIR AGENTS SHALL BE LIABLE FOR ANY ACT, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, SPECIAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF THE USE OF OR ACCESS TO ANY DIGITAL MATERIAL, AND/OR ANY INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN.

LIKE YOU, THE SuperEvac™ PLUS II IS ALWAYS READY.



The integral DC motor means power on demand... even in tough conditions. High efficiency equals less wear and tear over time. Lightweight puts less strain on you. The SuperEvac™ PLUS II gets the job done.

- OPERATES IN LOW VOLTAGE CONDITIONS
- HANDLES EXTREME TEMPERATURES
- 20% LIGHTER WEIGHT THAN AC PUMPS
- A2L SYSTEM COMPATIBLE

To learn more, connect at yellowjacket.com   



In This Issue

JUNE 2021

Letter from the NATE Chairman

02

You Asked/We Answered
and Word Search

04

NATE News

06

NATE Collaborates
with Manufacturers in a Variety
of Ways

08



NATE, Distributors Pull Together
for Technician Certification

14

Building a Professional Partnership

18

Strategic Partnerships Boost
NATE's Reach and Create
Countless Opportunities for
HVACR Technicians

22

Duct Retrofits: Diagnosing an
Opportunity to Drive Revenue and
Customer Satisfaction

26

Spotlight on NATE Technicians

30



NATE Partners for Success



At NATE, we understand that building and maintaining successful relationships is critical to the sustainability of any HVACR business. In fact, our organization was founded thanks to the collaboration of industry manufacturers, distributors, and contractors. Over 20 years ago, industry leaders came together to discuss concerns about the uneven quality of service and installation of HVACR equipment in the field. As a result of their conversations and partnership, they founded NATE to provide rigorous and comprehensive testing and certification.

It has also been with their support over the years that we have evolved and adapted to best support today's technician. NATE could not have the impact and reach that it has without the help of so many others in the industry, which is why we wanted to focus this issue on the manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, industry associations, contractors, and technicians that partner with us to make our community stronger.

In our feature article on page 8, learn how manufacturers such as Carrier, Goodman, Lennox, and Rheem have partnered with NATE to provide comprehensive technician training. By aligning with NATE education benchmarks, these companies have been able to make sure their training curriculum covers current HVACR topics important to the industry today, as well as provide technicians with a clear path towards certification. In this issue, you can also find our conversation with Rhonda Wight of Refrigeration Sales in Ohio, a distributor who works closely with NATE. She and other distributors describe how their partnerships with NATE, including aligning their training with NATE standards and becoming NATE-approved testing facilities, help them stand out to contractor customers.

I wholeheartedly believe technician training is the most important resource a contractor can invest in, and I am thrilled by the ways contractors today are motivating their technicians to further their HVACR education. For this issue, we talked to several contractors, including Laura DiFilippo of DiFilippo's Service Company and Diana Fisher of Isaac Heating & Air Conditioning. You can find their interviews and why they believe that employing NATE-certified technicians leads to higher customer satisfaction and profitability.

Here at NATE, we work hard to support contractors, technicians, and the wider HVACR community. I am proud of our team and their work to expand and modernize the ways NATE serves our industry. However, we do not accomplish anything in isolation. We rely on feedback and guidance from people across the industry to recognize the needs of today's technicians. I am awed by the deep relationships NATE has been able to build over the years, and I look forward to seeing where our partnerships take us in the future. ●



NATE OFFICES

2311 Wilson Blvd., #410
Arlington, VA 22201
P: 877/420-6283
F: 703/527-2316

THE NATE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Kevin Kevin
Johnstone Supply,
Portland, Oregon

Vice Chairman: Kevin Traut
Isaac Heating & Air Conditioning,
Rochester, New York

Secretary/Treasurer: Mike Branson
Rheem Manufacturing Co.,
Fishers, Indiana

Parliamentarian: John Lanier
Chief Operating Officer, NATE and AHRI

TRUSTEES

Eddie Bluff

Site-Seeker, New Hartford, New York

Mike Hellmann

Endeavor Business Media, Nashville, Tennessee

Dave Kyle II

Trademasters, Lorton, Virginia

Edward McFarlane

Haller Enterprises Inc., Lititz, Pennsylvania

David Meyers

Carrier Enterprise, Indianapolis, Indiana

Harold Nelson

Mingledorff's, Norcross, Georgia

Quan Nguyen

Lennox Residential, Richardson, Texas

Brent Schroeder

Emerson Climate Technologies, Sidney, Ohio

Brad Snyder

Goodman Global, Houston, Texas

Rhonda Wight

Refrigeration Sales Corp., Valley View, Ohio

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Scott Boxer

Service Experts Heating & Air Conditioning, LLC, Lennox International, Plano, Texas

Laura DiFilippo

DiFilippo's Service Co., Paoli, Pennsylvania

Don Frenberg

Phase 3 Insights, Naples, Florida

John Garvelink

Commercial Design Engineers Ltd., Colorado Springs, Colorado

Ray Isaac

Isaac Heating & Air Conditioning Inc., Rochester, New York

Wade Mayfield

Thermal Services Inc., Omaha, Nebraska

David McIlwaine

HVAC Distributors Inc., Mount Joy, Pennsylvania

Randy Tice

APR Supply Co., Lebanon, Pennsylvania



The Brains of Google. The Brawn of Goodman.

Introducing: The Nest thermostat E + **Goodman**

- ✓ Program designed for **Goodman**® brand dealers
- ✓ Outstanding 5-year limited warranty*
- ✓ Easy installation with every new **Goodman** system
- ✓ Long-term customer connection through Nest HVAC monitoring

The Nest thermostat E + **Goodman** packs brains and brawn into one powerful product. Homeowners get what they want: a simple user interface, remote control¹ and monthly system performance reports². **Goodman** dealers will love the seamless installation of the Nest with any new **Goodman** system. The Nest is backed by a 5-year limited warranty* from **Goodman** and VIP dealer technical support from Google.

To sum it up – The Nest thermostat E + **Goodman** = exceptional indoor comfort.

* The full text of **Goodman** limited warranty on this product may be viewed at www.goodmanmfg.com/products/controls, or may be requested in paper by contacting us at 19001 Kermier Road, Waller, TX 77484.

¹ Requires working internet and Wi-Fi

² Email sign-up required to receive monthly report

For more info visit www.goodmanmfg.com/goodmangooglenest



You Asked, We Answered

QUESTIONS ASKED BY NATE-CERTIFIED TECHNICIANS, ANSWERED BY THE NATE TEAM AND SHARED WITH YOU.

Have a question for NATE? Please email us at [asknate@natex.org!](mailto:asknate@natex.org)

I TOOK AN HVAC COURSE TO COMPLETE MY CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS FOR MY RECERTIFICATION. HOW DO I RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE COURSE?

To receive credit, you will need to provide proof of training or attendance with a certificate of completion for review. To upload a certificate of completion, log into your NATE account and submit the certificate as an attachment through the “pending credits” tab in the continuing education section. When a course is approved, you will receive an approval email notifying you that credits have been added to your account.

Please remember that courses must be related to the specialty you are certified for in order to receive CEH credits. For example, you must take gas heating-related training in order to accrue CEHs towards your gas heating specialty. Training regarding general topics such as safety, electricity, motors, controls, and codes/regulation will accrue CEHs regardless of the specialty in which you are certified.

HOW ARE THE NATE CERTIFICATION EXAMS SCORED?

NATE certification exams are Pass/Fail. For the NATE traditional pathway certification exams, the Core and Installation/Service specialty exams, a score of 70 percent or higher is required to pass. For the Core exam, this

means you must answer 35 of the 50 questions correctly to pass. For the Installation and Service specialty exams, you must answer 70 of the 100 questions correctly to pass. For the NATE Certified HVAC Professional (CHP-5) pathway, a score of 60 percent or higher is required on each exam. This means you must answer 18 of the 30 questions to pass.

HOW DO I VERIFY A TECHNICIAN'S NATE ID NUMBER?

You can easily verify a NATE ID number online by using our website, www.NATEX.org. In both the homeowners’ and the contractors’ menu bar drop-down from our main page, you will see a link to “Verify a Technician’s NATE ID.” Entering the NATE ID will bring up the certifications the individual has earned and when they expire.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO CONTACT NATE?

Our Customer Service Team is happy to answer any questions you may have about NATE exams, recertification, and certification. You can call us toll-free at 877-420-6283 (NATE). Our office and phone lines are open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT. You can also email us anytime at asknate@natex.org. If you have specific questions about recertification, you can email us at recertify@natex.org. You can also contact us on our website, www.NATEX.org, by submitting an Ask NATE form.

