



# ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HVAC SEER RATINGS

**SEER**

Seasonal  
Energy  
Efficiency  
Rating



AHRI (Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute) determines SEER rating to ensure that HVAC systems are safe, productive, and environmentally friendly which is important for anyone including Bay Area residents.

The rating effectively calculates a unit's average cooling output versus the energy consumed by it. This is in accordance with the typical yearly use in average homes. A higher SEER rating is considered to be more energy efficient.

It is a fact that HVAC units with higher SEER ratings tend to cost more. But, the remarkable decrease in utility bills would more than make up for the cost difference in the long run. You also contribute less towards carbon footprint, which can make you feel good about doing your bit for the environment.

## SEER Ratings Regions

There are three regions in the US based on climatic conditions. This means that SEER ratings may differ as per the state.

### *North*

The Northern region includes maximum parts of the US, including Alaska. The minimum in these areas is 14 SEER where packaged HVAC systems are concerned and 13 in the case of split systems. Heat pumps must have a 14 SEER.

### *Southwest*

Arizona, Nevada, California, and New Mexico form the Southwest region. The minimum SEER in these states for AC units is 14. The minimum SEER for heat pumps is also 14.

### *South*

The District of Columbia, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Hawaii and Delaware

form the Southern region. SEER of 14 is required for units in these regions.

Regardless of your location, if you get an HVAC gas pack instead of installing a heat pump, you would need a minimum SEER of 14.

### **How to Choose the Right SEER Rating?**

Do not assume that bigger equipment is better when choosing a new HVAC system. Square footage that needs to be cooled or heated is an important factor. A unit that is too big for an area would not be efficient and would overcompensate.

Conversely, systems that are too small would need to work overtime to keep a large area comfortable. This will rack up your utility bills and place an additional strain on the system.

Thermal rating of the property is another important factor while determining the HVAC efficiency. This means you need to address any improvements that would affect the inside temperature of your home.

This is how you can ensure better energy efficiency:

- Get an attic exhaust fan installed
- Add a double layer of insulation and reseal the ductwork if they have not been maintained in a while
- Improve thermal efficiency by adding a double layer of insulation in the ceiling or attic
- Add a radiant barrier to your roof or install low-E windows and solar screens

### **What are the Benefits of SEER Ratings?**

You can decrease energy bills through better energy efficiency if your home is properly insulated and does not have areas where air can potentially leak out. You are also eligible for federal tax rebates if you purchase an Energy Star certified air conditioner. Make sure you check with the local utility company for rebates on installation of energy efficient heating and air conditioning systems.