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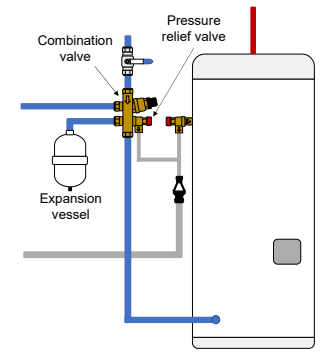
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Prepare for a political battleground...

Until now, most progress with decarbonisation has been made through big infrastructure projects. The next stage will see the task get much more personal, affecting directly how we live our daily lives. The extent to which the government can control this is likely to become a political battleground.



When it comes to how we spend our money, most of us don't like to be told what to do; we like to make the final decision ourselves, based on our priorities and what suits us best. But what if that was no longer possible and the government dictated what kind of car you must drive, or what technology you must use to heat your home?

During the first half of the year the UK citizen climate assembly has been meeting to discuss these challenges. The homes section contains many sensible suggestions. For example, assembly members emphasised their support for tailored solutions for local areas and individual households. They also wanted more choice, including through promoting competition, and they also stressed that any changes need to work for all income groups and housing types. On home retrofits, the need to minimise disruption, put in place support around costs, and offer flexibility and choice to homeowners were highlighted. There was very strong support (94%) for smaller organisations to offer energy services.

These are all points OFTEC has pushed strongly and we can only hope the policy makers have taken notice because, by the time you read this, a key UK government consultation on heat in buildings may be underway. It should focus on promoting choice and maximising cost-effectiveness, but it's possible that the government may propose to restrict the range of heating options for off-gas grid homes to just heat pumps or biomass, banning oil and LPG boilers and undermining the potential of biofuels to provide cheaper alternatives. It's fair to say that the stakes for our industry, and for a successful transition to low carbon heating, have never been higher.

Laurance Coey

Chairman
OFTEC

Join OFTEC's campaign for affordable green heating

You may have seen a series of social media posts about our campaign for affordable green heating and we need your help.

As you've no doubt read elsewhere in this and past issues of *Oil Installer*, it's likely that government will soon make announcements about the future of oil heating. Whilst we are confident that our solution is viable and extremely cost-effective, government is taking some convincing to include renewable liquid fuels in their future heat policy.

This is where you come in! We need you to help raise awareness of the potential of renewable liquid fuels in your community – please let your customers know about the campaign by using our suggested social media posts and talking to them about it at your next visit.

You could also use our suggested letter template to write to your MP (and encourage your customers to do the same), highlighting the potential harm that could come from forcing oil heating customers to choose from only a narrow range of expensive low carbon technologies. You could also explain how it could impact your business.



Let's be clear, we're not anti heat-pumps or any other technology – we just want consumers to be able to choose the best heating system for their individual circumstances. For some, this could be a heat pump, but for many who live in older, draughty homes, or who already own a modern condensing boiler, we think a renewable liquid fuel would be a better solution!

To read more about the campaign and download Facebook / Twitter graphics to use please visit: www.oftec.org/future-heating



Register for TrustMark with OFTEC

In September, OFTEC launched its new TrustMark registration scheme. TrustMark is the government endorsed quality scheme which covers work carried out in or around homes.



Joining TrustMark complements the Competent Person Scheme registration and provides consumers with added peace of mind that they are engaging with a business which has been thoroughly vetted to meet required standards, and which has also made a commitment to good customer service and trading practices. We are confident that the majority of our registered businesses already have the processes in place that would enable them to register for TrustMark should they wish. The requirements generally reflect good business practices and so it's just a matter of ensuring that these are well documented.

Government is strongly promoting this scheme and has made it a condition of several funding initiatives like the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the Green Homes Grant scheme (GHG), running from September 2020 to March 2021. One of the reasons that government is endorsing the scheme is that it gives consumers a certain level of expectation of the way a registered business will carry out work in their home through the customer charter. Plus, if a problem does arise, TrustMark offers a range of remedies to give further protection to consumers.

Why should I register for TrustMark through OFTEC?

