

Your furnace relies on at least one heat exchanger to run correctly and safely. To stay warm and toasty throughout the colder seasons, all parts — your heat exchanger included — must work appropriately. If your heat exchanger is cracked, the issue must be addressed ASAP and never left unattended!

However, it may not always be obvious that your heat exchanger is cracked. Below, we discuss what exactly a heat exchanger is used for, how to tell if a crack is present, and what to do should it be broken.

Have a cracked heat exchanger? Call Mattioni ASAP at [484-699-0274](tel:484-699-0274) for [info on how to resolve the issue!](#)

WHAT IS A HEAT EXCHANGER?

A heat exchanger is a device used to transfer heat between a working fluid and a source. If your furnace is 70% to 80% efficient, it will have one exchanger; 90% efficient units will have two. These systems feature either finned coils, tube bundles, or plate heat exchangers within a furnace where gas is ignited.

From there, a blower distributes warm air through your ducts and into your home. These systems ensure toxic chemicals aren't released into your home. Your heat exchanger must be sealed tight for this to work as intended!

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY HEAT EXCHANGER IS CRACKED?

Although it's not always easy to know your system is cracked, some signs may be your carbon monoxide alarm going off, symptoms of distress shown by you or your loved ones, your furnace not producing heat, or physical signs of wear and tear.

Carbon monoxide is a dangerously toxic, flammable gas that cannot be smelled, tasted, or seen by the naked eye and can be fatal! Some signs that carbon monoxide is present are headaches, nausea, and other flu-like symptoms that shouldn't be taken lightly.

Additionally, if your heat exchanger is cracked, your furnace won't be able to produce adequate heat. It may also be corroded, have a soot buildup, or produce odd smells or sounds.

HOW TO CHECK HEAT EXCHANGER FOR CRACKS

Paying attention to common signs of a cracked heat exchanger is your best bet at catching the issue before it's too late. If you suspect your heat exchanger is cracked, a trusted professional can provide a video inspection with a high-resolution infrared camera to determine if it's the case.

The camera slides right into the system, showing any holes, cracks, and other visible damage. This is a surefire way to determine if your system is damaged; attempting to discover a crack yourself is much less reliable.

CAN YOU RUN A FURNACE WITH A CRACKED HEAT EXCHANGER?

A furnace should not run if the heat exchanger is cracked. Doing so can result in the system releasing carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and other harmful gases into your air. These gases can lead to various symptoms and, in some cases, be fatal!

CAN A CRACKED HEAT EXCHANGER BE REPAIRED?

Unfortunately, a cracked heat exchanger cannot be safely repaired. In some cases, you may be able to have the damaged cell removed and replaced; however, other parts of the unit may be damaged, resulting in a repair service that's far too expensive. If your heat exchanger is cracked, it's time to look into replacing either the exchanger or your furnace.

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