



Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

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Homeownership 201

I have often thought about giving a seminar on homeownership. It sounds like something that is mostly unnecessary but I could go on for days about the things that homeowners do NOT understand about the way things work in their homes. You don't need to be an electrician to understand electricity and you don't need to be a heating technician to understand how a heating system works. Most homeowners don't need any more than the basic information but don't even have that. Things like where is the main circuit breaker panel and what is a circuit breaker. Where is the main water shutoff valve for the house and how is it used. Where is the air filter for the furnace and/or air conditioner and how do you replace it. A basic operational explanation of the way these systems work and some awareness of how a homeowner can help themselves at a time when something isn't working seems like an appropriate agenda. Then they can react with purpose and not out of pure panic. When a customer calls with no heat we ask some questions about their system so that we can possibly avert a service visit and save them some money. Some are more than willing to make the observations we ask for and check the things that are really their responsibility. Others don't want any part of it and just want someone out to fix it. If I had a dollar for every emergency switch I talked a customer through checking and turning on in the basement stairway, I wouldn't need to write this article every week to pay my advertising bill. If I had 5 dollars for every customer who didn't even know this switch existed, I wouldn't need to advertise at all because I'd be retired and on a beach in Honolulu. Many people are not comfortable changing their air filters or doing other small tasks that I put inside the homeowner responsibility bubble and we are in business to do things like that. I couldn't afford to pay someone to fix every small thing that goes wrong in my home and I try to help others with information as much as possible. I wouldn't call the seminar 'homeownership for dummies' because everyone is a dummy until they're not and not wanting to be one means you're not one in the first place. Maybe I'd call it homeownership 201. I think my biggest problem would be keeping it interesting since I am a pretty boring guy. I have some pretty awesome friends that might help though.

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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