

# The *un*comfortable truth



Home comfort, worker productivity and even retail sales are affected by heating and cooling issues





# Ready for the Comfort Conversation

**On average, we spend 90% of our time indoors<sup>1</sup>.**

Feeling comfortable with the air we are breathing, and the overall heating and cooling of our homes is important.

When we're shopping, eating out, at school or work, staying comfortable can be challenging.

To better understand the state of comfort and identify opportunities for contractors to solve comfort challenges, Emerson asked consumers how comfortable they felt in their daily lives and how they deal with discomfort<sup>2</sup>. The answers, especially in environments like school or work where there isn't a chance to change the environment individually, showed opportunities for contractors to have comfort conversations with facility managers and homeowners.

This e-book, which contains the key findings of Emerson's Consumer Comfort survey<sup>2</sup>, is designed to give you information and insight you can use to have a conversation with your customers about comfort and the role HVAC equipment and technology can play in improving the livability of homes, office space, school buildings and retail environments.

## Home *Dis*comfort



## Comfort *Clash* at School and Work



## The Business *Cost* of Comfort

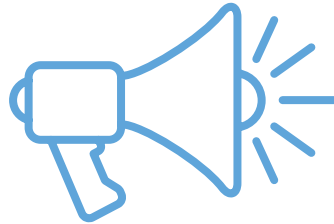


## Applying the Science of Livability



# Home *Dis*comfort

We spend much of the time indoors<sup>1</sup> and, when you include sleeping, we spend most of that time at home. Issues like humidity, zoning and indoor air quality caused **76 percent** of consumers surveyed to say they **aren't comfortable** in their **own homes**.



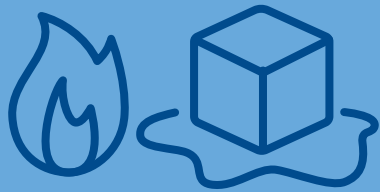
# Comfort Conversation Starter

Since comfort is personal and situational, it is important that you talk with customers to better understand how they live and how they use the space in their homes. Explain how allergies and pre-existing health conditions might be worsened by an uncomfortable home.

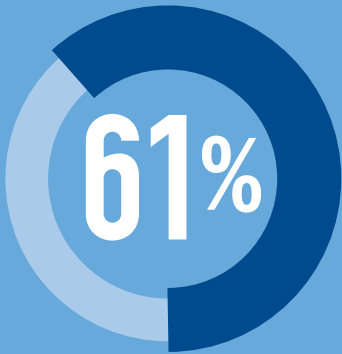
Are there areas that are too hot or too cold?

Are comfort and energy costs a constant topic of conversation within the household?

Home zoning issues are common, and in the survey, the majority of consumers reported having hot and cold rooms. Consumers do try to create a comfortable environment, with nearly half saying they adjust their thermostat to match their daily schedule.



### Reading the room



of people surveyed say their home has rooms that are too hot and others that are too cold.

Disagreements about comfortable temperature, fueled by concerns about energy costs, are contributing to discomfort in the home.



### “Who messed with the thermostat!?!”



of people surveyed admit to having family disagreements about comfortable temperature.

Factors such as dust mites, pet dander and poor air circulation can take a toll, often making healthy people sick or exacerbating pre-existing conditions such as allergies and asthma. It doesn't matter if the temperature is perfect if you can't breathe in your own home.



