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Fuses. I carry most every one I will see on a unit, and stock disconnect boxes JUST in case you need one. Unit not mounted to the slab? Tie-downs are standard on EVERY truck with EVERY company just about. But will the guy explain why it needs to be tied-down? Also, vibration ISO pads should sit between a metal base and a concrete slab. We do not want to crack the concrete, we do want to decrease the noise with a "buffer," and it also raises the unit up to allow rainfall to run UNDERNEATH the unit as well as out of it when it drops inside. Common sense, standard, but most guys don't care. I will bet their "price list" doesn't even HAVE that on it!

I could seriously go on all day, but I have shown you some things to look for and ask about. If a guy is working out of his station wagon or trunk of his car, he is probably just a handyman working on-the-side on A/C systems. Well, he had BETTER be EPA certified to touch your system because if he puts gauges on that system and is not, well, go ahead and look up the fine with the Environmental Protection Agency. And that's FEDERAL. Hey, maybe you can turn him in and make a few dollars!

The main goal here is to show you what to look for, and I cannot stress enough that the guys that work this as a side-job are probably not certified, licensed, insured, or qualified to even touch your system. I know for a FACT that there are some companies who send their salesmen out to give you an estimate on a new system. Well, a LOT of them do not have EPA certification to put gauges on your unit. If they cannot take the time to do it by-the-book and LEGALLY, then their main concern is to SELL you something. Obviously. The guy working out of his car isn't taking the time to buy all the correct instruments, stay up-to-date on the newest technologies, and probably taking shortcuts.

If you call me, fine. You are getting someone proud of his work, fair with his pricing, and who will treat you as the little company always does...With honesty and you are not just a number. Some large companies sub work out to me. Why? Because I do quality work and they know this. I hand a select few other companies work that is just too far away for me to get to that day if it is hectic, and I don't want a customer to go without air. I can sometimes diagnose the problem over-the-phone, and THIS has hurt me. Because if it is a simple fix, the customer can go do it himself. Which is FINE, even if I don't make a dime. The problem is my diagnosing an issue, making a recommendation, and then he goes and calls some unlicensed hack to do the work. He probably couldn't have figured out the issue himself, and he profits off my technical training. Doesn't seem fair.

But if you want to call another company, that is fine, just be sure they are licensed and that their guys adhere to the basics above. Questions are welcome.

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Stay cool...And flag the hack!