Word Search

1. Traditional
2. Arlington
3. Hydronics
4. Computer
5. Efficiency
6. Remote
7. Heating
8. Contractor
9. Pathway
10. Industry
11. Service
12. Ventilation

L V Y V Y I S D Z H C N
 R A C O M P U T E R E O
 E C N V E J S A G C S T
 M Y G O T F T C I T U G
 O Y A T I I F V Y C N N
 T T S W N T R I T W O I
 E C L G H E I T C R T L
 R Y K D S T P D D I T R
 C I X V P P A Y A J E A
 R N J S N S H P E R L N
 R O T C A R T N O C T I
 V E N T I L A T I O N N

Contracting Business



Mike Hellmann, Director Building Infrastructure
mhellmann@endeavorb2b.com, 978-289-0098

Mike Eby, Senior Director of Content—Buildings
meyby@endeavorb2b.com, 913-209-9884

Steve Spaulding, Editor-in-Chief—CONTRACTOR
sspaulding@endeavorb2b.com, 702-848-4703

Terry Melver, Director of Content—Contracting Business
tmciver@endeavorb2b.com, 216-346-8978

Contributors: Kelly Faloon, Michael Keating, Neal Lorenzi, and Elaine Yetzer Simon

Joe Agron, Sales Manager
jagrone@endeavorb2b.com, 941-200-4778

Bill Boyadjis, Account Manager, Midwest
bboyadjis@endeavorb2b.com, 973-722-2048

Mark Gersten, Account Manager, West + Northwest
mgersten@endeavorb2b.com, 858-412-4080

Brian Sack, Senior Manager, Business Development, East + Northeast
bsack@endeavorb2b.com, 732-629-1949

Randy Jeter, Senior Manager, Business Development, South & West
rjeter@endeavorb2b.com, 512-263-7280

James Carahalios, Key Account Manager
jcarahalios@endeavorb2b.com, 303-697-1701

David Sevin, Key Account Manager
dsevin@endeavorb2b.com, 401-246-1903

Jay Thompson, Account Sales Manager
jthompson@endeavorb2b.com, 913-707-0468

Steve Suarez, Media Account Executive
ssuarez@endeavorb2b.com, 816-588-7372

Beverly Beckert, Endeavor Business Media Marketing Solutions
bbeckert@endeavorb2b.com, 941-208-4308

Greg Araujo, Senior Production Operations Manager
garaujo@endeavorb2b.com; 941-203-3722

Randy Schirz, Art Director, 773-259-7253

ADVERTISER INDEX

AHRI.....31
 American Standard A/C.....17
 Daikin Manufacturing Company, LP.....5
 Fieldpiece Instruments Inc.....6
 Fujitsu General America, Inc.....11
 Goodman Manufacturing Company, L.P.....3
 Goodman Manufacturing Company, L.P./Amana.....21
 Lanco Corp.....32
 Lennox Residential.....BC
 LG HVAC.....7
 LP International Inc./Powermate.....32
 Mitsubishi Electric- HVAC.....IBC
 Ritchie Engineering.....IFC
 Trane Residential.....13

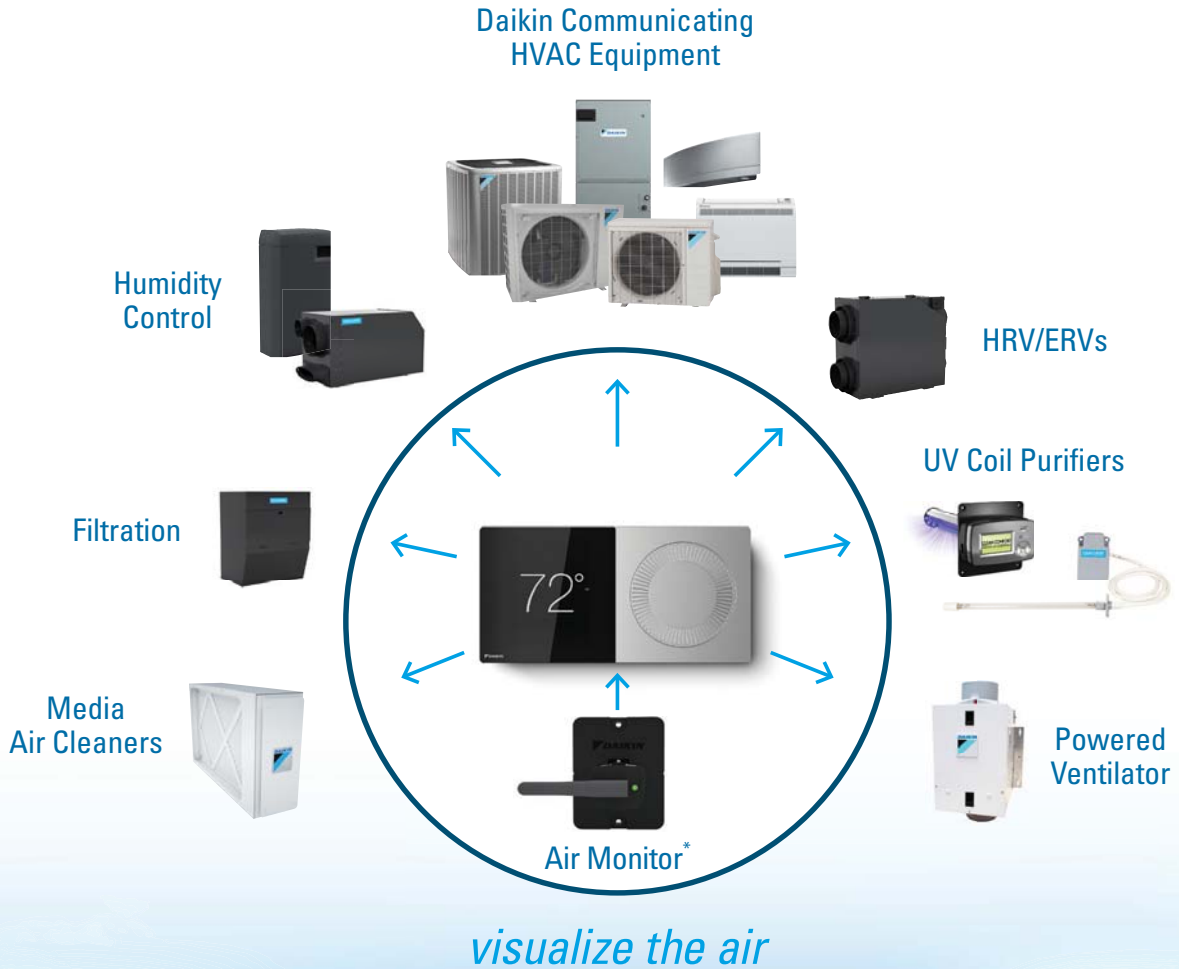
WINNER



Printed in the U.S.A.

Copyright © 2021 by Endeavor Business Media

Visualize the air with the Daikin One ecosystem



Heating, Air Conditioning, and Indoor Air Quality solutions to help DETECT, VISUALIZE, and ACT to address common indoor air quality issues. Learn more at www.daikincomfort.com/go/daikinoneecosystem/

*The Daikin One home air monitor only works with ducted units. Components sold separately.



NATE News

AHRI REFRIGERANT WEBINAR SERIES

Over the past year, AHRI has held virtual forums examining research in collaboration with Department of Energy, California Air Resources Board, ASHRAE, AHRI, and others to build on material covered in the Flammable Refrigerant Research and Planning Conference held in October 2018. Recent industry research has informed technical updates to safety standards that will enable compliance with global regulations that phase down the use of high-GWP refrigerants.

The webinars are designed to help HVACR technicians, manufacturers, channel partners, policy makers, fire service personnel, and building code and environmental experts learn more. To view any of the recorded webinars, visit AHRI.

ONLINE TRAINING OPTIONS

Technicians that are working towards their NATE certification have a range of tools available online to help them prepare. NATE has partnered with HVACRedu.net and Interplay Learning to provide technicians with quality training to help them develop their job skills. Technicians can find online courses, training videos, and virtual reality trainings. The courses can help technicians prepare for the Certified HVAC Professional (CHP-5) certification and other NATE exams.

Additionally, technicians can order official NATE study guides in the NATE online store. Paperbacks and PDF downloads are both available. Technicians can also find other online courses and study guide aides on the NATE Resources webpage.

A PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT RECRUITING AND LICENSING

Recently, the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States, Canada (UA) and NATE announced they will be working together to continue to create new opportunities for increasing man-hours in the service sectors. This agreement opens the door for the United Association to engage NATE resources for continuing journeyman education. "The United Association is a real training leader," says John Lanier, COO of NATE. "Their commitment to building and maintaining a skilled workforce is commendable and aligns well with NATE's mission of recognizing quality technicians. We look forward to supporting the UA as they launch their newest apprenticeship to ensuring that journeymen have advanced continuing education opportunities."

"We are excited to continue to build our partnership with the UA on technician training and certification," says Gurminder Sidhu, NATE's senior director of business operations. "We both recognize that rigorous, industry-supported education, training, and certification programs are the key tools to increasing the number of skilled HVACR installers and technicians." The United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States, Canada (UA), affiliated with the national building trades, represents approximately 355,000 plumbers, pipefitters, sprinkler fitters, service technicians, and welders in local unions across North America. Visit www.ua.org/about-ua-training/latest-news/spring-2021-safety-newsletter.aspx to learn more about the United Association and their partnership with NATE.

Fieldpiece



INTRODUCING THE DR82 AND DR58 LEAK DETECTORS

The New DR82 Infrared and DR58 Heated Diode Refrigerant Leak Detectors will make your job faster and easier.

Giant backlit display clearly showcases the info you need with easy-to-read bar graphs, numeric readings and customizable dual alarms. They're built tough, with long-lasting sensors, a lighted tip and fine-tuned sensitivity.



