

# Ask a Pro

# How to Select Your A/C Contractor

- "You want to work with someone who will do more than slap a band-aid on a problem. The best a/c companies work with the homeowner to determine which of three factors—temperature, humidity and cleanliness—are causing you discomfort," says Dwayne Ehler of A.J. Warren Service Co.
- The state of Texas now requires technician registration, which means the state does background checks. "Your card must be available if a homeowner wants to see it," says Bob Eloff, president of Environmental Air Systems, Inc.
- Get an overview before you start. At A.J. Warren, a "whole house comfort, efficiency and safety" inspection costs about \$300. "It can show you where your house is leaking money," says Ehler.
- Another safeguard for consumers is the certificate of insurance carried by companies like Environmental Air. It protects the homeowner against any damage done by the contractor. "All licensed contractors are required to carry insurance," says Eloff.



Specialists in humidity control and filtration systems, A.J. Warren opened its doors in 1973. It has won the first place national award for Excellence in Residential Contracting from the Air Conditioning Contractors of America.

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In business since 1982, Environmental Air Systems, Inc. offers heating and air-conditioning services for both residences and commercial properties. Owner and president Bob Eloff was inducted into the Air Conditioning Contractors Association of Greater Houston's "Hall of Fame" in 2004.

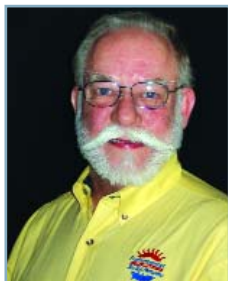
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## THE COOL FACTOR

### WORK WITH THE EXPERTS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AIR-CONDITIONING DOLLARS



A.J. Warren III,  
A.J. Warren Service Co.  
Inc. TACLA 4205C



Bob Eloff,  
Environmental Air  
Systems, Inc.  
TACLA 681C

Most Houston homeowners have some kind of fear and trembling about their air-conditioner. It's that essential to living in this part of the country. And that makes having true professionals in your corner a smart strategy.

"An indication of expertise in our field is the NATE certification, which is the group that certifies all the technicians and installers in our field," says Bob Eloff, president of Environmental Air Systems, Inc. He also believes that membership in trade organizations, like the Air Conditioning Contractors Association of Greater Houston, implies integrity. "It has a code of ethics that we subscribe to," he explains. "All members must be licensed and insured. In the event of a dispute, the association can arbitrate."

"Air-conditioning is a building science these days," says Dwayne Ehler, vice president of A.J. Warren Service Co., Inc. "The better companies realize that the a/c and heating is a system within the larger system of the house. Sometimes that means we need to fix the house—not just the a/c. We do it by testing such factors as air pressure, humidity levels, air filtration and leaks in the thermal envelope."