

Dealing with Steam



In 2017, folks aren't exactly clamoring for steam heat, but that doesn't mean that there's no money to be made. While steam systems may not be going into new construction, there are still plenty of Chicagoland homes and businesses that rely on them to keep comfortable. In today's blog post, we're going to be diving into some of our favorite products for keeping steam systems running smoothly.

The tekmar 279

When it comes to managing a steam boiler, the tekmar 279 is our go-to control option. The 279 includes an outdoor temperature sensor and a return temperature sensor. These sensors allow the control to modify the output of the boiler using outdoor temperature reset ensuring that your clients will be comfortable through changing outdoor conditions. If the system doesn't allow for installation of the return sensor, the tekmar 279 can use boiler runtime to supplement the decision-making process.



The 279 can be programmed in a 24-hour, 5-1-1, or 7-day schedule, making it easy to match the demands of the household. It features an easy-to-read LCD display and offers warm weather shutdown and tankless DHW coil operation functions.

[tekmar 279 Steam Control Application Brochure](#)

McDonnell & Miller LWCOs

Every steam boiler should have a high-quality low water cut-off protecting it. Our LWCO of choice is the McDonnell & Miller Series 67 model. These controls can be utilized with both residential models and commercial units.



We prefer the Series 67 for multiple reasons. First and foremost is reliability. It's important to know that a low water cut-off is going to work when you install it as an LWCO failure can lead to significant equipment damage. Beyond that, we value the ease-of-use of Series 67 LWCOs. These models include quick hook-up fittings and an adjustable outlet to streamline the installation process. Furthermore, they support the addition of an alarm or water feeder thanks to the extra circuit included in each unit.

M&M Series 67 LWCO Data Sheet

Danfoss Thermostatic Radiator Valves

Whether you're dealing with baseboards or radiators, Danfoss and Able have an RA 2000 Series valve set for your application. In fact, since the operators and valves from this product line are packaged separately, you'll always have the option of customizing an order to match a specific application.



When it comes to the RA 2000 line, versatility really is the name of the game. In addition to the separate packaging, Danfoss provides several other ways to customize an RA 2000 to ensure that you're getting the perfect product. For the operators, you have a choice between standard valve-mounted, tamper resistant valve-mounted, or remote-mounted. All three options are available in combined dial and sensor configurations or remote sensor configurations. The RA 2000 valves are available in four connection formats and include a cap which allows for manual operation during installation.

Danfoss RA 2000 Thermostatic Radiator Valve Data Sheet

Gorton Steam Vents

Balancing a steam system can be a real bear, especially if there are many radiators spread over a large area. Luckily, Gorton has over a century's worth of experience when it comes to keeping steam systems running smoothly. The Gorton Vapor Equalizing Valve is available in many sizes, most of which provide far more functionality than a standard air vent. In total there are five different sizes of Gorton vents, the smallest is equivalent to a single standard air vent while the largest has a venting capacity equal to 27(!) standard air vents.

Gorton checks every vent that they make on a live steam system before shipment to provide contractors with peace of mind that they're getting a product they can count on. In addition to providing a larger venting capacity than standard vents, Gorton models also respond and vent more quickly than competing models. This ensures consistent comfort in every zone without any wasted efficiency.

Squick Steam Boiler Cleaner

If you're maintaining a steam system, you should get familiar with Silver King's Squick cleaner. Squick will clear a system of solids while absorbing any oil and rust present. It doesn't just clean, though; it also protects. That's right, regular treatment with Squick will prevent scale and corrosion from building up, neutralize free oxygen, and stop the system from foaming or surging. Squick even improves heat transfer for maximum efficiency. Once used, you don't even need to drain or blowdown the boiler.

The Bottom Line

Steam systems may be rarer with each passing year but there are still enough of them to justify a few slots on your truck. When it comes to managing and maintaining a steam system, the products covered above are each invaluable in their own right. If you have any questions about how best to service your steam clients, don't hesitate to ask your favorite Able salesperson next time you see them!