



Comfort Systems USA, Inc. (FIX)

Updated October 28th, 2024 by Nikolaos Sismanis

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$387	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	8.4%	Market Cap:	\$15.3 B
Fair Value Price:	\$282	5 Year Growth Estimate:	15.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	11/14/24
% Fair Value:	137%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-6.1%	Dividend Payment Date:	11/25/24
Dividend Yield:	0.4%	5 Year Price Target	\$567	Years Of Dividend Growth:	12
Dividend Risk Score:	B	Retirement Suitability Score:	F	Rating:	Hold

Overview & Current Events

Comfort Systems USA provides mechanical and electrical contracting services across the U.S. The company specializes in HVAC, plumbing, piping, controls, and electrical system installations and services, running 44 units with 178 locations in 137 cities. Serving primarily commercial, industrial, and institutional markets, Comfort Systems USA works in sectors like manufacturing, healthcare, education, and government. The company generated \$5.2 billion in revenues last year, with 54.8% of it coming from new facility installations and 45.2% coming from services for existing buildings.

On October 24th, 2024, Comfort Systems raised its dividend by 16.7% to a quarterly rate of \$0.35, marking the second hike for this year.

On the same day, the company posted its Q3 results for the period ending September 30th, 2024. Revenue for the period was \$1.81 billion, up 31.5% compared to last year. The increase included a 17.5% increase in revenue related to same-store activity and a 14.0% increase related to the Summit, J&S, and DECCO acquisitions. The same-store revenue growth was largely driven by strong market conditions, including the increase in the company's backlog. The increase in demand was quite strong in the technology sector, especially for data centers and chip plants. The mechanical segment recorded revenue growth of 40% year-over-year, due to solid organic growth in construction and services. The electrical segment also performed well, showing an 8% revenue boost.

Earnings per share (EPS) increased by about 40% to \$4.09. For the full year, we believe the company will achieve EPS of about \$14.10. The company's strong back should keep powering its growth. At the end of September, the company's backlog stood at a significant \$5.68 billion as compared to \$5.77 billion last quarter and \$4.29 billion last year.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
EPS	\$0.61	\$1.32	\$1.74	\$1.48	\$3.03	\$3.10	\$4.11	\$3.95	\$6.84	\$9.03	\$14.10	\$28.36
DPS	\$0.23	\$0.25	\$0.28	\$0.30	\$0.33	\$0.40	\$0.43	\$0.48	\$0.56	\$0.85	\$1.40	\$2.82
Shares¹	37.8	37.9	37.8	37.7	37.6	37.1	36.7	36.5	36.0	35.9	35.8	34.0

Over the past decade, Comfort Systems USA's sales growth has been fueled by several key factors. The rising demand for energy-efficient HVAC and electrical systems, driven by increasing awareness of sustainability and stricter environmental regulations, has been a major contributor. As businesses and institutions have prioritized reducing energy consumption and meeting green building standards, the need for modern, efficient mechanical and electrical systems has surged.

Also, the growth in construction and renovation activities across the commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors has driven demand for the company's installation and maintenance services. The growth of healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and tech hubs has further contributed to this growth, as these sectors require sophisticated and reliable mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems.

These factors led to revenues growing at a CAGR of 14.4% between 2014 and 2023. EPS grew at a CAGR of 35% during this period, further boosted by an underlying margin expansion and modest buybacks. The company has also grown its

¹ Share count is in millions.

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dividend for 12 consecutive years, at a CAGR of 15.6% over the past decade. It’s also worth noting that the company’s massive backlog provides significant cash flow visibility.

Looking ahead, the company is well-positioned to continue its growth trajectory. The ongoing demand for energy-efficient HVAC and electrical systems, driven by trends in sustainability and regulatory changes, will likely drive new business opportunities. For this reason, we have our earnings and dividend growth at 15% through 2029.

Valuation Analysis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Now	2029
Avg. P/E	22.8	16.2	17.2	23.3	14.8	16.1	11.0	17.6	13.6	15.9	27.5	20.0
Avg. Yld.	1.7%	1.2%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%

Comfort Systems USA has historically traded at a P/E in the mid-teens. The stock is now trading at 27.5 times our expected EPS. This above-average multiple is due to exceptional revenue growth along with a margin expansion that has led to exceptional earnings growth prospects. While we believe the stock deserves a modest premium, we have set our fair multiple to a more reasonable 20 times earnings. Regarding the yield, it has historically been weak. While the company has grown the dividend rapidly, share price gains have outpaced this growth. We expect this trend to endure.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