To learn more visit
www.fieldpiece.com



**Air Conditioning
Technologies**



**Find your next
HVAC system
recommendation.**

**With LG HVAC systems,
you'll have peace of mind
to stand firmly behind
your recommendation.**

Learn more about becoming an
LG Pro Dealer at
lghvac.com/lg-pro.

With ducted and duct-free solutions for your next project, LG offers a wide range of options for even your most challenging installs. And when you are an **LG Pro Dealer**, you'll have access to the resources, products and support to put you ahead of the competition:

- **Opportunity:** Access exclusive training and events, marketing materials, priority technical support, sales leads, and much more.
- **Reward:** Receive exclusive perks and benefits including priority listing on LG's contractor locator, financing programs, and discounts on LG Electronics products.
- **Satisfaction:** As an LG Pro Dealer, you'll have the power of the LG brand to offer your customers. And the added confidence of offering a 12-year warranty^{1 2} to stand behind your recommendation.

¹Upon expiration of the product's original manufacturer's limited warranty period, an extended warranty contract may apply.

²An extended limited warranty on parts and compressor for qualified, registered LG Residential Light Commercial (RLC) Products.

NATE Collaborates with Manufacturers in a Variety of Ways

OEMS ARE EMBRACING LIVE ONLINE PROCTORING AND THE CHP-5 CAREER PATH.



“WITH CURRENT TRAVEL CONSTRAINTS, USING ONLINE PROCTORING ENABLES OUR TECHNICIANS TO TAKE THE NATE EXAMS AT HOME OR AT THE OFFICE AND FULFILL THEIR CAREER PATHS.”

— Vickie Ashmore, sales and marketing manager, Lennox Learning Solutions

Manufacturers have teamed up with NATE to give technicians a convenient path to professional certification. The partnerships also help boost manufacturers’ credibility among their customers and within their service channels.

Manufacturers such as Lennox have partnered with NATE so that technicians at Lennox contractors enjoy a hassle-free, frictionless process to take NATE certification exams. “We offer both online eCourses and live-streaming, instructor-led classes for contractors and their employees to earn NATE continuing education hours,” says Vickie Ashmore, sales and marketing manager, Lennox Learning Solutions. She adds that Lennox is a NATE testing organization and that NATE exam proctors at her firm are authorized to provide NATE testing.



Lennox has a comprehensive NATE training infrastructure in place. “We highlight NATE on a dedicated landing page on our learning management system designed to educate customers about the NATE program. It includes a direct link to the NATE website to obtain more information. On this same page, we offer a convenient method for technicians to upload their transcripts and document their CEUs directly to NATE for official tracking. This saves time and assures technicians that their hours go toward their ongoing certifications,” Ashmore explains.

She says this online feature is quite popular with Lennox Learning Solutions customers, and the numbers prove it. “A total of 53,258 hours of training have been uploaded to NATE by 5,700 users.” She adds that Lennox strives to keep its NATE courses recognized for NATE CEUs. “All of them have content that focuses on the NATE certification tests. In 2020 alone, over 2,200 hours of NATE training were completed online.”

Carrier, the heating, air-conditioning and refrigeration solutions provider, is committed to making industry-agreed NATE standards prevalent in its technical training materials, says Christine Rasche, senior manager, Residential Education, Product Launch and Literature. “We do this by getting many of our courses NATE-certified. In addition, our Factory Authorized Dealers (FADs) are required to undergo a prescribed minimum of NATE-certified training hours to maintain their status as a FAD.”

Many of Carrier’s technical training materials are approved by NATE before being released to Carrier’s



“OUR FACTORY AUTHORIZED DEALERS (FADS) ARE REQUIRED TO UNDERGO A PRESCRIBED MINIMUM OF NATE-CERTIFIED TRAINING HOURS TO MAINTAIN THEIR STATUS AS A FAD.”

— Christine Rasche, senior manager, Residential Education, Product Launch and Literature, Carrier

channel, and that is a plus for the company, according to Rasche. “We feel that this is a benefit for Carrier because we know that our channel is getting quality training materials relative to the industry. Working to integrate NATE standards provides a good benchmark for our technical training materials to provide current and accurate information in the industry.”

Samsung HVAC provides its distribution and spec-rep partners (specifying engineer’s representatives) with NATE-approved training programs that the partners can host, says Jose De La Portilla, national training manager. He adds that through the training, technicians at Samsung’s partners earn continuing education credits for their NATE certifications. “All of our core curriculum is set up as continuing education courses so we can provide the NATE certificates with numbers to our partners or to the installer-contractors, and they can work through the recertification process.”

De La Portilla says the training setup helps form a tighter bond between Samsung HVAC and its partners. “It’s just one more way to create extra stickiness. If the installer-contractors know this is something they can get from us—or from our spec reps or our distribution partners—they know they can get their product as well as help on NATE re-certification. It makes us a little more valuable to them than just a partner-vendor who is selling them boxes.”

De La Portilla is also a member of the NATE Technical Committee. This role offers another avenue for Samsung HVAC and NATE to collaborate. “Another way that Samsung HVAC participates with NATE is the company actively supports me working with the NATE Technical Committee and going out there whenever travel is back to normal or working meetings remotely through Zoom or other webinar platforms.”

He notes that committee members help create and update the NATE certification exams. “I also work on the committee creating, maintaining, and updating the NATE study guides that go along with the tests. In that way, Samsung HVAC not only has a voice into the NATE organization, but we are able to bring new information to NATE to add to their certifications.”

“THEY CAN GET THEIR PRODUCT AS WELL AS HELP ON NATE RE-CERTIFICATION. IT MAKES US A LITTLE MORE VALUABLE TO THEM THAN JUST A PARTNER-VENDOR WHO IS SELLING THEM BOXES.”

— Jose De La Portilla, national training manager, Samsung HVAC



De La Portilla points out that the Samsung HVAC variable refrigerant flow (VRF) product lineup that technicians work with is still a fairly new technology. “We bring that new information to the table that NATE can use in its training and certification programs to make sure newly certified technicians are on top of all the latest trends and technology.”

Yet another manufacturing group that has teamed up with NATE is Goodman. “Goodman and Amana brands have collaborated with NATE on making sure our Goodman/Amana brand training classes are approved and represent current HVACR topics pertinent to the industry today,” says Benjamin S. Middleton, national sales training manager, Goodman Manufacturing Co., Goodman Global Group, Inc., a member of Daikin Global.

Middleton notes that many of his firm’s training affiliates have been involved with NATE since its beginning and have helped to establish NATE’s Knowledge Areas of Technician Expertise (KATEs). He says Goodman has promoted NATE to become a best-practices leader in professional training and certifying men and women for the trades.

Goodman and Amana brands include NATE certification as a part of the Fast-Track Tech program, which is designed to help develop new technicians for the industry. “Goodman and Amana brands submit courses to NATE for its approval for technicians to use towards their annual continuing education requirements for certification,” Middleton explains. He adds that the brands actively promote NATE on their websites and in publications.

Rheem Manufacturing partners with NATE in a few different ways, says Phil Oglesby, manager, education and content development; he is with the AC Division. “We offer roughly 80 classes, which include online and classroom training that provides CEUs for learners who need to maintain their certification. We’re also making it easier than ever to have those CEUs applied to their account with NATE.”

Oglesby says Rheem promotes NATE on social media; messaging is directed at contractors as well as homeowners. “We want our entire channel to be familiar with NATE and the value it adds to the industry.”

Prior to COVID, Rheem Manufacturing was conducting regular certification exams. Oglesby adds that the firm’s distribution partners also provided that service to technicians. “Now, with the new online proctoring, NATE has made it very easy, convenient, and safe to take the exams.”

Emerson’s White-Rodgers business is certifying all of its online content through NATE’s Recognized Training Provider (RTP) portal, says Tipper O’Brien, channel marketing lead. “This helps to ensure that we offer a utility or passage to contractors and technicians for learning about our products.” He adds that the company has ramped up its content creation efforts over the last 12 to 18 months in order to provide easily digestible product information for a range of HVACR stakeholders to help them in their use of the firm’s products.

O’Brien says Emerson instructors are key advocates for NATE certification. “During each of our classes, they note the available NATE CEUs associated with the course and answer any related questions about earning and tracking credits. We also provide the service of submitting class participants’ information to NATE so they can receive NATE credit for the course they’re attending.”

Eric Weiss, technical product trainer, American Standard HAC, endorses NATE as the dominant certification program across the U.S. “When I’m on the road with training, NATE is the one and only HVACR certification entity that I see in all of my classes. I may find other certification programs in certain areas, but NATE is the most popular and most-recognized organization throughout all our territories.”

PERFORMANCE DELIVERED



Introducing the Infinite Comfort Series.
Now, offer your customers ultra-efficient, multi-position
air handling units from Fujitsu General.



As low as
25dBA
indoor sound
level



Up to a
50% smaller
outdoor
footprint



A new
multi-position
indoor unit
design



WiFi
compatible
with Fujitsu's
FGLair app

- Revolutionary side discharge outdoor condensing units are highly efficient and save space allowing for multiple installation options
- Quiet operation - indoor as low as 25dBA and outdoor as low as 53dBA
- Units range in size from 24,000 to 48,000 BTU/H
- Adaptive fan motor speed control assures optimum comfort
- Longer line length - 160' (24k & 30k BTU/H) and 230' (36k & 48k BTU/H)
- Excellent energy ratings (19 SEER and >10 HSPF) equal big utility rebates

For more information, please visit www.FujitsuGeneral.com



INFINITE COMFORT

“WITH THE CHP-5, NATE RECEIVED FEEDBACK FROM MULTIPLE MANUFACTURERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS...AND CAME BACK WITH A MUCH MORE TECHNICIAN-FRIENDLY CERTIFICATION PROCESS.”

