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How to Celebrate Air Conditioning Appreciation Days

by homewarranty.com

So, summer arrived, and you find yourself occasionally retreating to the "great indoors" to cool off. It's hard to imagine a summer without air conditioning, but it wasn't that long ago that Willis Carrier (yes, *that* Carrier) discovered air became cooled when it passed over water-filled coils. Thank you, Mr. Carrier.

Air Conditioning Appreciating Days are July 3 to August 15. Here are a few great tips to help you celebrate Air Conditioning Appreciation Days by keeping your AC system running efficiently, which in turn, will keep you cool all summer long.

Service Your Air Conditioner

Invest in regular checkups and maintenance inspections for your air conditioner. It should be treated well; after all, it's doing some pretty important work for you! A professional inspection of your system will allow you to catch small problems before they become large, expensive ones. Your AC deserves this professional attention - and you deserve the cool retreat you crave during a heatwave.

Replace Your AC Filters Regularly

Having a clogged filter will only make your AC work harder. If your AC has to work harder to cool your home, it works less efficiently, runs longer, and costs you more money in energy bills. More importantly, if your AC is fighting to cool your home with clogged air filters, you are decreasing your AC's life expectancy. This is one appliance you want to keep happy and around as long as possible. Change your AC filters every three months, or per the manufacturer's suggestions.

Allow Your AC to "Chill Out" Once in Awhile

We all need a little R & R occasionally, right? If the temps are comfortable enough to do without your AC for the day, it's time to give it a rest. If you find summer temps dipping into the 70s or even 80s, consider giving this major appliance the day off and opening the windows. This is a great time to get some fresh air into your house. Better yet, reducing your air conditioning consumption as much as comfortably possible will cut down on your energy costs. In short, keep your home's temperature settings as warm as possible.

Don't Create More Heat

Keeping your house as cool as possible during the summer is key to regulating your AC consumption, so use common sense when it comes to doing "hot" chores during the heat of the day. Do your baking at night during cooler hours, and cook dinner outdoors when possible. Also, run your clothes dryer in the evening. In other words, put in a little overtime, so your AC doesn't have to!

Keep Your Curtains Closed

Curtains and blinds are a great way to insulate your home. It's basic - they keep the sun from coming through your windows and heating your home and keep your air conditioning in, where it belongs.

Plant Shade Trees

Yes, this is a more long-term solution, but it's a solid one! Shade trees naturally reduce your home's exposure to the sun. This is not an immediate solution to keeping your home cooler, but trees can be a great way to regulate the temperature of your home and reduce your reliance on your air conditioner.

July Calendar

July 4 - Independence Day

July 3 - August 15 - Air Conditioning Appreciation Days

July 31 - National Avocado Day

Homeowner Tip:



How to Properly Clean Your Flag

Many of us might feel a bit nervous about cleaning an all-weather flag, but don't be! The U.S. Flag Code does not prohibit washing our national flag if done correctly. Most outdoor flags are made of polyester or nylon. Just hand wash in cool water with a mild laundry detergent. Do not place your flag in the clothes dryer. Allow your flag to dry on a clothes line or drying rack. Use a cool iron to get out any wrinkles.

Summer is Here: How is Your Deck Holding Up?

Summer is in full swing, and more than likely so is the use of your deck.

1. Make sure stairs and railings are secure and do not wiggle. Railings must be properly attached to both the deck framing and deck surface. Keep the stair pathway clear to prevent a tripping hazard.
2. Check the flashing for leaks or cracks. If water gets under the flashing, the wood can rot and weaken the deck's foundation.
3. Look for split or decaying wood. Check several areas, including the ledger board (where the deck attaches to the house), support posts, and joists.
4. Walk the surface and check for pest

infestation. Do you see small boreholes? These may indicate insect infestation. Other signs include the presence of a powder resembling fine sawdust, wood shavings, or merely seeing termites in swarms around your home.

5. Check footings and support posts for loose connections, inferior fasteners (for example, nails instead of bolts), pooling water, and signs of decay.
6. Ensure water from your sprinklers, downspouts, or hoses doesn't discharge near support posts. Exposure to water over time can cause wood rot to occur.

As a general rule, a standard deck's lifespan is around 15 to 20 years. Keep your deck healthy, and it will repay you with happy and safe summer gatherings.



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Grilled Guacamole With Grilled Corn - Celebrate National Avocado Day

Ingredients

2 ears yellow corn
3 small or 2 large Hass avocados, halved and pits removed
1/2 red onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 lemons, juiced
1 lime, juiced
1 jalapeno, seeded and minced
1/2 cup packed basil, chopped
2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoon pepper
Vegetable oil, for oiling grill

Directions

Bring a grill to high heat (400°F). Clean the grates.

When the grill is heated, lightly oil the grates with vegetable oil. Grill the corn until cooked and charred on all sides. 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool.

Next grill the avocado halves, about 5 minutes or until nice grill marks appear but the avocado still holds its shape. Remove from heat.

In a large bowl, add the grilled avocado, scooped out from the skin, chopped red onion, garlic, the juice from both lemons and lime and the jalapeno.

Mash with a fork. It should be combined but still chunky.

Remove the kernels from the cooled cobs and add to the avocado bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Taste for seasoning. Add the basil. Stir to combine.



*Photo & recipe courtesy of:
chefmeganmitchell.com*