The TrustMark scheme offers a range of benefits to registered businesses such as:

- Your business portal – to upload your company profile and manage customer enquiries
- Payment and finance options for your customers through your business portal
- Free business leads from the TrustMark customer search system
- Access to benefits through TrustMark's business partnerships
- Use of the TrustMark logo (subject to a licence agreement) and other marketing materials
- Access to government funded work – such as GHG or ECO

OFTEC is now licenced to offer registration for the following TrustMark trades, which complements our current competent person and microgeneration certification scheme accreditation.

- Heating Engineer
- Electrical
- Heat Pumps
- Biomass
- Solar Thermal

TrustMark registration with OFTEC only costs £80 + VAT per business.

To find out more or to apply for TrustMark registration, visit www.joinoftec.com/trustmark-registration



Green Homes Grant scheme

The Green Homes Grant scheme, which Chancellor Rishi Sunak launched in his summer statement, went live on 30th September and will see £2bn invested in improving the energy efficiency of homes across England (other regions are not currently included in this scheme). Homeowners can claim grants of up to £5,000 (£10,000 for low income households) to fund a range of improvements to bring fuel bills down, improve comfort levels and help the UK meet net zero carbon emission targets.

It also opens up an opportunity for installers to tap into a new source of work and will raise awareness of low carbon heating systems, which have been viewed by consumers with a degree of scepticism in the past, and so could encourage more to switch in the future even if now is not the right

time for them.

A condition of the government's Green Homes Grant is that all work must be carried out by a TrustMark certified business and only these businesses will be able to register on the government's database of GHG installers and claim the voucher funding. For renewable low carbon heating MCS registration is also required – for other energy efficiency measures, installers need to be certified against Publicly Available Specification (PAS 2030).

TrustMark registration for the Green Homes Grant scheme is an extension to OFTEC's CPS and MCS registration for the below measures.

- Low carbon heat: Air source heat pump, ground source heat pump, solar thermal and biomass pellet boilers.

Industry sees the Green Homes Grant scheme as an efficiency scheme trial – it's an injection of cash with the aim of kick-starting the industry and supporting post-Covid recovery. Measures installed under the scheme need to be completed before the end of March 2021, so it's a short-term scheme and many, including OFTEC, have argued that this means it is unlikely to have the desired effect of supporting smaller installers. It's important, therefore, to provide as much feedback as we can about the scheme to BEIS. This will help to ensure that that future schemes can be developed so that all installers can be supported and, at the same time, provide the best outcomes for consumers and maximise energy efficiency gains to help reach government targets for net zero.

If you are already registered for MCS and TrustMark, but have not yet registered as a GHG installer, please visit our GHG launch page on:

www.oftec.org/technicians/technical-news. To feedback your views on the scheme, contact OFTEC's marketing team: marketing@oftec.org



2020 round up – it's been quite a year!

This year has demonstrated the uncertainty of life and how global events can challenge and reshape the way we live.

Like all industries, heating has been affected by the Covid emergency but, so far, has not been hit as dramatically as other sectors. In fact, manufacturers of oil heating equipment tell us that 2020 has been a buoyant year for sales – probably helped by the very low price of kerosene and we hope this continues into the winter and spring.

During the initial lockdown phase, OFTEC was quick to support registered technicians – providing extensive guidance online and extending their registrations free of charge to help them get through a period when earning opportunities were limited. Inspections were also paused and then modified to allow for government safe distancing guidelines.

With the exception of the OFTEC Direct shop, all services remained operational throughout lockdown, providing technical advice and registration services as normal. In fact, OFTEC has responded to over 7,500 technical enquiries, increased the number of approved training centres to a record 98 – the highest number ever – and commenced a full review

of the assessments and technical publications!

Renewable liquid fuels

Despite the continually changing faces within government departments as staff were seconded to Covid planning, OFTEC has continued to make the case to heat policy developers that renewable liquid fuels are the only practical and cost-effective heating solution for off grid homes. OFTEC has raised its game in terms of PR – contacting rural MPs on several occasions and attending a key event at the Houses of Parliament to push the liquid fuels agenda.

There have been numerous articles on the decarbonisation agenda published this year and OFTEC has responded to 20 government consultations. The OFTEC website now has an affordable green heating campaign section with free downloads to help consumers, technicians and industry influencers highlight the campaign in their own communities.