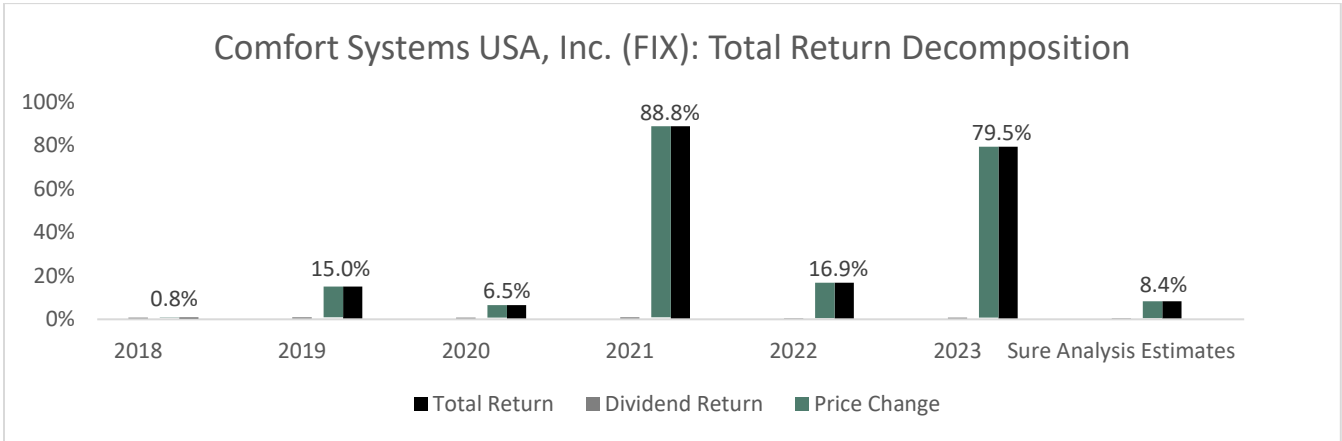
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
Payout	38%	19%	16%	20%	11%	13%	10%	12%	8%	9%	10%	10%

Comfort Systems USA as several qualities, such as a diversified service portfolio and a broad geographic which provide a competitive edge. Its expertise in critical services like HVAC, electrical, and plumbing systems gives it a stable demand, particularly in areas like healthcare and education, which are less sensitive to economic downturns. The company's ability to secure long-term contracts for maintenance and upgrades ensures steady revenue streams too. However, despite these strengths, the company's reliance on new construction projects, which are more vulnerable to economic cycles, could pose challenges during a recession. Regardless, we believe the dividend is safe.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Comfort Systems USA has experienced strong growth thanks to rising demand for energy-efficient systems and its broad service capabilities across key sectors. Its diverse service offerings and extensive geographic presence provide stability and competitive advantages, though its dependence on new construction projects can introduce some variability. We believe the stock can achieve annualized returns of 8.4% moving forward, powered by our growth estimates and the negligible dividend, offset by possibility of a valuation headwind. Shares earn a hold rating.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	1,411	1,581	1,634	1,788	2,183	2,615	2,857	3,074	4,140	5,207
Gross Profit	250	318	344	366	446	502	547	563	742	991
Gross Margin	17.7%	20.1%	21.0%	20.5%	20.4%	19.2%	19.1%	18.3%	17.9%	19.0%
SG&A Exp.	208	229	243	267	297	340	358	376	489	574
D&A Exp.	21	23	26	37	43	52	61	69	81	82
Operating Profit	42	89	101	100	149	162	189	187	252	416
Operating Margin	3.0%	5.6%	6.2%	5.6%	6.8%	6.2%	6.6%	6.1%	6.1%	8.0%
Net Profit	23	49	65	55	113	114	150	143	246	323
Net Margin	1.6%	3.1%	4.0%	3.1%	5.2%	4.4%	5.3%	4.7%	5.9%	6.2%
Free Cash Flow	23	77	68	79	120	110	262	158	253	545
Income Tax	12	31	36	46	36	37	41	47	(10)	65

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Assets	656	692	709	881	1,063	1,505	1,757	2,209	2,597	3,306
Cash & Equivalents	32	56	32	37	46	51	55	59	57	205
Acct. Recv.	304	302	319	383	481	619	620	774	1,024	1,319
Inventories	9	8	9	10	12	10	13	22	35	66
Goodwill & Intang.	186	185	192	277	330	492	696	897	886	947
Total Liabilities	335	327	332	463	565	920	1,061	1,403	1,598	2,028
Accounts Payable	106	107	103	132	176	196	204	255	337	420
Long-Term Debt	40	11	3	61	77	226	236	388	256	44
Shareholder's Equity	306	347	377	418	498	585	696	806	1,000	1,278
LTD/E Ratio	0.13	0.03	0.01	0.14	0.15	0.39	0.34	0.48	0.26	0.03

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Return on Assets	3.7%	7.3%	9.3%	7.0%	11.6%	8.9%	9.2%	7.2%	10.2%	11.0%
Return on Equity	7.3%	14.4%	17.5%	13.9%	24.7%	21.1%	23.4%	19.1%	27.2%	28.4%
ROIC	6.8%	13.4%	17.2%	12.9%	21.4%	16.5%	17.2%	13.5%	20.1%	25.1%
Shares Out.	37.8	37.9	37.8	37.7	37.6	37.1	36.7	36.5	36.0	35.9
Revenue/Share	37.33	41.74	43.22	47.46	58.07	70.43	77.76	84.32	114.86	145.06
FCF/Share	0.62	2.03	1.80	2.09	3.19	2.97	7.14	4.33	7.02	15.18

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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