### There's something in the air



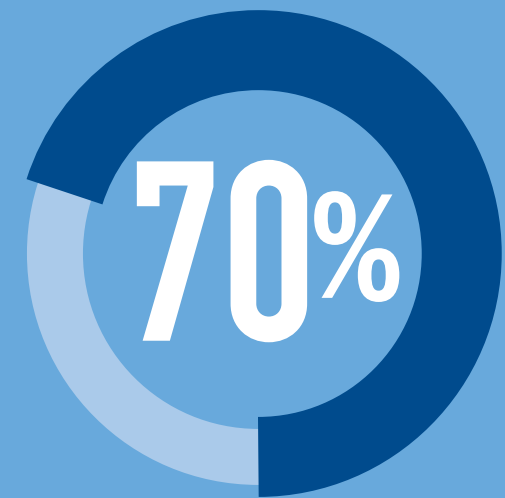
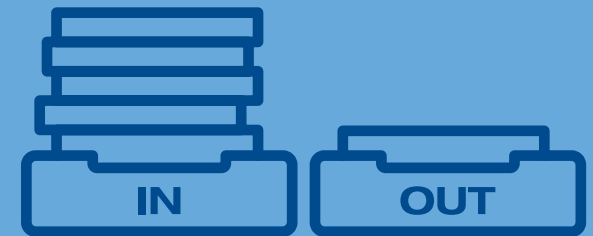
of people surveyed say the air in their homes causes their allergies to act up and notice musty, moldy and humid air at home.

# Comfort *Clash* at School and Work

**Unpleasant environments** at school and work can be a daily struggle for many. Indoor air temperature and circulation can **impact the productivity** of workers and students, including the ability to learn, concentrate and remember important information.

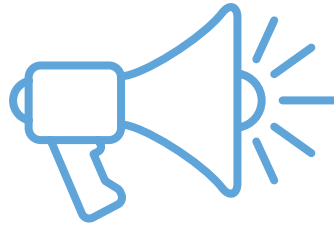
Actively disengaged employees cost the United States up to **\$550 billion** per year in lost productivity<sup>3</sup>.

Final exam scores among continuously distracted students are **18 percent lower**<sup>4</sup>.



of respondents said discomfort has affected their productivity.





# Comfort Conversation Starter

When talking with facility managers, whether it is regarding a school building or office space, it is important to stress the impact comfort can have on productivity and the ability to learn and concentrate.

Have they received complaints from occupants?

Do they notice significant temperature differences as they walk through the spaces?

Is everyone bundled up or taxing the circuits with potentially dangerous portable space heaters?

Comfort problems at work and school can be distracting and even embarrassing.



### That's uncomfortable



of people surveyed said they have been embarrassed or criticized by their discomfort.

Nearly 90 percent of those surveyed said there are big differences in temperature throughout their school or workplace.

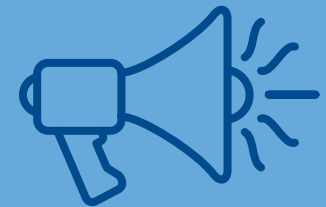


### Breakin' in



admitted to trying to break into the thermostat at school or work to change it themselves.

Unpleasant environments at school or work are a daily struggle for many.



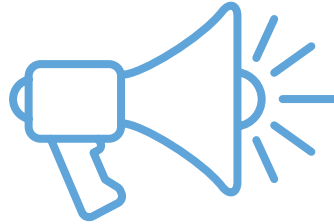
### Temperature wars



of students and workers who responded to the survey said they have had a disagreement about temperature.

# The Business *Cost* of Comfort

In-store comfort may not be top-of-mind for all retailers, but temperature, airflow and air quality can **affect** how **consumers feel** about their **shopping experience**.



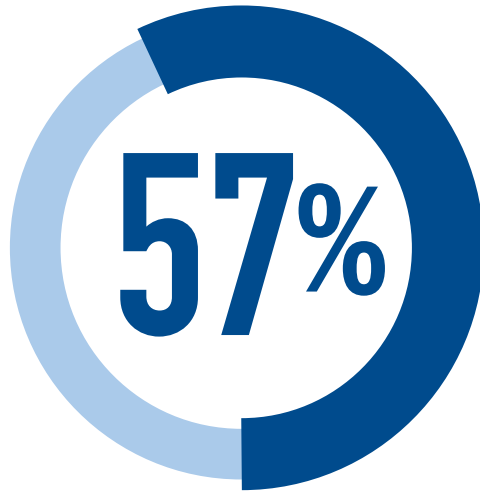
# Comfort Conversation Starter

When discussing the livability of a retail space, make the connection between comfort and greater sales. The more patrons are comfortable, the longer they may stay in the store to browse and make additional purchases.