OFTEC launched its TrustMark scheme at the beginning of September for technicians who wish to highlight the quality of the service they offer or want to participate in the Green Homes Grant scheme, which includes

heat pumps, solar thermal and biomass among its permitted options. It appears certain that TrustMark registration will be needed for all future government grant-funded heating work.

OFTEC has been heavily involved with energy strategy policy makers in both Northern Ireland and the Republic, again pushing renewable liquid fuels as the most cost-effective solution for decarbonising homes.

OFTEC regularly encourages registered businesses to diversify into new technologies so, readers may be interested to know that OFTEC has been involved in industry groups developing standards for low temperature heating and hot water systems and heat pump qualifications. In February, OFTEC collaborated with MCS at the Futurebuild event showcasing heat pumps, battery storage and solar technologies.

It's perhaps with a sense of relief that we put 2020 behind us and, while it may be too much to look forward to a complete return to normality in 2021, I hope we'll all be able to embrace the 'new normal' with more confidence and a renewed sense of optimism.

By Paul Rose

Conference on the future of liquid heating fuels

Eurofuel and NORA (the American trade association of the heating oil industry) co-hosted the first joint European-North American conference on the future of liquid heating fuels in August and September. The 'virtual' event was run on four consecutive Wednesdays and featured some prestigious speakers covering different aspects on the future of the heating oil industry – policy developments, new technologies. It was a good opportunity to build partnerships in Europe and beyond and to highlight the progress that industry is making to develop new low carbon and affordable heating solutions for consumers.



Revised OFTEC rules for registration

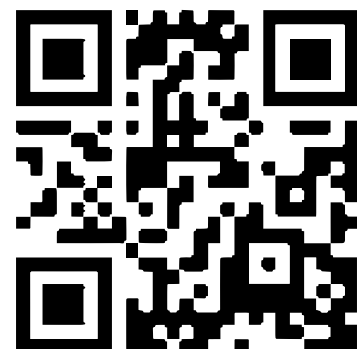
OFTEC updated the rules for registration in August to reflect a number of recent scheme changes and the addition of TrustMark as an extension to registration.

The R100 booklet provides registered technicians, and those considering becoming registered, with information regarding the OFTEC registration schemes and the responsibilities and conduct expected of technicians performing installation and commissioning work under a scope of OFTEC registration.

The aspiration of the OFTEC registration schemes is that customers employing the services of an OFTEC registered technician can be confident that the work will be performed to high standards and comply with relevant Building Regulations, British

Standards, manufacturers installation requirements, industry codes of practice and provide consumer protection.

Please ensure you are familiar with the new version which can be downloaded from the OFTEC website: www.oftec.org/policies



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OFTEC Annual General Meeting (AGM)

In the autumn issue of *Oil Installer*, we normally report on the OFTEC AGM and mini-conference, which involves talks from key figures in the liquid fuel industry. This year for obvious reasons, there has been a bit of a change of plan!

The event was initially postponed and finally the decision was made to cancel the mini-conference and to run a virtual AGM by video conference in October. An AGM is a requirement for any trade organisation and is an opportunity to review the past year's activities as well as vote in board and committee members. It is open to all trade association members to attend.

The OFTEC board 2020-21:		
Chairman	Laurance Coey	Harlequin Manufacturing Ltd
Vice-Chairman	Nick Hawkins	Kingspan Water and Energy Ltd
MSC Chairman	Martyn Bridges	Bosch Thermotechnology Ltd
OSC Chairman	Bob Clark	South West Peninsular Training Ltd
Co-optee	Johnnie Black	Warmflow Engineering
Co-optee	Colm Murphy	Firebird Heating Solutions Ltd
Co-optee	Martin Cooke	EOGB Energy Products Ltd
Chief Executive Officer	Paul Rose	OFTEC
Technical Director	Tim Lock	OFTEC
Registration Director	Adrian Lightwood	OFTEC
The Member Services Council representatives 2020-21 will be		
OFTEC CEO	Paul Rose	
OFTEC Head of Comms	Malcolm Farrow	
Management and associates	Andrew Mathews	Kiwa Gastec
Steel tank manufacturer	Bruce Woodall	Oil Tank Supplies
Plastic tank manufacturer	Nick Hawkins	Kingspan Water and Energy Ltd
Cookers and stove manufacturer	Seat Vacant	
Burner manufacturer	Bernard Dawson	Riello Ltd
Ancillary manufacturer	Terry Wyatt	Teddington Controls Ltd
Appliance manufacturer (Chairman and OFTEC Board rep)	Martyn Bridges	Bosch Thermotechnology Ltd
Oil distributors	Seat vacant	
Training and assessment	Bob Clark	South West Peninsular Training
Appliance manufacturer (RoI)	Johnnie Black	Warmflow Engineering Ltd
Oil refining	Seat vacant	

