



DUCTLESS HEAT PUMP STRIKES CHORD WITH MUSIC STUDIO

Energy-efficient equipment is a great investment for commercial businesses of all sizes, including Keyboard Central Music, a small music and recording studio located in the mountain town of Oakridge, Oregon. After upgrading from electric resistance heat to a ductless heat pump, the studio is now more comfortable for students and wastes less energy. Plus, incentives from the local utility covered nearly one-third the installation cost.

Scott Hitchings is a professional musician who spent his career teaching music and performing with such groups as The Supremes, Temptations, and Jefferson Starship. After 31 years in Los Angeles, he moved his family permanently to Oakridge.

Not long after he arrived, he spotted a small, older building for sale that looked to be the right place for teaching and recording music. One thing led to another, and Keyboard Central Music was opened for voice and piano lessons, and music recording. He's made himself part of the community, taking on students both locally and as far away as Eugene.

Built in the 1940s, the 1,250 square-foot, one-room building came with an outdated heating system. Two inefficient electric resistance heating units hung from the ceiling, producing little heat and high utility bills. "It is cold in the winter here, so I ran the heaters all the time to keep the space warm," said Hitchings. "It ended up being quite an expense for me."

A Ruralite magazine article featuring the energy-saving benefits of ductless heat pumps inspired him to contact Lane Electric Cooperative for information. Through his trade ally, Alpine Heating & Air Conditioning, and Trade Ally Network NW, Hitchings learned more about ductless heat pumps and available incentives.

Today, his Mitsubishi ductless heat pump delivers consistent warmth to the building and a 30-50% reduction in his electric bill. "Students no longer need to keep a sweater on during lessons," he says. "The unit is quiet and works well in the space. It's been a really great move for the building and for the business."

For more case studies, search the Resources section of the Trade Ally Network NW website.



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