— Phil Oglesby, manager, education and content development, Rheem Manufacturing



Weiss says most of American Standard HAC’s factory technical training courses that can be taken online or through one of his firm’s field service representatives (FSRs) at a local distributor have associated NATE recertification hours. “We currently have more than 70 hours through a variety of course topics to assist our field technicians.”

NATE’S CERTIFIED HVAC PROFESSIONAL (CHP-5) PATHWAY

There’s broad manufacturer participation in NATE’s Certified HVAC Professional (CHP-5) program (<https://www.natex.org/site/519/Technicians/Certified-HVAC-Professional>). It is a new certification pathway designed to mesh technicians’ training and certification efforts with their on-the-job learning. This recently established way to earn NATE certification consists of five 30-question exams instead of NATE’s traditional 50-question core exam and 100-question specialty exam.

Rheem Manufacturing’s Oglesby offers some positive views on the new NATE pathway: “With the CHP-5, NATE received feedback from multiple manufacturers and other stakeholders. They took that

feedback and came back with, in my opinion, a much more technician-friendly certification process. The CHP-5 will encourage more participation, which helps all of us.”

At Lennox Learning Solutions, the company’s Field Technical Consultants will begin offering CHP-5 exam proctoring in the near future, reports Ashmore. She says Lennox currently provides Live Online Proctoring (LOP) of NATE certification tests associated with the traditional career path.

She believes new NATE offerings such as LOP and the CHP-5 career path help manufacturers stay at the forefront of certification trends and technology. “With current travel constraints,” she says, “using online proctoring enables our technicians to take the NATE exams at home or at the office and fulfill their career paths. It also allows technicians who may not live near a testing facility to conveniently take the NATE test without travelling.”

Manufacturers say that collaborating with NATE can yield a variety of benefits. “Aligning with the industry’s highest standards is incredibly important in showing our commitment to innovating quality, efficient HVACR solutions with

a great installation experience,” says White-Rodgers for Emerson’s O’Brien. “We know how critical it is to invest deeply and provide the very best product and training information possible.”

He adds that partnering with NATE is vitally important in 2021. “This is especially timely when you consider the environment we are in today with a shortage of talent in the trades and the pandemic’s impact on in-person training events. Now more than ever, it is important to deliver HVACR pros with the tools to help them succeed. That’s why we put so much time and consideration into the construction of our content, so that we are catering as best we can to that market and conveying the quality of our products.”

NATE’s relationships with manufacturers will change as the HVACR industry advances. “In the future, we would like to be more proactive in hosting NATE certifications through the Goodman Business Toolbox and the Amana Brand Business Academy,” says Middleton. “We would also like to be involved in the discussions around additional certifications and knowledge areas that will be relevant to our industry as technology continues to evolve and building standards continue to improve.”

Rheem’s partnership with NATE will continue to evolve, believes Oglesby. “There needs to be a continual feedback loop in order to keep up. Our industry is changing so quickly—not just products and technology but also the workforce. We need to make sure we are providing the right solutions at the right time.” ●

Michael Keating is a contributor to the *NATE Magazine*.

PRODUCT

XV20i TRUCOMFORT™

TEST

CLIMATIC
CHAMBER

DESCRIPTION

TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY SHIFTS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING. INSIDE THE CLIMATIC CHAMBER, OUR PRODUCTS ARE PUT THROUGH AN ENDLESS BARRAGE OF WEATHER EXTREMES—INCLUDING 5-INCHES OF RAIN PER HOUR.

SHAKE

SLAM

WET

COLD

HOT

WE
TEST.
SO
IT
RUNS.



TRANE®

It's Hard To Stop A Trane.®

NATE, Distributors Pull Together for Technician Certification

WITH THE SUPPORT AND DIRECTION OF NATE, DISTRIBUTORS, AND MANUFACTURING, SERVICE TECHS AND THEIR EMPLOYERS CAN BE THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS.



Many hands make light work, together everyone achieves more, teamwork makes the dream work. Trite or not, there are many adages about working together because so often they are true. When it comes to certifying heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) technicians, NATE has a powerful network of wholesalers and distributors that help it to reach as many technicians as possible. After all, NATE and its partners have the same goal: to get the job done right, the first time.

PULLING TOGETHER

Valley View, Ohio-based Refrigeration Sales Corp. (RSC) has been a Carrier distributor since the 1940s and is 100 percent focused on HVAC and refrigeration. Rhonda Wight, Refrigeration Sales' president, serves on NATE's board and is a longtime proponent of training.

"Our philosophy has always been that training is the most important piece of what we do. That's our history, that's where we came from, and that's where we continue to focus," she says. "What I like to tell our folks is we are selling to the experts. The technicians are the ones that are the experts, and they need to have all the answers. If the technician doesn't have the answer, they need someone to go to. We have to be ready and willing and

have the answers for them or know how to find the answers for them.”

According to Jim Price, RSC’s technical support and training manager, who is NATE-certified and has been a NATE instructor for a number of years, this company history is why the company partners with NATE.

“We try to promote education, and that’s why NATE is a good fit for our company,” Price says. “NATE also promotes professional certification and continual education, and that’s a cornerstone of the HVACR industry, especially now with all the changes going on.”

Mingledorff’s, a distributor based in Norcross, Georgia, has been associated with NATE since its two major suppliers, Carrier and Bryant, started the Factory Authorized Dealer (FAD) program in early 2003, according to Harold Nelson, technical service and support manager.

“With the NATE certification, we feel that the service tech and their employers want to be the best in the business. With the support and direction of NATE, Mingledorff’s, and manufacturing, they can be,” says Nelson. “We feel overall that the certified technicians are more professional and better informed about the equipment they install and service. When the service techs are better trained and continue their education, warranty costs to manufacturing and callbacks for the dealer are reduced.”

BENEFITS OF TRAINING, TESTING

End customers want higher quality installation and servicing of their HVACR equipment. Thanks to the different NATE certifications, testing organizations like Mingledorff’s can make this happen, according to Nelson.

“Once certified,” he says, “NATE-certified technicians will continue to educate themselves through various

“WE FEEL OVERALL THAT THE CERTIFIED TECHNICIANS ARE MORE PROFESSIONAL AND BETTER INFORMED ABOUT THE EQUIPMENT THEY INSTALL AND SERVICE. WHEN THE SERVICE TECHS ARE BETTER TRAINED AND CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION, WARRANTY COSTS TO MANUFACTURING AND CALLBACKS FOR THE DEALER ARE REDUCED.”

— Harold Nelson, technical service and support manager, Mingledorff’s

NATE-certified CEU seminars. This will just increase the knowledge, along with making those NATE-certified techs more confident in the HVACR industry. The certified service tech is an investment to the contractor’s company and their customers. In most cases, the end-user is willing to pay more to have that reassurance of a well-trained individual.”

As the industry deals with the many changing elements of HVACR, such as green technology, refrigerant changes, and environmental initiatives, the education component is incredibly important.

“Segments of our industry are very resistant to change,” according to Price, “but what we found is that when you bring customers into an environment where there’s constant education occurring, then it’s much easier to affect change [because] people are used to coming back to a reliable source for good training and good information. Once the boulder of change stops, it’s very hard to get it moving again. When we can keep our customer base in a situation where we are always training, always promoting best practices, and always showing people better ways to do things, sustaining that change and helping our dealers master the

changes in our industry become a heck of a lot easier.”

NATE is an important part of this educational effort, Price says. “One of the things I really like about NATE is that it promotes the idea of you’re never done. You’ve never learned all you need to learn. There’s always something new. There’s always something more, and it’s our responsibility as training providers to provide the best information we can.”

About 90 percent of RSC’s training is NATE-certified, which has proved to be very popular with customers, explains Wight. “We have many companies that we have relationships with that continue sending their folks through our sessions, and that speaks volumes,” she says. “There are referrals and lots of positive feedback. It really has been a great program for us. The technicians like it and come back for more.”

NEW NATE OFFERINGS

NATE has introduced a number of new options in recent years, including the Certified HVAC Professional (CHP-5) pathway. With the CHP-5 pathway, technicians earn their NATE certification through a series of five exams, each on a different subject domain: HVAC Fundamentals, Electrical and Controls, Comfort and Airflow, In-

“THE VALUE TO TECHNICIANS OF COMPLETING THE NATE EXAM IS SHOWING THEIR CURRENT EMPLOYER OR POSSIBLE FUTURE EMPLOYERS HOW MUCH THEY CARE ABOUT BEING AN EXPERT IN THEIR CAREER AND HOW CONCERNED THEY ARE ABOUT BEING GOOD AT WHAT THEY DO.”

— Jim Price, RSC's technical support and training manager



stallation, and Service. Another new option is the Ready-to-Work certificate for technicians with fewer than six months of experience in the industry.