Meet your technician representatives

Did you know that registered technicians can have an influence over the direction of the OFTEC registration schemes?

It goes without saying that OFTEC welcomes feedback about any of their schemes directly, however, there may be times when you would rather talk to someone impartial about a particular issue. For this reason, there are two representatives, one based in Dorset and the other based in Northern Ireland. They are both happy to listen to your concerns and raise them with other members of the OFTEC Scheme Committee (OSC). It's through this forum that your voice can best be heard and help shape the way that OFTEC's registration schemes are run.



Guy Crabb – your GB technician representative

Guy runs his own heating business in Dorset and has been registered with OFTEC since 2003. He now employs 18 heating technicians working in different heating technologies and so really understands the concerns of heating businesses. You can read about how Guy managed to steer his business successfully through the maze of lockdown restrictions in a case study online: www.oftec.org/technicians/heating-business-case-study

Contact Guy by email at: registeredtechnician@oftec.org



Paul Henry – your Ireland representative

Paul worked as a plumbing and heating technician for many years working in oil and gas in the UK, Ireland and overseas before moving into the world of training and consultancy. He's been delivering training and assessments in Northern Ireland for over 20 years and volunteered to join the OSC to support heating technicians in Ireland

and ensure they have a say in the future of the oil heating industry.

Contact Paul by email at:
phenry@serc.ac.uk

What is the OSC?

The purpose of the OSC is to support technicians, training centres, authorities and consumers in Ireland and ensure they have a say in the future of the oil heating industry. By including technician representatives as members, it also ensures that the interest of thousands of registered technicians who use OFTEC's services are considered. Committee members come from a cross section of industry and other interested parties, such as Local Authority Building Control (LABC), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Certification Bodies, Training Centres, Equipment Manufacturers and the National House Building Council (NHBC). The committee meets quarterly to examine the content and delivery of training courses, review the registration schemes and discuss ways to improve standards.

So, what have your technician reps achieved for you?

- The UK Workmanship Warranty scheme is now included with your OFTEC registration (where installations are notified through the OFTEC portal)
- One year's free OFTEC registration for newly qualified NVQ 3 plumbing apprentices working for OFTEC registered businesses
- OFTEC now looking at the level of fault finding in service and repair courses
- Registration fees kept at a competitive level and frozen where possible
- Encourage OFTEC to review and improve its online services.

The next meeting of the OSC will see discussions around a number of issues including:

- OFTEC updating on progress with new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system to enable better and streamlined online services.
- Reviewing OFTEC's Covid-19 procedures for registration and inspections
- Next steps for the solid fuel training course following personal certification accreditation
- A discussion about the potential for OFTEC to offer Solar PV as a scope of registration.

HVO – a new route to low carbon rural heating

Since the late 2000s OFTEC has been working on a low carbon biofuel to replace kerosene and give oil heated households a decarbonisation solution that does not involve high up-front cost.

Until recently, our focus has been on a biodiesel called FAME, which is widely available and relatively cheap. It was first tested in a field trial as far back as 2008-10 and forms the renewable element of B30K, a fuel OFTEC proposed as an initial replacement for kerosene.

B30K would reduce the carbon intensity of heating oil to a level comparable with LPG and natural gas but, to go further, high concentrations of the biofuel constituent would be necessary. This poses technical difficulties, particularly around long-term storage due to the tendency of FAME to absorb moisture and become more viscous in cold weather.

