



Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

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Just Rambling

As much as I would like to continue for a third week on the intricacies of steam heat, I know how little most people really care about that antiquated method of heating. There is no perfect heating system even though number of combinations of fuels and types of systems is staggering. Some things depend on location because natural gas is not available in most of the country. And in areas that get really cold for most of the winter, a system that uses water as a transfer medium can be risky if it shuts down or power goes out for an extended period of time. Yes, those systems can be treated with antifreeze but that reduces heat transfer and causes other problems so it's not a great option. A furnace that uses air as a heat transfer medium is a safer bet in the event of a winter shut-down but plumbing pipes will still freeze and there will be some damage. Heat pumps and furnaces also need a duct system and that takes up a lot of space as compared to a hydronic system that can heat a whole house with a single pipe full of hot water. Heat pumps need a backup system in cold climates too because if something breaks down on the outdoor unit, you can't always get it fixed immediately especially, if the weather is bad. The easiest and least expensive backup for a heat pump is electric. It is also the most expensive to operate. The operating cost is sometimes overlooked when selecting a system and price is the only factor that makes the decision. But a \$700 electric bill can be a shock and by then it's too late to opt for a different kind of backup heat. Not to mention that if power was going to be out for weeks, you could not use a small or medium size generator to power the heat. If you have a gas or oil system and there is fuel, a small generator can keep the heat on and probably a couple lights as well. The vast majority of people don't feel the need to have that extra complication in their lives but as the residents of Texas have learned, when things get bad, they can get really bad. I do see many more whole house generators installed in our area than ever before and it's probably because the technology is better and you don't need to be an electrician and a small engine mechanic to keep one operational.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com



L-R State Rep. Ann Flood, NESTEC CEO James Nestor, Senator Scevello, First Lieutenant Morgan Nester

Nestec Ceo James Nestor Was Recently Honored With The Patriot Award

By Senator Scevello

PEN ARGYL - Monday, I joined State Rep. Ann Flood at NESTEC Inc. in Pen Argyl. NESTEC CEO James Nestor was recently honored with the Patriot Award from the U.S. Defense Department's Employee Support of the Guard and Reserve program. The Patriot Award is an award that recognizes supervisors and bosses nominated by a Guardsman or Reservist employee for support provided directly to the nominator.

James was nominated by First Lieutenant Morgan Nester who serves his nation as part of the Pennsylvania Army national Guard. At NESTEC, Morgan serves as the companies controller. I thank Morgan for his service to the nation.

Rep. Flood and I presented James with a plaque from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania congratulating him on his achievement. Thank you James for your support of Morgan's service to our country!

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