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## TAX INCENTIVES MAKE HVAC IMPROVEMENTS PAY

Beginning January 1, 2006, commercial building owners can claim up to \$1.80 per square foot in tax credits for making improvements in energy efficiency.

The incentive is part of the Energy Tax Incentive Act of 2005, passed by Congress in July of 2005. Although many of the specifics are yet to be published, it is the first significant energy legislation put in place in more than a decade. The act is intended to conserve energy and reduce our dependency on fossil fuels.

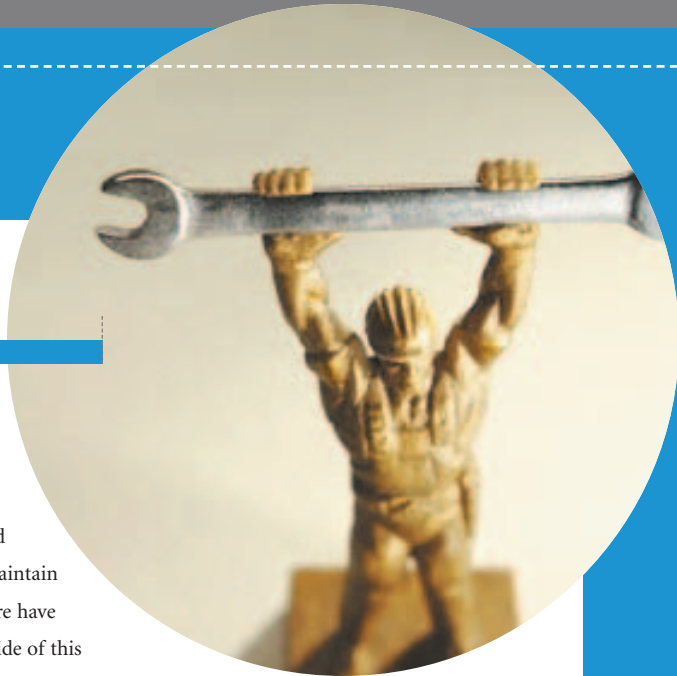
The energy efficiency improvements would be measured against a standard reference building that would meet the minimum requirements of ASHRAE (American Society of Heating Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers) Standard 90.1-2001. In order to qualify for the tax credit, building owners will have to demonstrate an improvement in energy efficiency of 50 percent compared to the minimum standards. The Department of Energy is expected to issue regulations that will explain how the calculation is to be made.

Many experts believe that HVAC upgrades and lighting retrofits will be two of the areas building owners will be looking into for energy efficiency improvements. Because the law will cover all types of fuel consumption, including gas and electricity,

replacing old inefficient HVAC systems could provide significant energy savings and go a long way toward meeting the 50 percent requirement.

Owners of buildings who can't meet the 50 percent improvement standard for the entire facility can still get money back by showing energy efficiency improvements for a particular system. The individual system would still need to meet the 50 percent standard and be certified by a qualified professional. The deduction for this type of partial retrofit is limited to 60 cents per square foot.

There is sure to be more information coming soon on how building owners can realize these incentives. Because they are complicated, it may be that building owners will need input from engineering professionals as well as CPA's or tax consultants. When building owners factor in not only the one time tax credit, but the ongoing savings on utility bills as well, the time may be right to consider HVAC upgrades, control retrofits, and other energy saving projects. If your plans do include upgrading your HVAC equipment and/or a control retrofit, be sure to utilize the talents and expertise a qualified contractor to get the best end result.



## ENERGY RECOVERY VENTILATORS

All building owners and facility managers must deal with an ongoing conflict - how to provide a healthy and comfortable environment to their occupants and yet maintain energy efficiency for their building. In recent years, there have been some important developments that impact each side of this balancing act. The Clean Air Act, and several ASHRAE (American Society of Heating Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers) standards call for stricter requirements for indoor air quality. Meanwhile, energy costs are continuing to escalate, which poses a significant challenge to the building owner and manager's budget.

Energy Recovery Ventilators (ERVs) offer a way to help strike that balance between good indoor air quality, occupant and employee comfort, and energy efficiency. The basic technology of an Energy Recovery Ventilator is to pre-condition the outside air that is being introduced into the building using energy rejected from the building. Air being exhausted from the building passes through a heat recovery wheel that pre-conditions the outside air coming in to the building. This process can significantly reduce the outdoor air ventilation load, thus effectively downsizing the heating and cooling equipment that is required for the building. Typically, a building would be introducing outside air for ventilation at peak design conditions of 95 degrees and 40 percent relative humidity during the cooling season. Pre-conditioning this air using an Energy Recovery Ventilator lowers these conditions to 79 degrees with 50 percent relative humidity, a significant decrease.