These issues can be overcome, but a further problem is that the fuel is not suitable for vaporising appliances. This means that FAME-based biofuels do not offer the seamless transition that would be needed to give complete confidence to consumers, and feedback from government has made it clear that B30K does not go far enough in reducing carbon emissions.

For these reasons, our attention is now focused on a fuel called HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil). Like FAME, it is manufactured mainly from waste materials such as used cooking oil but, unlike FAME, it is a paraffinic fuel and does not suffer from any storage problems. It also works in both pressure jet and vaporising appliances, requiring only minor adjustments, and can be mixed with kerosene or used at 100% concentration, making it a near drop-in replacement. Importantly, HVO offers a complete solution; its carbon intensity is so low that heat pumps won't match it until around 2040.

The disadvantages of HVO are that

it is currently less plentiful and more expensive than FAME – although production is increasing every year – and output is mainly focused on the transport sector. However, if government was to make it clear that it supported the use of HVO for heating, then producers would scale up production to meet market demand. The price of HVO is likely to remain significantly higher than kerosene but, up-front appliance cost is minimal compared to switching to other low carbon heating options. We think that if a boiler scrappage scheme, favourable taxation or other incentives were used to support the introduction of the new fuel, then consumers would be likely to accept it as a popular low carbon solution.

Why does HVO matter?

Before the end of this year, the UK government is expected to consult on the future of heating. Tougher carbon emission standards are expected to be proposed that would mean an existing oil or LPG boiler could not be replaced with another boiler using the same fuel. Instead, the government favours replacing boilers with heat pumps or, in limited cases, biomass, but these are much more expensive – the average cost usually exceeds £10,000 – and consumer support has so far been muted. Some policy analysts think the only way to increase heat pump deployment is to ban oil and LPG boiler replacements entirely, but the financial and social impact on rural households would be appalling.

OFTEC supports the views of the UK citizen climate assembly that the need to minimise disruption, offer flexibility and choice, and put in place support around costs are essential if rapid decarbonisation progress is to be made in a way that is fair to everyone. To achieve this, we are absolutely convinced that renewable liquid fuels must stand alongside heat pumps and biomass as valid solutions for off grid homes. You can read more about our proposals at:
www.oftec.org/future-heating

UKIFDA welcomes findings in government's research

The UK and Ireland Fuel Distributors Association (UKIFDA) has welcomed the findings from a survey of the GB public on the transition to a low-carbon heating future.

UKIFDA CEO Guy Pulham comments: "The report doesn't throw up many surprises to us and reiterates what we have been telling government for some time – there is enthusiasm from the respondents in the survey for less disruption, national legislation is needed to facilitate change rather than rely on local authorities, households want to control the timing of their change too and off grid households believed the high upfront costs of low carbon heating such as heat pumps could be a barrier to transitioning.

"We have been lobbying government to develop a pathway that enables the 1.1m off grid GB households which use heating oil to cut their carbon emissions through a series of planned steps rather than one major heating system change. The continued focus on electrification of heat using heat pumps for those using heating oil does not consider the high price consumers would have to pay to change existing appliances and this research suggests the public also agrees with this.



Guy Pulham, UKIFDA chief executive

Biofuels "most efficient"

"The heating oil industry across the UK is working to show government that liquid biofuels can and should play a role in the future. Recent studies undertaken by trade association OFTEC and its consultants In Perpetuum (2019) suggest that liquid biofuels offer the most efficient and cost effective way to reduce carbon emissions in off-gas grid homes due to the type and fabric of the houses.

These studies suggest that retrofitting homes so that they can efficiently operate on newer technologies such as heat pumps could cost up to £11,000 (dependant on type of house) if only reasonable improvements are required but the cost can be over £11,000 (and up to circa £50,000 in larger homes) for deeper retrofits. The cost of a new condensing boiler (if required) and biofuel tank will range from £1,500 to £7,000 dependent on house size.

Lower carbon emissions

"Liquid biofuels would allow heating oil households to switch to a more environmentally friendly fuel with lower carbon emissions. Importantly though, there will be minimum disruption to households as they can continue to use a liquid fuel form of heating without making large scale changes to your home. All things that respondents in this survey wanted. Importantly, these drop-in liquid biofuels already exist and supply will increase if government announces that such fuels will play a part in the future and legislation on suitable implementation timeframes would also create immediate innovation and investment on these future fuels."