Nelson is a proponent of how NATE is making it easier for technicians to become certified. “For the testing organization, it couldn’t be simpler,” he says. “Of course, the online version of the test is the easiest. We encourage the online version because the individual from the contractor can receive immediate results on the exam. The paper version process is still easy to do; however, it could take up to 10 days before the individuals know their results.”

According to Wight, the CHP-5 pathway very much aligns with RSC’s current training philosophy. “We do 12-week semesters, and we really try to chunk it down into building blocks. [CHP-5] hits on the building blocks, if you will. There are so many components, and the more that we can chunk it down for these students, the easier it is for them to digest. Then, they’re getting a more thorough education.”

Price agrees that the CHP-5 pathway offers much-needed flexibility. “The CHP-5 has a kind of a modular approach to it that actually lends itself very well to our multi-week curriculum classes,” he says. “We’re going to find ways to incorporate that pathway into our HVACR technology classes. We’re actually very excited about that

because it offers our dealers more value so that when technicians leave our 24-week program, they would also be receiving a NATE certification.”

In addition, the divided format helps technicians achieve success on the exams. Price adds, “We’ve found that a lot of our technicians struggle sometimes with test-taking, so having smaller tests is preferable to having one large test. I very much liked the idea of having multiple smaller tests rather than one huge test. There’s a lot of sweaty palms and head scratching going on. When some of our technicians have to sit down in front of an empty Scantron sheet, it takes them right back to high school testing or college testing, and a lot of my folks don’t enjoy taking tests. Having smaller tests and being able to break that up over a multiweek curriculum are going to be big pluses for us.”

RSC has been the top certifier in the Great Lakes region for several years now, “turning out NATE-certified techs at a breakneck pace,” according to Price.

PROMOTING THE VALUE OF NATE

Mingledorff’s promotes its partnership with NATE and NATE certification in a number of ways, including through local and regional media.

“Plus,” Nelson says, “we continue to post and send out email cam-

paigns/newsletters to all the contractors and service techs about upcoming NATE testing dates and approved NATE CEU courses. Carrier and Bryant continue to send out information to our contractors encouraging them to become part of the FAD group. Also, we try to promote the overall value of the service technician and that the various certifications could result in a better compensated employee.”

Wight says Refrigeration Sales’ efforts include marketing the NATE certifications with the rest of the company’s training programs as well as through the Carrier FAD program.

“Part of that FAD requirement has lent itself to really easy marketing,” she says. “We’ve had a lot of success with just simply including it in our promotional marketing that we do for the training department.”

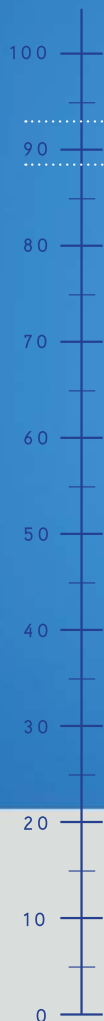
NATE certification is something that requires a broader view on the part of some technicians, however. “You have to show some technicians that the value of taking a NATE exam is not simply the NATE certification itself,” says Price. “The value to technicians of completing the NATE exam is showing their current employer or possible future employers how much they care about being an expert in their career and how concerned they are about being good at what they do. NATE is a very important component of a resume to one of our technicians and we find that, as a rule, technicians who are NATE-certified tend to be better informed, they tend to be more professional, and they tend to be more highly compensated.”

“I’m telling you, it all starts with the technician,” says Wight. “The better the technician, then life is easier for all of us.” ●

Elaine Yetzer Simon is a contributor to the *NATE Magazine*.

93% of American Standard dealers agree that our products are easy to service.

88% of people like dogs.



AMERICAN STANDARD: MORE POPULAR THAN PUPPIES.

It's hard to get everyone to agree on something—but we've come close. American Standard's proven quality, ease of use and customer satisfaction make it easy for dealers to love—and sell.



American Standard received a 93% ease-of-service score among current dealers in a proprietary Dealer Brand Health Study conducted by Trane Technologies in 2019. Dog feelings were reported by an AP-Petside.com poll conducted by GfK Custom Research in 2009.

See why it makes sense to sell us more at amsd.us/dogs



HVACR techs at Isaac Heating & Air Conditioning can attend regular exam review classes at the company's 30,000-sq.-ft. training center.
Photo credit: Diana Fisher

Building a Professional Partnership

NATE CERTIFICATION HELPS BUILD CONFIDENCE AND PRIDE WITH TECHNICIANS AND TRUST WITH CUSTOMERS.

After the challenging 14 months we've been through, it's critical that HVACR contracting firms raise their professionalism. They need to continue demonstrating to homeowners and building owners that they are ready and able to serve their heating, cooling, and refrigeration needs—whatever they are.

This means ensuring that HVACR technicians have the proper personal protective equipment to interact with customers safely. It means outfitting techs with the right tools and equipment to diagnose comfort-related problems.

It also means ensuring that techs are properly trained in the latest technology and the most updated codes in their jurisdiction—and highlighting that expertise for customers and potential customers. This is accomplished through certification programs provided by groups such as NATE.

The last two letters in NATE stand for Technician Excellence. And the certification routes it makes available for HVACR techs—the traditional way (a 50-question core exam plus various 100-question specialty exams) and the Certified Heating Professional

(CHP-5) program, which debuted last year—are distinctive ways to acknowledge the education and skills that a tech acquires.

“As a contractor, what benefits us most from partnering with NATE is the fact that we can go to our consumers, our clients, and say not only do we train our own guys, but a third party has tested them—and we know they're competent to do the work they need to do for you,” explains Laura DiFilippo, president of DiFilippo's Service, Paoli, Pennsylvania, and a former NATE chairperson. “It's a real bonus from a contractor's point of view.”

And NATE certification is necessary to highlight a company's professionalism, she adds, because there is no federal HVACR licensing.

"I think anything we can do as an industry as a whole—contractors, distributors, and manufacturers—is to make this a more professional industry," she says. "Some states have licensing, some states don't. For a consumer, you want contractors to be able to say, 'Yes, I'm hiring the best. Yes, I have the most qualified people coming out to you.' Anything we can do to raise professionalism is always a plus. NATE does that."

Training is crucial to any comfort services business. Studying for a NATE exam can be considered supplemental training to ensure that technicians are equipped with the expertise necessary to make themselves and their employers successful.

"Our industry is famous for on-the-job training," notes Ed McFarlane, vice president of learning and development at Lititz, Pennsylvania-based Haller Enterprises. "One of the more popular ways HVACR contractors work with NATE is as an internal addition to training."

He adds that certification makes training quantifiable.

"When you think of NATE's mission, which is to help the industry with testing and accreditation, that universal exam means the same thing from state to state or company to company," McFarlane says. "If you have the Gas Heating Service certification, it's a known quantity. And in an industry that is somewhat reliant on anecdotal stories during an interview process or onboarding experience, it's nice to have a level setting."

Backing up expertise claims with something measurable like certification is a primary component of building trust with customers.



HALLER ENTERPRISES
AIMS TO GET
80%
OF ITS ROUGHLY 60
HVACR TECHNICIANS
NATE-CERTIFIED.



"Isaac Heating & Air Conditioning has a well-known reputation for its culture and professionalism; I didn't realize why until I started working here," notes Diana Fisher, marketing manager of the Rochester, New York, firm. "It's easy for an HVACR company to say in a marketing piece, 'Trust us, we're great. We'll do right by you.' At Isaac, when we write content that asks customers to trust us, we get to say our technicians are NATE-certified and NATE-trained and re-certified."

She adds that each tech's bio lists the certifications acquired; these

bios are sent to the customer as the tech is on the way to the job. This practice emphasizes to customers that the HVACR contractor takes training seriously and will only send the best to take care of their needs.

CAREER PATH ADVANCEMENT

Fisher notes that while NATE certification is not required as a condition of employment at Isaac, it is encouraged as an avenue to advance a technician's career. Seventy-five of its HVACR techs are NATE-certified,

with another 14 having passed the Core Exam and now working through the specialty areas.

“You can’t just go from a Level 1 tech to a Level 4 without any certifications; you have to show an interest in learning because of the entire environment here,” she explains. “From technicians to the executive staff, Isaac is extremely education-driven. If you’re not learning, you’re not growing.”

At DiFilippo’s Service, NATE certification is a condition of employment. “We love it when techs come with NATE certification, but certainly if they don’t, we get them on that path,” DiFilippo says. “We include it in our job descriptions; it is part of being here because we as a company believe it’s that important. We want all our techs to be NATE-certified.”

She admits that certification was not a priority over the past year as the company dealt with the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. Vince DiFilippo, her husband, steers the company’s training program; four of their techs are NATE-certified, with two more working through the traditional program.

While not currently using the CHP-5 program, Laura DiFilippo sees the value in it from a training perspective.

“For instance, let’s say our guys are taking a piece of CHP-5 and they’re unsure of it; it allows us from a training capacity to go in and work on that individually with them so they can be best prepared to take that portion on the test,” she notes. “It takes the stress out of the staff.”

Haller aims to get 80 percent of its roughly 60 HVACR technicians NATE-certified, but it is not a condition of employment, McFarlane says.

“One of the things employers recognize is the challenge of finding technicians,” he explains. “So, we

want to make sure [the recruiting and hiring process] is not overly onerous or difficult. We spend a lot of time explaining the value in the exam and the ongoing training they can get to keep the certifications valid. And it’s a helpful addition to incentivize training.”

