

Atlanta, Georgia

WESTMORELAND AND PASTORE HOME

CHALLENGE

Finding an energy-efficient HVAC system that wouldn't take up too much space

SOLUTION

Ductless from Mitsubishi Electric

RESULT

Low energy bills and over 1,000 square feet of extra space



Lauren Westmoreland and her husband, Nick Pastore, purchased a two-unit duplex a few miles outside of downtown Atlanta. They knew they had a significant project on their hands with combining the two separate units into a single-family home. An added challenge: their renovation had to meet strict Georgia energy codes. This meant the couple needed to carefully choose energy-saving products for their home, from lights to insulation to windows. The selection of a cooling and heating system was easy, though, because Westmoreland knew about ductless systems from Mitsubishi Electric. Ultimately, a Mitsubishi Electric ductless system would offer the energy efficiency required by Georgia

and the space-saving, flexible design required by the couple.

The renovation project started with imagining their new space. Westmoreland and Pastore knew the eventual home would be 1,200 square feet, and would have two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Maximizing that space became a main priority, alongside energy efficiency and low maintenance. When it came to a cooling and heating system, maximizing space meant dealing with ducts. Westmoreland said, "There just wasn't room in the attic for ducts, so that meant all ducts would have to go in the basement. But that would mean we couldn't use the basement."



Westmoreland knew that ducts don't have to be dealt with, though; they can be done away with. "We've been really lucky to travel a lot, and I'd seen ductless mini-splits all over the world – Australia, Japan, Europe, South America. I thought, if they're doing it all over the world, why not here? Ductless would be a huge space-saver for us."

She continued, "We compared ductless mini-splits to a traditional, ducted heat pump. With the mini-splits, I gained at least 1,000 square feet of storage that I otherwise wouldn't have had access to. We have the washer and dryer in the basement, for example – something I couldn't have done had we gone with a traditional system."

Westmoreland was equally sure about choosing Mitsubishi Electric as a brand: "I've seen LG and Fujitsu around, but I've seen Mitsubishi Electric a lot more, so I felt good about going with them."

Westmoreland made this evaluation not just as a homeowner, but as a licensed architect and the Energy Codes Manager at the Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance – an Atlanta nonprofit that helps the construction industry meet energy codes. Westmoreland and Pastore carefully selected their cooling and heating system with usability, efficiency and design in mind.

With the system selected, installation began and "was fairly easy. There was a fair amount of flexibility in where we could put the indoor units. Initially we worried that their look might affect our home's resale value, but in reality no one is looking. In the year we've lived in our home, only two people have asked what the [wall-mounted] unit was, and then said it looks cool. No one else has even noticed," said Westmoreland.

Much more noticeable are the pleasingly low energy bills. Westmoreland said, "For eight

to nine months a year my total electricity bill is \$1 to \$2 a day. People say, 'You just don't run the HVAC then.' No, I do. I run it as much as anyone else does." Westmoreland and Pastore's neighbors are surprised because their own energy bills are much more expensive. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's most recent energy survey, Georgia residents pay an average of \$172 for energy each month. Westmoreland and Pastore

“ We didn't need a lot of HVAC because it's a tight home. We knew these Mitsubishi Electric units would remain efficient even if not pulling a lot of energy. ”

**— Lauren Westmoreland
homeowner**

Project Completed: April 2014 |

paid under half that amount last year, averaging just \$79 a month.

Westmoreland and Pastore also received a one-time rebate of \$600 from Georgia Power. All of these savings come at no reduction in comfort or functionality. In fact, Westmoreland and Pastore's home now benefits from zoning capabilities: "We have a guest bedroom. Guests have the ability to set their own temperature to whatever they want. That's really nice," said Westmoreland.

Westmoreland also appreciates their new cooling and heating system's easy maintenance. "What I really like about Mitsubishi Electric is that you can clean the filters on your own. I turn the unit off, take out the filters, vacuum them and stick them back in. It takes less than half an hour for all four units. With traditional systems, you have to remember to buy replacement filters."

In short, as Westmoreland said, "I'm really happy with the way it all came together."



EQUIPMENT

- ▶ (1) MXZ Outdoor Unit
- ▶ (4) MSZ Wall-mounted Indoor Units

PROJECT TEAM

Homeowners:

Lauren Westmoreland and Nick Pastore

Contractor:

ALL AIR, Atlanta