

## **ARE AIR RETURN DUCTS REQUIRED IF YOU REPLACE YOUR HEATER/AIR CONDITIONER SYSTEM? THE ANSWER: NO**

Many homes in Putnam Village are still using the original heating and air conditioning system that was installed during initial construction. Others have replaced those systems because of breakdowns or to gain the higher efficiency of newer units.

Often during the contractual stage for replacement, installers will tell home owners that their "ducting" is not up to current codes and that the ducting "must" be updated also "to meet the current codes." Please be aware that this is **NOT** true. When replacing a heating/air conditioning unit no other codes have to be met other than those directly related to the actual heating/air conditioning unit. Ducting codes are not considered a related code.

And for people selling their homes, there are unscrupulous "Home Inspectors" representing potential home buys that will tell you the same thing. That your home doesn't meet current building codes and that return air ducts must be installed prior to the sale. That is also not true.

The current code for new construction homes is that all rooms must have a return air duct from the room directly back to the heater intake. That was not part of the building code when our units were built. Our rooms have a return air duct that goes from each room to the basement but not directly to the heater. The original heater draws air from the basement. So our basement acts like a big return air duct.

Installation of return air ducts can be expensive especially if you have a finished basement and the added ductwork can reduce ceiling height in those areas.

In conclusion, don't be misled by unscrupulous Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC) companies or unscrupulous home inspectors representing potential home buyers into thinking that you **have to install return air ducts** in your home when replacing your old HVAC systems or when selling your house. **You don't.**

**If HVAC contractors or Home Inspectors give you a hard time over this issue, call the Nether Providence Township Office at 610-566-4516 and ask to talk to the township building inspector for the facts regarding this issue. Then report them to the Better Business Bureau.**