Isaac prefers its techs to study for the traditional core-plus-specialty path. Its 30,000-sq.-ft. Isaac Training & Education Center is available for HVACR techs to attend regular exam review classes. ITEC staff helps coordinate the actual tests and encourages onsite testing and proctoring.

McFarlane and DiFilippo plan to use the more accessible CHP-5 program this year to get more techs on the certification path.

“We’ve been talking about this as a team to make sure we’re incorporating it as we look at retooling much of our training,” McFarlane says. “Coming out of the pandemic, we’re taking a look at all the resources and getting ready for summer. I think CHP-5 fits right into that.”

DiFilippo adds: “CHP-5 makes this whole process more digestible for a technician. Think about it: You take a class and then you take a four- or five-hour exam. It’s super-stressful. CHP-5 takes a lot of that stress out of the process.”

NOT YOUR FATHER’S NATE

With certification a big part of building trust with customers, what advice would these HVACR industry partners give to their fellow contractors looking at NATE?

“If you think NATE is the same NATE it was when it started 20-plus years ago, it’s not,” DiFilippo notes. “I think between the CHP-5 and Live Online Proctoring, NATE has gone above and beyond to make this certification process easy and simple to use. It’s necessary for us as business

Vince DiFilippo heads up training at DiFilippo’s Service. Currently, four of their techs are NATE-certified, with two more on board.



owners to present to our customers and our communities that we are professionals, that a third party has said we are—and we can prove it.”

McFarlane adds: “I would encourage them to embrace it and make it part of their culture so it’s not the latest thing they’re doing, but it’s a part of everything they’re doing. It’s part of evaluations and training. When technicians are talking about developing, it’s one of those resources they can invest in. When you think of the way NATE has changed in recent years, it’s doing everything it can to make it easy without diminishing the value of a pass on the exam.”

From a marketing standpoint, NATE certification “is a huge piece of the consumer puzzle and why they should trust us,” Fisher says. “Any HVACR contractor not using it is missing out. It’s a lot easier to ask for trust when you have something to back it up.” ●

Kelly Faloon is a contributor to the *NATE Magazine*.

Expect More.



Efficient. Reliable. Connected.
Total Indoor Comfort



At Goodman, we believe in American dependability. Units are designed, engineered and assembled in the U.S.A.



Our continuing commitment to quality products may mean a change in specifications without notice. © 2021 Goodman Manufacturing Company, L.P. • Houston, Texas • USA

Amana is a registered trademark of Maytag Corporation or its related companies and is used under license. All rights reserved.

Strategic Partnerships Boost NATE's Reach and Create Countless Opportunities for HVACR Technicians

NATE GAINS INSIGHTS FROM ORGANIZATIONS THAT HELP TO PROVIDE HVACR CONTRACTORS AND TECHNICIANS WITH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES THAT MEET THEIR CHANGING NEEDS.



For more than 20 years, NATE has remained focused on its vision: to be the leader in developing and recognizing professional HVACR technicians. But NATE isn't doing it all on its own.

The organization has formed partnerships with several industry stakeholders, including associations, utilities, and manufacturers. Being affiliated with a large network of professionals dedicated to HVACR technician excellence assures a continued focus on addressing the current skills gap and the professional installation/service of heating and cooling systems.

"We truly value the relationships we build with our industry partners," says Gurminder Sidhu, senior director of business operations at NATE. "The insight we gain from them helps us to keep NATE a step ahead of the rest, and to provide HVACR contractors and technicians with educational resources that meet their changing needs."

Here we take a look at three NATE partnerships—with the Air-Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration Institute (AHRI), the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors (PHCC) National Association, and Women in HVACR

Photo: Getty/AndreyPopov

(WHVACR)—to see what fuels these partnerships and how each group and the industry at large benefit.

AIR-CONDITIONING, HEATING & REFRIGERATION INSTITUTE

Sue Perez is program coordinator, workforce development, AHRI, and her position includes coordinating the Clifford H. “Ted” Rees Jr. Scholarship Foundation. The foundation’s relationship with NATE started in 2015 with the establishment of the Donald Frenberg scholarship, according to Perez. Frenberg is a retired executive director of the HVACR Workforce Development Foundation and a former board chairman and CEO of NATE.

In addition to the monetary scholarships valued at \$1,000-\$2,000 each, recipients earn free NATE Ready-to-Work exams. The Ready-to-Work Certificate exam is designed for technicians who are just entering the HVACR field, with little to no formal education or training. The exam focuses on fundamental job knowledge and skills.

“Rees scholarships and NATE’s free Ready-to-Work exams provide early-career HVACR technicians with much-needed financial support and a solid set of foundational skills that are the basis for a successful career in the field,” Perez says. “Our partnership with NATE helps to address the industry’s skills’ shortage and is critical to developing a workforce that values continuous training and development.”

The Clifford H. “Ted” Rees Jr. Scholarship Foundation was established to assist with the recruitment and competency of future HVACR and water heating technicians by awarding scholarships to qualified students enrolled in an accredited school. Perez oversees fundraising, application management, and donor relations.

The foundation awards, on average, \$120,000 per year in scholarships, although the pandemic has affected the amount given last year and the total expected to be given this year.

“Collaboration with industry stakeholders is especially important at this time, with opportunities for students and HVACR technicians being stymied by the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe that partnerships make us all stronger and are mutually beneficial, particularly when our interests are aligned,” says Perez. “We thrive on creating opportunities for technician development at Rees, and remain energized by the fact that many of our scholarship recipients go on to become NATE-certified because of the connections we are making.”

For more information about the Rees Scholarship Foundation, please visit rees scholarship.org.

PLUMBING-HEATING- COOLING CONTRACTORS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

PHCC represents about 3,200 plumbing and HVACR contractors across the country comprising about 65,000 employees. The group offers a number of educational components as well as an advocacy side.

Charles White, PHCC vice president of regulatory affairs, has been NATE-certified for 20 years and serves as the chair of NATE’s technical committee. In addition to White’s work on the committee, which includes keeping certification exams up to date, local PHCC chapters function as testing organizations. The group also offers testing discounts to members.

“Part of our partnership, if you will, through NATE, is to facilitate our chapters to be testing organizations so that they can run tests for their members or even local tests for technicians in the area that may not

be members,” White says. “They can be the conduit back to NATE to offer testing dates and line up a site, either a testing computer facility, or if we do a paper-and-pencil test, a room that you can have 20, 30, or 40 people show up and take tests.”

PHCC also helps with public relations and promotion of NATE and the value of certifying technicians to prove their worth and their skills: “And provide consumers assurance that the guy they’re hiring to come to their house knows what he’s doing,” notes White.

“We want to make sure that the consumer is getting what they pay for and not having a bunch of callbacks; you were out here, you didn’t fix it. If you send qualified people out, then it’s just good for business. It’s good for the consumer. You’re not wasting their money, and manufacturers aren’t dealing with a whole bunch of parts coming back that there is nothing wrong with.”

Partnerships such as the one with NATE are “absolutely” important, according to White.

“We’re all kind of focusing on the same message and the same approach to the job market and to products and equipment,” he says. “All of us come together, share information about what’s needed in the industry, what’s the best method to train people, what’s the best way to attract people, and what’s the best message for products that we should be installing.”

WOMEN IN HVACR

The objective of WHVACR is to improve the lives of members by providing professional avenues to connect with other women growing their careers in the HVACR industry. WHVACR and NATE have been partners since 2007, when NATE sponsored the workbooks for the group’s conference.

WHVACR board member Erica Leonor, who also serves as a customer experience trainer for Power Selling Pros, explains that the partnership between her group and NATE is a natural fit.

“[NATE has] a great certification program; it’s the top level of training. It’s like a master’s degree in HVACR,” she says. “It was just a no-brainer to partner with NATE and have them come to our conferences and to be able to talk with different contractors about their teams and becoming certified.”

The two groups interact in a variety of ways, including NATE participating on several of WHVACR’s Friday education calls each year to

discuss the certification program; new offerings, such as online procuring; and other changes happening with NATE. In addition, NATE reserves a table at WHVACR’s annual conference so company representatives can interact with members, answer any questions, and discuss a variety of topics.

“What I’ve noticed about the women conferences that we put on every year,” says Leonor, “is that not everybody trying to get money from everybody else. It’s more than that. It’s just being there and letting people know that you’re involved with the women’s organization, that you’re an official partner. We value NATE

so much and what they provide, [including] the online resources.”

Leonor says the conference attendees from NATE provide “immense value,” ranging from roundtable discussions to networking: “And so they’re very involved in and always present so that people know where to go when they have questions.”

The partnership with NATE carries over to Power Selling Pros, as well, according to Leonor.

“When we work with people who take our trainings and ask, ‘Does anyone need any NATE hours for continuing education?’, they’re always so happy that we partner with NATE,” she says. “They can get that well-rounded education through NATE.” ●

“[NATE HAS] A GREAT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM; IT’S THE TOP LEVEL OF TRAINING. IT’S LIKE A MASTER’S DEGREE IN HVACR.”

– Erica Leonor, WHVACR board member

Elaine Yetzer Simon is a contributor to the *NATE Magazine*.