Any building owner or manager who is considering equipment replacement should look at the possibility of incorporating Energy Recovery Ventilators into the system design. Taking into account the equipment size reduction and the operating savings, the payback is often three years or less. ERVs can also be considered as an enhancement to an existing system, thus providing improved ventilation at reduced energy costs. With these potential benefits available, Energy Recovery Ventilators provide an interesting and cost saving option to building owners.

## CREATING SMART GOALS

*With 2006 just beginning, start your goal setting using the SMART criteria:*

**Specific** - A goal needs to be exact, distinct and clearly stated. Use the six "W" questions to get started: Who, What, Where, When, Which, and Why.

**Measurable** - Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress. To determine if your goal is attainable, ask questions like: How much? How many? How will I know when it's accomplished?

**Attainable** - When you identify goals that are most important to you, you find ways you can make them come true.

**Realistic** - A goal must represent an objective toward which you and your company are both willing and able to work towards. Your goal is probably realistic if you truly believe it can be accomplished.

**Timely** - Specify a time during the day when you will work towards fulfilling your goal.



## BANKING ON AIRTIGHT

In Charlotte, we're right in the middle of the second largest financial market in the US. One of the best banks in town has an uptown property with a rounded top similar to an old Wurlitzer jukebox that houses a 60-ton water-cooled HVAC unit. The building was constructed in the early 80's, and after nearly 25 years of hard work, the unit was in need of some major repair.

Project manager Tom Robinson of Childress Klein Properties, was given the task of having this system remediated to a like new condition. Due to Tom's comfort level and history with AirTight after having worked with us on several complicated, high profile jobs, he called looking for suggestions. A thorough on-site investigation determined that every critical component needed to be replaced; replacing the unit itself was out of the question.

Due to global banking interactions, and the fact that the 60-ton unit serves the executive offices, scheduling and coordination were infinite in detail. Working closely with CKP engineering, security and building managers, the Memorial Day weekend job was a success. Most of the staff probably never realized that just hours before coming to work, the marble floors were covered with protective sheathing and the cherry and mahogany paneling was hidden behind plastic sheeting. Meanwhile, up on the roof the new compressors, coils, motors and controls were doing their thing. (View digital images at [www.airtightvac.com](http://www.airtightvac.com) in the gallery section named 60-ton remediation).

Thank you to Childress Klein for their trust and support, and to AirTight's skilled technicians for getting a difficult job done right!



## AIRTIGHT'S COMMITMENT TO TECHNOLOGY

AirTight is a bit of an anomaly in the HVAC industry in that we embrace technology; we don't shy away from it. Over the past two years or so we have implemented an electronic dispatch system that sends the technician work directly to his laptop computer. He completes his physical work, prepares an electronic work order which is sent wirelessly back to the AirTight in-house server, he generates a PDF which is printed and then presented to you the customer. Imagine, a work order that you can actually read!

As we move forward (some of you are doing this now), you will have web access to your account at AirTight, including work order status, outstanding quotes, approved quotes and equipment maintenance and repair history. We are looking forward to more and better information sharing in the future. We feel this will save you time and money as we become better and better equipped to help with your asset management.

If you have any questions about this please e-mail [support@airtightvac.com](mailto:support@airtightvac.com)

## GOOD THOUGHTS TO REMEMBER

It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end.

-LEGUIN, URSULA

To affect the quality of the day; that is the art of life.

-THOREAU, HENRY DAVID

We do not remember days, we remember moments.

-PAVESE, CESARE

Money will come when you are doing the right thing.

-PHILLIPS, MIKE

The quieter you become the more you can hear.

-DASS, BABA RAM



## THE UNIFIED GROUP

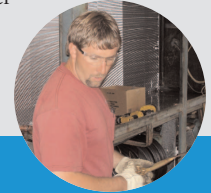
*We are an independent association of the country's elite HVAC commercial contractors. We help our members increase productivity, profitability and customer retention, and we also provide a network for national and regional customer business solutions.*

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### *Ryan Gunto / The Right Way or No Way!*

AirTight prides itself on high quality work and Ryan Gunto has been a huge part of establishing that benchmark. Ryan, a certified welder who grew up working on a farm in Cameron, West Virginia, is all about hard work and doing it right. Ryan has been with AirTight for five years; he has grown in his HVAC knowledge and become a vital part of our company. He has developed his role into the lead man on most of our large retro-fit projects. Ryan lives in Stanley, NC, races 4-wheelers off-road, enjoys returning to West Virginia to visit his dad Andy and the rest of his family. Ryan shares his home with Donna and a boxer named Reba. When it must be right, on time and totally functional, Ryan can get it done.



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