



Ken Field

Owner of Slate
Belt Energy
Services

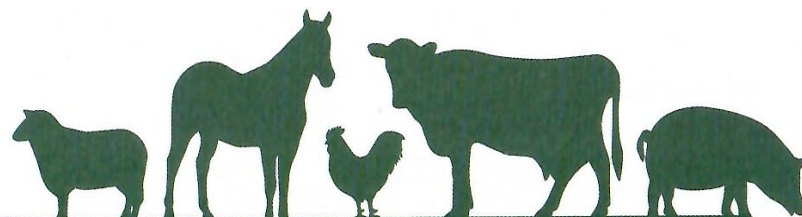
Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Face the Inevitable

We have seen at least a 20% price increase on all heating and air conditioning equipment in the last 18 months. The march toward a cleaner environment has accelerated the need to retire older air conditioners. If they don't leak refrigerant, I'm still not a fan of forced replacement. If a motor fails in a 20 year old air conditioner, it really is up to the homeowner whether we replace the motor or replace the system. It's easy for me to spend other people's money so I try to be as gentle on their pocketbooks as possible but I will always explain the bigger picture. A repair will cost less than a replacement but there is no increase in efficiency and there is no guarantee that some other 20 year old part won't fail tomorrow. The HUGE risk is that if something in the refrigerant circuit starts to leak or fails completely, those parts will not be available for much longer. When they are gone, any repair using some parts other than factory original is not a good idea. The cost of R-22 refrigerant is extremely high now because of the phaseout plan and it is not a good value at any price because these systems will need to be replaced sooner than later and homeowners should bite the bullet and do it before equipment prices go even higher. There again, that's easy for me to say but that is the only logical way to insure continued operation of the air conditioning system and the opportunity to improve the operating efficiency and reduce utility cost. Now that we have arrived at the replacement mindset, everyone should be aware that there are many brands and grades of equipment on the market. The most popular are the cheap junk models because they cost the least. They also will not save much on utility bills and they are noisy and do not hold up well. One step up the ladder costs slightly more but the units are made better. Neither of them are a good value in the long run. Two steps up is the value spot for today. Better equipment, better warranty, and better savings on utility bills. You don't need a big name brand because they use their name to get in the door and their equipment is not up to par with the same equipment from lesser known brands. The best thing you can do is have a contractor who you can trust and get the straight scoop from them. Ask a lot of questions and make sure the answers make sense.

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

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**176 Acres of Farmland
PRESERVED**

176 Acres of Farmland Preserved in the 137th

By State Rep. Joe Emrick

BANGOR - Our farmlands and farmers are the backbone of our Commonwealth and our areas are unfortunately being decimated by warehouse development as each year passes.

In light of that unfortunate reality, I am pleased to announce the following farms that have been forever preserved within the district:

- The Alvin P. and Heidi Messinger Farm located in Upper Mt. Bethel Township, a 26-acre crop farm.
- The James Folk Farm located in Washington Twp., a 51.9-acre crop farm.
- The Jeffrey A. and Kevin M. Brewer Farm #3 located in Lower Mt. Bethel Township, a 44.9-acre crop farm.
- The Floyd G. and Doris J. Brewer Farm located in Lower Mt. Bethel Township, a 53.9-acre crop farm.

Agriculture is also Pennsylvania's number one industry, supporting nearly 500,000 jobs in the Commonwealth. You can read more about the positive impacts of agriculture within the Commonwealth here.

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