LIVE ONLINE PROCTORED EXAMS

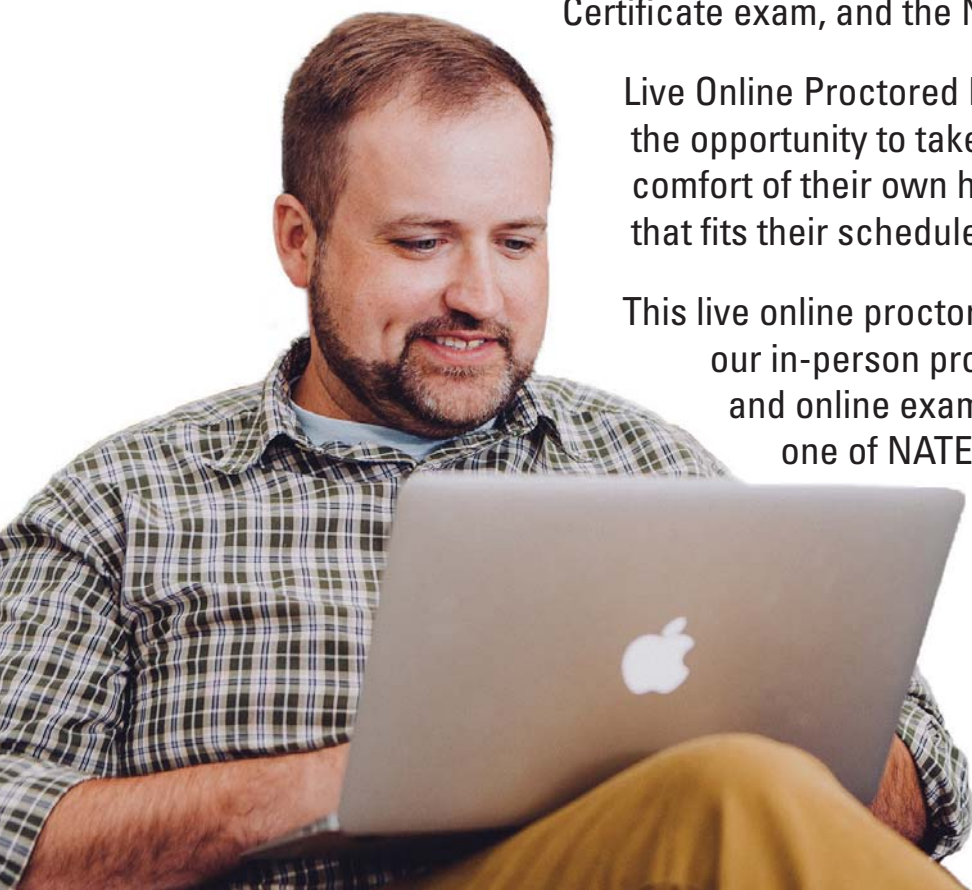


NATE exams now available online!

NATE now offers remote Live Online Proctored Exams for the EPA 608 Exams, HVAC Support Technician Certificate exam, and the NATE Certification exams.

Live Online Proctored Exams give technicians the opportunity to take their exam from the comfort of their own home or office, at a time that fits their schedule.

This live online proctoring option will not replace our in-person proctored paper and pencil and online exams that you can take with one of NATE's Testing Organizations.



For more information or to register for an exam visit:

NATEX.org

NATE is the leader in developing and recognizing professional HVACR technicians.

North American Technician Excellence (NATE) is the largest non-profit certification organization for heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration technicians.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: 877-420-6283 | EMAIL: asknate@natex.org

Duct Retrofits:

Diagnosing an Opportunity to Drive Revenue and Customer Satisfaction

A CONTRACTOR COHORT COLLABORATING WITH OWENS CORNING TESTS A MODEL FOR EXPANDING BUSINESS OFFERINGS.



Ductwork in the attic can be easily accessed and inspected.

This situation may sound familiar to many HVACR contractors. An owner of a high-efficiency home comfort system is frustrated with its performance. Despite changing the air filter as directed and keeping up with the recommended maintenance schedule, certain rooms are consistently too hot or too cold. Perhaps a musty odor occurs when the comfort system cycles on. Or maybe there's a lot of debris collecting around the registers, or an unexplained spike in energy bills. Clearly, there is an issue—but is it a problem with the equipment or the technician?

It's very likely that neither the equipment nor the technician is at the root of the problem—especially if a home is more than 15 to 20 years old. While codes have evolved and manufacturers' equipment is delivering ever higher levels of efficiency, homes' ductwork has aged in place. The infrastructure surrounding homes' HVACR equipment simply isn't designed for a new generation of equipment.

“It has been estimated that upwards of 60-65 percent of problems are related to a home's ducts,” notes Anthony Spagnoli, director of testing and education at NATE. As the largest component of a home's comfort system, ductwork is responsible for delivering air to every room of a home. Yet it's also one of the most overlooked culprits when it comes to issues affecting the indoor environment. Homes constructed during the housing boom of the 1990s and early 2000s were built to much lower energy codes. Ductwork in many of these homes built in the southern and southwestern areas (the “smile states”) is easily accessible in the attic area.¹

BOOSTING CONTRACTOR REVENUE AND HOMEOWNER COMFORT

What might appear as a problem—aging ductwork—can evolve into an opportunity for proactive contractors. A residential ductwork inspection, upgrade, or retrofit presents an opportunity for contractors to diversify their comfort offerings, improve revenue per job, increase off-season sales, and improve their customer's comfort, while elevating their role as a home comfort expert. There is

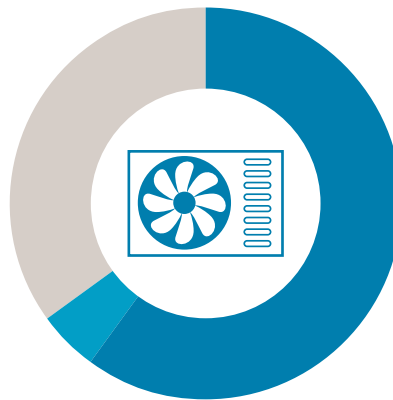
also the comfort value proposition to consider. Energy-Star data finds that in an average home, up to 30 percent of air that moves through the duct system is lost due to leaks, holes, and poorly connected ducts.¹

NATE-certified technicians have the proven diagnostic capabilities to troubleshoot problems and recommend a prescriptive solution. From both a comfort and an economics perspective, offering a duct inspection and retrofit service can improve homeowner comfort and the contractor's bottom line.

Illustrating the economic benefits that can be gleaned from educating contractors about comfort, IERNA's Heating, Cooling & Plumbing in Florida's Tampa Bay area educated customers about their home comfort system being more than the "box that sits outside the house." In March 2020, the company added a duct inspection service that led to more than \$100,000 in March/April revenue based solely on upgrade services in the ductwork area. The sales bump is especially significant given that the service was introduced during the start of the pandemic.

DISCOVERING DEMAND FOR DUCT RETROFITS

Owens Corning Air Distribution group developed an evaluative process to assess a home's ductwork, troubleshoot areas of concern, and diagnose approaches to resolve the issue. Unlike a duct cleaning which could potentially worsen a situation depending on the condition and contaminants in the ductwork, a duct inspection and retrofit addresses the problem at its roots—correcting the problem, right-sizing the ducts, and optimizing performance. The evaluation of ductwork is conducted in the home's attic and can take up to two hours. Most contractors find the "shoulder season" typically



"IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT UPWARDS OF
60-65%
OF PROBLEMS ARE RELATED TO A HOME'S DUCTS,"

—Anthony Spagnoli, director of Testing and Education at NATE

provides an ideal time to schedule this service—before summer's sweltering temperatures arrive.

Once inside the unconditioned space, technicians evaluate indoor air quality using an infrared camera. The technology visualizes areas where contaminants are escaping the ducts and "leaking" into the conditioned environment. Technicians also inspect sealing around joints, interior duct condition, the integrity of duct insulation, condensation levels, attic insulation, and output efficiency—in conjunction with the rest of the system.

Once the situation is assessed, technicians review the findings—including the thermal images—with the homeowner and propose a customized strategy tailored to the inspection findings. The retrofit can be scheduled for a time that fits the homeowner's schedule and budget. Many contractors schedule retrofits between seasonal maintenance.

THE ECONOMICS OF DUCT RETROFITS

Owens Corning's Air Distribution Group collaborated with a group of 15 contractors located in key markets in the southern U.S. to evaluate the economics of the business proposition for HVACR contractors. This region was selected based on the age of homes and the accessibility of ductwork in the smile states.

An initial cohort of 15 contractors evaluated the concept and partnered with Owens Corning to market, introduce, deploy, and evaluate the duct retrofit offering. Based on early figures and revenue numbers provided by HVACR



Balanced insulation in the attic supports a system approach to ventilation and homeowner comfort.

contractors in market research interviews conducted by Owens Corning, the duct retrofit generated not only revenue for the retrofit service but also provided an opportunity to sell additional insulation in the attic space.

Working with research partners in different markets, cohort members evaluated different messages surrounding the service. Indoor air quality, comfort, and energy efficiency were all topics that resonated with homeowners. From an efficiency perspective, consumers responded most strongly to messages that reflected energy waste.

For example, Dave Pawlicki, business development leader, Owens Corning, says, “We found that creating a mental picture by asking, ‘What if every time you pumped gas, 30 percent of it ended up on the ground instead of in your gas tank? That’s what happens every time you run your system with leaky ducts,’ really resonated with consumers.”