Have they received customer complaints?

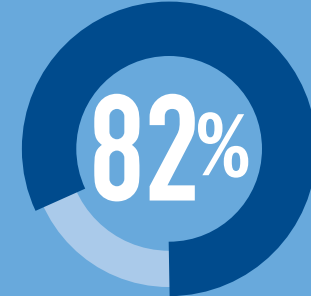
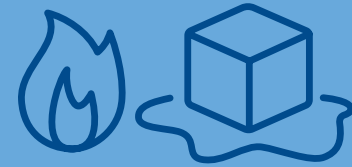
Do they notice people quickly leaving?

Does the retail staff look like it is too hot or too cold?

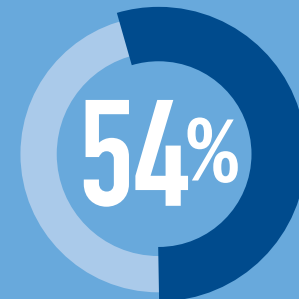


of consumers surveyed reported having left a business due to lack of heating or cooling comfort.

Even if the temperature is just right, retail stores can still run the risk of giving consumers a very uncomfortable, and therefore brief, shopping experience.



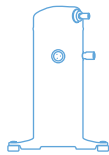
of respondents said they have felt too cold at a business, while **80 percent** said they have felt too hot.



said their allergies have been triggered while shopping. **75 percent** reported having felt stuffy or a lack of airflow while shopping.

# Apply the Science of Livability

So, what does all of this mean for you, the contractor, consulting-specifying engineer or builder? It means there is a significant opportunity for you to have a conversation with your customers about comfort; a conversation that will hopefully help them understand the vital role HVAC equipment, technology and upgrades play in improving livability. It provides you with an opportunity to bring up new and important products and technology they should know about, including:



**Copeland Scroll™** two-stage compressors that provide more precise temperature control, lower humidity and greater energy efficiency.



**Sensi™ Touch Smart Thermostats** that combine proven smart home technology with a vibrant color touchscreen display, intuitive interface and mobile app and a sleek, minimalist appearance.



**Sensi Predict™**, a smart HVAC maintenance solution designed to keep contractors and homeowners in-the-know by remotely analyzing your HVAC performance and efficiencies.



**Site Supervisor**, a flexible facility control platform that offers better control of and visibility to key facility HVAC systems.

Most people have a strong personal desire to be comfortable. They may not pay extra for a five percent energy efficiency increase, but they might invest in a comfortable work environment that improves productivity or indoor air quality that does not agitate their child's asthma.



## Not sure where to start?



The heating and cooling experts at Emerson can help. We know how to keep residential and commercial spaces cool, comfortable and operating efficiently. We can also give you the tools and tips you need to have that comfort conversation and help foster a new understanding in how HVAC can improve and promote greater comfort and livability.

[Download our Comfort Conversation Checklist >](#)

[Read our e-book \*“The Science of Livability: Enhancing Comfort for the Way We Relax and Work.”\* >](#)

[Visit AC & Heating Connect >](#)



Sources:

- 1 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency <https://www.epa.gov/report-environment/indoor-air-quality#note1>
- 2 Emerson conducted its survey on heating and cooling comfort in October 2018 and focused on consumers in the United States between the ages of 18 and 60. Respondents were divided fairly evenly by gender; 47% male and 53% female. Forty-eight percent of the survey takers were from the north, 32 percent from the south and 20 percent were from the west. Nearly 300 respondents completed the survey.
- 3 Gallup <https://news.gallup.com/reports/178514/state-american-workplace.aspx>
- 4 MIT Department of Economics; [tinyurl.com/y66w4sf6](https://tinyurl.com/y66w4sf6)