All figures correct at time of going to press.

Sustainable Energy Association EPC campaign

Although the energy efficiency of the UK's homes is gradually improving, it still has some way to go. Two thirds of UK homes still fall below the average band C and the support for insulation measures has fallen sharply since 2012. The benefits of doing this are enormous. Well insulated homes are more comfortable and healthier to live in, cheaper to heat and produce less carbon emissions – it really is a win, win, win.

The government made an important commitment to upgrade all homes to EPC band C by 2035 in its Clean Growth Strategy, starting with fuel poor homes by 2030, but this has not yet been enshrined in law.

OFTEC and UKIFDA have both lent

their weight to a campaign by the Sustainable Energy Association to make the minimum target of EPC band C legally binding to prevent such a vital ambition from being disregarded down the line. This will provide the certainty needed to trigger vital industry investment and ensure that all homes are more energy-efficient, affordable, and warm and help to achieve the UK's net-zero carbon target.

The bill will compel the government to develop a more detailed plan of action to bring all fuel-poor homes to EPC band C by 2030, and all those not classified as fuel poor by 2035. It will also require the minister to maximise the adoption of existing, new and innovative technologies and to consider how best they can be utilised to realise the bill's aims.



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Home spill inspections – exclusively carried out by OFTEC technicians

By Judy Hadden, Oil Spill Insurance Services

Home insurance generally covers the costs of replacing the lost oil and damage caused to the fabric of a home following an oil spill from a domestic oil heating system but NOT the environmental investigation and clean-up costs to own land, or the polluted surface or groundwater within it.

Additionally, if the oil spill pollutes neighbouring land, water or property, the third-party liability cover provided by a home insurance policy can be limited. To address this issue we developed the HomeSpill Protect insurance policy.

HomeSpill Protect provides emergency response and environmental damage clean-up by specialists in the event of an oil spill from an insured oil tank. However, before an oil tank can be accepted on to the HomeSpill Protect insurance programme it must undergo a HomeSpill Inspection.

OFTEC registered

Initially, tank owners visit our website to check the eligibility of their oil tank and to obtain a price indication for HomeSpill Protect insurance cover. As part of this process we provide a link to the 'Find an OFTEC registered technician' on the OFTEC website and also to a panel of OFTEC registered businesses that are known to us.

A HomeSpill inspection is a specific inspection of the oil tank system in conjunction with the completion of a HomeSpill inspection report carried out by an OFTEC technician. This inspection determines whether or not an oil tank system is eligible for HomeSpill Protect insurance cover. Any rectification work identified during the inspection must be recorded on the form and completed and signed off by an OFTEC technician before



insurers will consider accepting the tank onto the HomeSpill Protect insurance programme.

Once on the HomeSpill Protect insurance programme, an oil tank must be inspected annually by an OFTEC technician. In practice this inspection is usually carried out as a part of a boiler service. If any required works are identified these must be recorded and carried out by an OFTEC technician. Policyholders are required to obtain evidence of this annual inspection, which can be achieved by obtaining a completed CD/11 (including the Oil Storage and Oil Supply System sections). If rectification works are carried out, the customer will require a paid receipt detailing the completed work.

Some important points to mention:

- The tank owner chooses the OFTEC technician to carry out the inspections and any rectification work.
- The contract and payment for the inspections and rectification work is between the tank owner and the OFTEC technician.

- HomeSpill inspection report forms must be fully completed, signed, dated and include the OFTEC registration number of the technician that has carried out the inspection and then left with the tank owner.
- If rectification work is required it should be explained, clearly detailed on the HomeSpill Inspection Report form or CD/11 and if requested by the tank owner, a quotation provided to carry it out.
- Any queries regarding the HomeSpill Protect Policy should be referred to us, under no circumstances should the OFTEC technician comment on any insurance related issue, only the inspection.

A large number of HomeSpill Protect enquiries received are from people that have purchased a home with oil heating for the first time. HomeSpill Protect provides them with a framework to improve the compliance and safety of their oil tank together with emergency assistance and insurance protection in the event of an oil spill.

