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Toughen Up on Tape Practices

-5 Common HVAC tape mistakes you may be making – and how to avoid them-

HICKORY, N.C. (January 2018) – The importance of proper tape use is often overlooked when it comes to HVAC installation and maintenance tasks. When system efficiency is on the line, choosing – and properly applying – a tape that is right for the task at hand can make the difference between an airtight system and costly inefficiency.

Don't wait until you find a failure in the system – here are 5 common mistakes to avoid during your next project:

1. **Failure to use a UL Listed tape:** When working with any component of an HVAC system, using a tape that is UL Listed is critical. A UL listing lets you know that the tape has been rigorously tested to meet performance and safety standards – a requirement in order to pass inspections. Most HVAC tapes that are UL Listed are constructed with a printed backing, allowing inspectors to quickly see that a job is up to code.
2. **Choosing a tape that isn't suited for the environment:** HVAC ductwork is often housed in unconditioned spaces – those that are exposed to the extreme temperatures and climate conditions of each season. Certain adhesives become brittle and lose their holding power in extreme cold, making it essential to choose a cold-temperature grade of HVAC tape in colder regions. Likewise, hot environments can cause tape to contract and fall off. Consider the environment where the tape will be used when choosing an HVAC tape and select one that is engineered for cold-temperature performance, rugged conditions, or whatever the job requires.
3. **Tape flagging:** This is a sure sign of tape failure. Flagging can indicate that the wrong tape was used for the environment, or that the tape was not applied correctly, including using a squeegee to apply wipe-down force. In some cases, the tape used may have simply lacked good quality construction, leading to an inadequate bond. Using the right tape and application method will reduce the risk of tape flagging.

4. **Improper storage:** Believe it or not, HVAC tapes can actually “go bad.” When not in use, the proper way to store a roll of HVAC tape is on its side, with the core facing up. The roll should be kept on a shelf or other storage area away from dirt and debris that could cling to the exposed adhesive on the roll’s side. Be sure to provide enough room each roll to fit without standing on its end, which can cause the roll to become distorted and no longer unwind properly. Replace unused tape that has exceeded a year of age to get the best performance for the life of the HVAC system.
5. **Lack of full system closure:** Full system closure – or sealing all air leaks – is the number one goal for HVAC installs and maintenance jobs – but it can’t be achieved without the right tape. Air leakage can cause the HVAC system to quickly lose its ability to efficiently heat and cool – adding up to high energy costs. Choose a tape that is designed to deliver full system closure and can stand up against the conditions of the job.

Do any of these issues sound familiar? Learn more about choosing the right tape for your next job at Shurtape.com, and try out the latest in HVAC tape solutions at the [2018 AHR Expo](#) in Chicago – January 22-24, 2018 – at booth 4510.

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