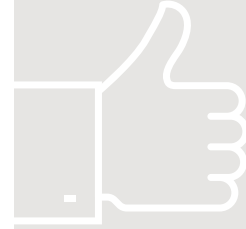
Several contractors in the cohort reported close rates for duct retrofits of nearly 50 percent. Not only does the service increase the revenue per job, but it provides an opportunity to spread the work out over the course of the year—leveling the financial outlay over time for consumers and leveling the labor curve for contractors.

EXPANDING THE COHORT

Inspired by the cohort’s phase one success, the pilot is expanding and adding new members. “As a new presidential administration comes into office, more attention may be focused on internal environmental factors such as energy use,” says Pawlicki. He notes that the global pandemic has also heightened awareness of clean and pristine indoor environments, while interest in home remodeling remains robust.

Duct retrofits are not for every contractor. Attics can be challenging environments for techs, given the tight confines and soaring temperatures—and ducts outside the attic can be harder to access. But for contractors who strategically integrate ductwork into their comfort solutions portfolio, duct retrofits can enhance comfort, support indoor air quality, and contribute to contractors’ bottom lines. Information on joining the contractor cohort is available at www.owenscorning.com/retrofit-contractor. ●

Charlene Ierna is owner and president of IERNA's Heating, Cooling & Plumbing in Florida's Tampa Bay area.



A THUMB'S UP ON NATE CERTIFICATION

IERNA's Heating and Cooling Field Supervisor Scott Brinson has been NATE-certified since 2016. A part of the HVACR industry since 2010, he holds certifications in Heat Pump Install, Heat Pump Service, AC Install, and AC Service.

Brinson believes that having NATE certification has helped him move up quickly in his career. “I never turn down a chance for training or improving my knowledge,” he says. “Being NATE-certified opens doors and looks good on the resume.” He adds that it’s good to have a standardized test that is applicable across all regions and not just representative of a specific group or region.

Regarding a clean indoor environment, Brinson notes that ductwork and indoor quality have been huge issues for his company, as well as a talking point with customers. “Customers are really interested in antimicrobial technologies for ducts. They’re inquiring about UV lights and any technology that supports clean indoor air.”



Contracting Business[®]

Need to update your *Contracting Business* magazine subscription contact information?

If so, please enter www.contractingbusiness.com/update into your browser then type in your account number (see your mailing label) and last name to access your information.

Don't like updating online?

Please feel free to contact customer service at **847-559-7598**.

If you would like to subscribe to *Contracting Business*, please enter www.contractingbusiness.com/NewSub into your browser and sign up today.



Spotlight On NATE Technicians



There are many traits that describe great leaders. A great leader is ambitious, has vision, and is resourceful. Great leaders are well-educated and know that in order to be successful in a career, the learning process never ends.

In the HVACR industry, technicians continue the education process by gaining NATE certifications. The *NATE Magazine* would like to put the spotlight on the following NATE-certified technicians who are leaders in the HVACR industry.



BEAU BROWN

1. TITLE/EMPLOYER: Level 3 Service Technician, Ambient Edge

2. LOCATION YOU SERVE: I service most of northern Mohave County, Arizona, along with Laughlin, Henderson, and Las Vegas, Nevada.

3. WHAT DO YOU DO (AS A TECHNICIAN) ON A DAILY BASIS? I maintain and work on residential and commercial HVACR equipment.

4. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE HVACR INDUSTRY? I have worked in the HVACR field for five years.

5. WHAT LED YOU TO A CAREER IN HVACR? When I got out of the Marine Corps, I installed HVACR in new construction

homes. It was hard work but I loved the challenge. I eventually quit and went to school to earn my Series 6 and 63 license to be a financial advisor. For seven years, I worked in an office, which made me stir crazy. I love working with my hands and being some place new every day.

I remember how much I loved HVACR and decided to work towards the goal of a new career. I started out in the Ambient Edge installation department and worked my way up to a spot on the service team.

6. WHAT NATE CERTIFICATIONS DO YOU CURRENTLY HAVE? WHEN DID YOU GET THOSE CERTIFICATIONS? Heat Pump and A/C Install and Service. I received my first NATE certificate a year ago and Heat Pump in November 2020.

7. WHAT VALUE DO YOU FEEL THAT THE NATE CERTIFICATIONS HAVE ON YOUR CAREER IN HVACR? NATE has definitely helped my career. Ambient Edge, the company I work for, puts a lot of importance on training and NATE certifications. So much so that every NATE certification we earn brings a level up and a possible pay raise. Also, the knowledge I've received from studying for the NATE exams is priceless.

8. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A NEWCOMER LOOKING TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE HVACR INDUSTRY? My advice to someone new to the industry is not to give up. There are going to be days where it's hot and you're tired and you feel like you don't get paid enough. But stick to it, earn those certifications, and learn as much as you can. The job only gets better the more you learn.

9. DO YOU HAVE ANY FUNNY/INTERESTING SERVICE CALL STORIES YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE? I was working on a furnace in a mobile home when the customer's cat decided to take a nap in my empty tool bag. As the cat settled in, it choked up a hair ball. That was okay, though. Hair balls can be hosed off. ●

Time-tested Solutions FOR A **Global Economy**

AHRI is the trusted source for HVACR and water heating equipment performance standards, certification programs, and industry information across the globe.



USA



CANADA



CHINA



UAE



we make life better®



Globally Recognized. Industry Respected.

With an unrivaled certification program backed by more than 100 years of experience and ingenuity, only AHRI provides turnkey solutions that facilitate compliance with technical and minimum efficiency performance standards.

AHRI is proud to represent the most innovative companies in the industry and to bring together leading international manufacturers, specifiers, regulators, and building owners.

Learn more about AHRI online at ahrinet.org.

M3320902

Power Mate®

Motorized Stair Climbing Hand Trucks & LiftGates

SAVE TIME & MONEY!

PowerMate does 100% of the lifting. Most loads can be moved by one person instead of 2 or 3.



www.PowerMate.info 1-800-697-6283

TURN YOUR SURPLUS & USED HVAC EQUIPMENT INTO WORKING CAPITAL!

Lazco Corp. BUYS & SELLS Surplus... HVAC EQUIPMENT

- Compressors
- Cooling Towers
- Generators
- Controls
- Roof Tops
- Liebert A/C
- Chillers
- Boilers
- Units

Save 25% - 50% on the Manufacturer Brands That You Are Currently Selling. We Will Quote Any Project Worldwide.

HVAC EQUIPMENT SPECIALS:

- Daiken New 70 ton Roof Top 6 stage \$36,000
- New Trane 3000 ton Chiller \$365,000
- New Trane 120 ton Roof Top \$88,000
- Mini Split Sale 19 Seer Heat Pump Inverter with 16 Foot line Set. Sold with Warranty
- 12,000 btu \$499 18,000 btu \$699 24,000 btu \$899 20 systems minimum fob Miami

lazco Corp. www.lazcocorp.com
 Fax: 866-437-3531
 Send your Requests to Buy or Sell to Lazcocorp@gmail.com

To advertise in classifieds, contact

Steve Suarez

Media Account Executive
O: 941-259-0867
M: (816) 588-7372
ssuarez@endeavorb2b.com

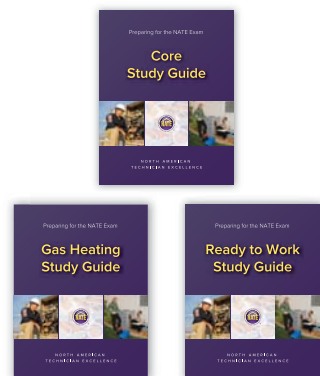
NEW NATE STUDY GUIDES

The wait is finally over!

Get ready to be NATE-certified by preparing for the exam with a study guide produced by NATE for the first time ever.

You can now purchase brand new Core, Air Conditioning/Heat Pump and Gas Heating study guides with practice questions and answers.

Print versions of the Ready to Work and HVAC Support Tech guides are also now available in English and Spanish.



- Ready to Work
- HVAC Support
- Gas Heating
- AC/Heat Pump
- Core

To purchase new NATE study guides visit:
store.natex.org



SMALL FOOTPRINT. BIG IMPACT.



**A resilient solution for
any building, anywhere**

Allow us to bring energy-efficient heating and cooling to your projects, no matter size, location or unique conditioning needs. Our CITY MULTI® Variable Refrigerant Flow systems deliver customizable comfort, high performance and resilient operation to commercial buildings from coast to coast. See the CITY MULTI difference for yourself.

Learn more at [MitsubishiPro.com](https://www.MitsubishiPro.com)



When you need a partner in perfect air, there's only one. Lennox.

At Lennox, we're not just setting the standard for perfect air with innovations like the Ultimate Comfort System™. We're reinventing the HVAC dealer-supplier relationship. With the most respected expertise in the industry, the most direct distribution model, over 200 well-stocked Lennox® Stores, continued education for your employees and all-around answers on how to grow and operate a successful HVAC business, we're your perfect partner.

Partner with us by visiting [learnlennox.com/airislife](https://www.lennox.com/airislife) or scan this code with your mobile device.



© 2020 Lennox Industries Inc.



Ultimate Comfort System™



Air is life. Make it perfect.™