HEAT PUMP PROS — GUIDE

# How to compare cold-climate heat pumps

*Use model-specific cold-weather performance and a home load calculation.*

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A cold-climate label is a starting point. Ask how the proposed equipment will heat your home during local winter conditions. Do not accept the outdoor unit's name alone as a complete design.

## Use the NEEP list carefully

NEEP hosts a Cold Climate Air Source Heat Pump product list and specification. Its page explains why a seasonal performance metric alone does not fully describe low-temperature operation. The list helps designers compare equipment performance. It does not certify an installer or approve a homeowner's rebate.

Ask for the exact outdoor unit, indoor unit and matched configuration. Have the installer show the corresponding product entry. Record the model combination with your quote so that a later substitution is visible.

## Compare capacity with demand

Ask for the local outdoor design condition used in the load calculation. Ask the designer to compare the home's heating load with the equipment's output at that condition. A capacity stated only for mild weather does not answer that question.

Ask how the design handles defrost and backup heat. Request a written control plan: what turns backup heat on, who sets it, and what the owner can change. If an existing furnace remains, ask how the systems work together.

## Plan the installation details

Ask where meltwater will drain and how the outdoor unit remains accessible for service. Discuss snow, ice and the route to nearby paths. Have the installer mark the proposed location before signing.

After installation, ask for a demonstration of normal operation, defrost and emergency controls. Keep the commissioning record and operating instructions. If a room stays cold, report the room and conditions to the installer. Do not solve a design problem by changing hidden controls yourself.

## Sources

All pages below were fetched and checked on 2026-11-10. The check date is not a promise that intake remains open.

- NEEP, ccASHP Specification and Product List. Checked 2026-11-10.
- ACCA, Manual J Residential Load Calculation. Checked 2026-11-10.
- Government of Canada, Electric heat pumps and NRCan resources. Checked 2026-11-10.

## Frequently asked questions

**Does a NEEP product entry approve my installer?**
No. It concerns equipment. Check the contractor licence and any program enrollment separately.