

AIRDUCT CLEANING: *Is it really worth it?*

Trap

Linda suffers from allergies and wondered if duct cleaning would help her health improve, increase the efficiency of her air-conditioning system and perhaps lower her electric bill. She saw advertisements offering whole house duct cleaning for just \$99 but decided she would get more information before calling a company.

Tips

Here are some things to consider before hiring a duct cleaning company:

- According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, there is no scientific evidence that duct cleaning improves air quality or prevents health problems. The EPA recommends duct cleaning only if there is visible mold growth inside the ducts or the ducts are clogged with dust/debris and particles are actually being released into your home from the grills. Many substances can look like mold but a positive determination can be made only by an expert and may require lab analysis for confirmation.
- In Florida, a license is required for contractors who remove grills to clean inside the duct. Check with the Palm Beach County Contractors Certification (561-233-5525, <http://discover.pbcgov.org/pzb/contractors/Pages/default.aspx>) or Florida Dept. of Business & Professional Regulation (850-487-1395, www.myfloridalicense.com) to see if the company is licensed.
- Be wary of businesses that:
 - ▶ Want to clean the ducts without a prior inspection.
 - ▶ Offer services at a very low price without details as to what the price covers. Get quotes from at least 3 companies. The EPA shows a range from \$450 to \$1000 depending on the specific services and system size.
 - ▶ Pressure you to buy additional services such as carpet cleaning
- Get details about how the services will be performed. Ask about the experience level of the workers – a careless technician can damage your ducts. Always ask for references.

Additional Resources: Environmental Protection Agency (<http://www.epa.gov>); National Air Duct Cleaners Association (<http://www.nadca.com>)

**For more information, or to file a complaint contact Consumer Affairs
Call 561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray 1-888-852-7362)**