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Thermostat is Just a Switch

What actually goes on behind that thermostat on your wall that controls the heat? Sorry to make it sound boring but it just touches 2 wires together.

Two wires turn on most heating systems. Heat pumps are a little different and it may take more than 2 wires but there's no sorcery going on back there. And to make it even more boring there is very little voltage there. Only 24 volts as compared to 120 on a wall socket. So you can barely feel it if you touch it. Electric heat is different and that uses full voltage to the thermostat to power the electric baseboards so don't mess with that. I think people try to replace their own thermostat often to save money but also because there is little danger of electrocution. They still sometimes cause problems because they touch the wrong wires together when they have the thermostat off the wall.

Someone I've known since 7th grade told me that "nobody would know that the thermostat is just a switch". Someone I dated a long time ago said that "it's a dial or an arrow or something but not a switch". The girl I took to the prom said "nobody would have any idea what I meant when I said switch". My resident fact checker said "not everyone is a genius like you". So here's the lowdown. Whether your thermostat has a dial or arrows or a touch screen or even if it talks to you, when the room temperature drops below the setting, it just touches 2 wires together. I'm sorry if I took the mystery out of it but that's it. It is still magic because it does that 24/7/365 and it's always accurate. Newer thermostats (switches) keep track of time and can turn the heat down if you tell it when you are at work or in bed. They even know enough to start returning to the set temperature early so that it is warm when you get out of bed or return from work.

Another important point that my in-house critic seem to misunderstand is that heat is either on or off. Setting the temperature up one degree makes the system work just as hard as it does if you turn it up 5°. There is no booster or accelerated algorithm or turbocharger, just 2 wires touching each other until the room is up to temperature. So you could just remove the thermostat from the wall and touch those 2 wires together when your cold and separate them when you're comfortable but the thermostat probably does it better than you could.

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

Fall Trout Stocking At Minsi Lake



By Michael Ortoski

UMBT - Zachary Rudd, Waterways Conservation Officer for Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission led the fall trout stocking this past Friday with volunteers from the community at the west shore at Minsi Lake.

This is the small stocking, a couple hundred to clean out the tanks on the brand new truck they just got. Normal stocking is 4000 trout for the season.

Friends of Minsi Lake are working on plans to purchase new benches, picnic tables and bathrooms to be installed at the lake possibly by 2023.

