

The Department of General Services' Facilities Maintenance Division (FMD) Annual Heating to Cooling System Switchover Operation

The Department of General Services (DGS) prepares annually for the 'heating-to-cooling' switchover for every spring season. This activity is part of the agency's annual Spring and Summer Readiness Operations. As the District's implementation agency for all District-owned and managed facilities, DGS will adjust all HVAC systems and units and provide regular preventative measures to ensure buildings have proper and operational heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) functions. To prepare for warmer temperatures, DGS will work with all District of Columbia government-owned facilities to transfer HVAC systems from heating to air conditioning.

This is a two-part transitional phase which first includes heating units being turned off. Once this is complete, cooling units are then turned on and assessed for optimal operation. This annual spring-summer switchover phase begins April 15, with completion by May 31, pending no constraints.

Please note that as DGS transitions to cooling, industrial-sized facilities, such as schools and recreation centers, may take up to a day for the system(s) to switch to cooling status. Unlike residential properties, switching from heating to cooling involves significant HVAC engineering work. Once systems are switched to cooling, heat will not be brought back online until the following switchover season in late fall.

During the switchover period, temperatures may fluctuate within a 24-hour period which may impact target comfort levels.

To help keep buildings and their occupants as comfortable as possible during the switchover period, DGS recommends the following activities to optimize comfort in your space once the process is initiated:

- Ensure thermostats are set within the 68-74-degree range
- Remove any items causing blockage of vents or Air Handling Units
- Pull down shades to reduce increased room temperatures, especially in rooms facing the sun
- Windows should be closed once the cooling system is fully switched over
- Stay hydrated and bring a refillable water bottle if possible
- Notify on-site facility maintenance staff if any additional support is required
- Report any cooling-related issues to your designated facility maintenance or operations point of contact or call 202-576-7676.

DGS remains committed to providing safe and efficient air filtration, ventilation, and comfort within all District buildings and appreciates your patience during the annual cooling switchover period.