We believe that the HomeSpill inspection initiative is an effective way of protecting the environment and highlighting the professionalism and value of using an OFTEC registered technician.

To obtain more details or discuss further please contact me at Oil Spill Insurance Services:
judy@oilspillinsurance.co.uk,
tel: 07818 225585



Minister backs winter fuel readiness campaign

UK minister for business, energy and clean growth, Kwasi Kwarteng MP, has announced his support for liquid fuels trade association, the UK and Ireland Fuel Distributors Association's (UKIFDA) Get Winter Ready campaign.

Minister Kwarteng said: "With colder months on the way, it is crucial that households relying on oil and liquified petroleum gas for their heating are prepared, so I am fully supporting this Get Winter Ready campaign.

"As the global coronavirus pandemic continues to have an impact on everyday life, it is more important than ever to get prepared and stay warm and safe this winter."

Guy Pulham, UKIFDA chief executive adds "It is our hope that this campaign will help and encourage the 1.5m UK households who have oil heating to take winter readiness measures. Oil is currently the cheapest form of heating so it's worth ensuring you have enough to last the whole winter. The Covid-19 pandemic also means it is even more crucial to order ahead of the winter months as an

increase in the number of coronavirus cases and further potential lockdowns would increase the pressure on the supply chain at the time of year when pressure is already high.

"Due to COVID 19 and more local lockdowns being enforced we particularly want to encourage those who are aged 75+, who use oil to heat their homes to get winter ready and in particular sign up to the Cold Weather Priority (CWP) scheme, an initiative designed to help prevent excess winter deaths.

"The Cold Weather Priority initiative is industry-led and was created in full consultation with, and fully supported by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It has been designed to enable our UKIFDA member heating oil suppliers to identify those most vulnerable so they can ensure deliveries are prioritised for them when there are supply shortages or the weather is extremely cold."

<https://ukifda.org/cold-weather-priority-initiative/>

GOAL! – Grant sponsors children's football team

Devizes Town Youth Football Club's under 12s Team for the 2020/21 season will be sponsored by Grant UK.

The club, based only minutes from Grant's head office premises in Devizes, Wiltshire, has a number of teams and the company is pleased to become one of the kit sponsors for the U12s team this season.

The Devizes Town YFC has been established for over two decades. It is an organisation run by volunteers who provide football to boys and girls between the ages of three years up to 18 years. The under 12s Team is one of fourteen teams run at the club which have between them, approximately 230 playing members.

Although the under 12s team's fixtures for the 2020/21 season have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, the players are still training and preparing for upcoming games. As a kit sponsor, Grant UK's logo will be displayed on the team's away kit, joining other local businesses who are supporting this grassroots football club.



"We are very pleased to be a new kit sponsor for the under 12s team at Devizes Town Youth Football Club," comments Anna Wakefield, head of marketing at Grant UK. "The past few months have been incredibly tough for lots of people – especially children – so clubs like Devizes Town YFC have become even more valuable than before. Players can focus on improving their skills and playing a game they enjoy, taking their minds away from other worries.

"Grant UK's head office is located on the doorstep of this club and we are really looking forward to supporting the Under 12s team when they get out on the football field to play."

www.grantuk.com



Martyn Bridges

No boiler upgrades – an "oversight" says Worcester

Following the recent government update on the Green Home Grant confirming that boilers will not be included in the scheme, Martyn Bridges, director of technical communication and product management at Worcester Bosch commented: "Although we support any scheme that actively tries to improve the efficiency of UK homes, the fact that upgrading boilers is not included in this grant is an oversight.

"There are still anything up to 6m non-condensing boilers in operation so upgrading to a high efficiency condensing boiler would have made a significant improvement to these homes.

"Another concern is that tradespeople need to be TrustMark or MCS accredited registered companies to undertake the work. The overwhelming majority of heating installation businesses are not members as they are small, one-man operated businesses. Therefore, while we will end up with more efficient properties for homeowners, there will be no great job retention outcome for the businesses that are not able to take advantage of this grant.

"However, it is pleasing to see that if one of the listed primary measures has been installed then a secondary measure would be eligible for matched funding. The secondary measures include smart controls which again will add efficiency savings to the property."

