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### Local spotlight

## Firm fixes mystery of home's hot, cold spots

Owner uses physics and air flow monitoring equipment to measure and control results.

Karen Dybis / Special to the Detroit News

For many homeowners, there is at least one room in the house that never seems comfortable. Either it is hot in the summer, or it is cold in the winter.

Enter Stan Broyles. He is owner of Stan Broyles & Associates, a residential air balancing company. His expertise lies in finding solutions for this age-old homeowner problem.

"These are the rooms where you can't put the kids to bed at night because it is too cold or too hot," Broyles said. "It becomes awfully expensive storage space."

Advertisement Think of him as something of a house whisperer -- he studies what the house tells him and takes appropriate action to rectify the situation.

In most homes, the hot-room or cold-room issue is related to air flow, Broyles said. The room or basement in question is not receiving proper air supply. This can occur for many reasons, including poor installation of the furnace system.

Homeowners have good reason to be concerned -- a U.S. Department of Energy study found that the yearly energy waste from leaky residential air ducts is equivalent to the energy required to power 13 million automobiles.

"This situation is solvable, without adding new equipment," Broyles said.

Commercial air balancing has been utilized for large buildings like Kmart and Wal-Mart for years, and it is extremely expensive. It is virtually unheard of in the residential market. That is why he is used to people looking puzzled when he describes his work. After all, there is no "Yellow Pages" listing for what he does.

Broyles started his business in 2000 with a basic understanding of the problem. He added his knowledge of physics and the Six Sigma approach, which seeks measurable and controllable results. As a result, Broyles has refined the methodology and techniques he utilizes to the point of being able to guarantee the results when he accepts a job.

Not only does air balancing improve the room's temperature, but it also dramatically reduces a homeowner's heating and cooling costs while extending the life of this very costly equipment, Broyles said. He estimates that his service can help a homeowner reduce their heating and cooling energy usage by 15 to 35 percent.

Broyles can work in any size or age home, but his primary market is houses between two and 15 years old, averaging 3,000 sq ft. Broyles said most homeowners first try to address the issue with the homebuilder, who typically cannot improve the situation. Then they might try a heating and cooling company, but they too are usually unable to remedy the situation.

Many clients had been urged to buy more equipment, such as a larger or higher efficiency furnace, fireplace, duct fan or other expensive equipment or alterations to their system, none of which identified or solved the problem. Broyles said these are expensive and ineffective "fixes." Indeed, he notes that there are at least 20 different aspects of the heating/cooling system that affect a homeowner's comfort, and all are considered during his analysis.

One of his largest clients had a 28,000-square-foot home with 10 air conditioners and 10 furnaces, so capacity was not the issue, Broyles said. He noted that the homeowner was not able to resolve the temperature problem in the master bedroom suite until he came into the picture.

Broyles' list of satisfied customers includes Detroit Lions and Red Wings players as well as many doctors, engineers and corporate executives.

One of Broyles' goals is to work with any and all builders, to provide their client/buyer with a sealed, balanced and efficient system from the day they move in. This "green" service becomes a powerful sales point for builders and real estate agents marketing these homes.

"There hasn't been a home built in the past 20 years that wouldn't significantly benefit from what I do," Broyles said.

Karen Dybis is a Metro Detroit freelance writer.

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Stan Broyles, owner of Stan Broyles & Associates, uses a velocity meter to measure the air flow at a client's home in Rochester. Broyles specializes in balancing air flow to eliminate hot and cold rooms. (Kiya Gibbons / Special to The Detroit News)



### More information

#### Stan Broyles & Associates

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