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333894	Vortex 15/21 eco utility sys blr only pk	£1,165.00
333895	Vortex 21/26 eco utility sys blr only pk	£1,279.00
333896	Vortex 26/35 eco utility sys blr only pk	£1,489.00
333897	Vortex 15/21 boilerhouse red blr only pk	£889.00
333898	Vortex 21/26 boilerhouse red blr only pk	£929.00
333899	Vortex 21kw pro combi oil blr only pk	£1,809.00
333900	Vortex 26kw pro combi oil blr only pk	£1,829.00
333901	Vortex 26 XS internal combi blr only pk	£1,819.00
333902	Grant standard 12-26 black flue kit	£149.00
333903	Vortex 26/35 eco util f/s blr only pk	£1,285.00
333904	Vortex 36/46 utility oil blr only pk	£1,699.00
333905	Vortex 46/58 kitchen/utility blr only pk	£1,759.00
333906	Vortex 58/70 kitchen/utility blr only pk	£1,809.00
333907	Vortex 26/35 boilerhouse red blr only pk	£1,299.00
333908	Vortex 36/46 boilerhouse red blr only pk	£1,529.00
333909	Vortex 46/58 boilerhouse red blr only pk	£1,685.00
333910	Vortex 58/70 boilerhouse red blr only pk	£1,749.00
333911	Grant standard 26-70kw black flue kit	£172.00
333912	Vortex 15/21 eco util ext fs blr only pk	£1,149.00

Code	Description	Price
333913	Vortex 21/26 eco util ext fs blr only pk	£1,279.00
333914	Vortex 26/35 eco util ext fs blr only pk	£1,469.00
333915	Vortex 15/21 eco ext system blr only pk	£1,335.00
333916	Vortex 21/26 eco ext system blr only pk	£1,519.00
333917	Vortex 26/35 eco ext system blr only pk	£1,725.00
333918	Vortex 21 outdr he combi oil blr only pk	£1,849.00
333919	Vortex 26 outdr he combi oil blr only pk	£1,999.00
333823	Worcs gs dmoor utility 32/50 blr only pk	£1,832.00
333920	Worcs gstar danesmoor 12/18 blr only pk	£1,409.00
333921	Worcs gstar danesmoor 18/25 blr only pk	£1,473.00
333922	Worcs gstar danesmoor 25/32 blr only pk	£1,749.00
333923	Worcs gstar dmoor util 12/18 blr only pk	£1,199.00
333924	Worcs gstar dmoor util 18/25 blr only pk	£1,299.00
333925	Worcs gstar dmoor util 25/32 blr only pk	£1,649.00
333926	Worc gstar dmoor ext 12/18 blr only pk	£1,509.00
333927	Worc gstar dmoor ext 18/25 blr only pk	£1,602.00
333928	Worc gstar dmoor ext 25/32 blr only pk	£1,942.00
333929	Worcs gstar hslave ii 12/18 blr only pk	£1,959.00
333930	Worcs gstar hslave ii 18/25 blr only pk	£2,039.00
333931	Worcs gstar hslave ii 25/32 blr only pk	£2,199.00

Code	Description	Price
333932	Worcs gs hslave ii ext 12/18 blr only pk	£2,059.00
333933	Worcs gs hslave ii ext 18/25 blr only pk	£2,189.00
333934	Worcs gs hslave ii ext 25/32 blr only pk	£2,329.00
333936	Worcs gs dmoor utility 50/70 blr only pk	£2,040.00
333937	Worcs gstar dmoor syst 18/25 blr only pk	£1,539.00
333938	Worcs gstar dmoor syst 25/32 blr only pk	£1,950.00
333939	Worc gs dmoor util sys 12/18 blr only pk	£1,439.00
333940	Worc gs dmoor util sys 18/25 blr only pk	£1,469.00
333941	Worc gs dmoor util sys 25/32 blr only pk	£1,869.00
333942	Worcs dmoor system ext 12/18 blr only pk	£1,798.00
333943	Worcs dmoor system ext 18/25 blr only pk	£1,906.00
333944	Worcs dmoor system ext 25/32 blr only pk	£2,253.00
333947	Worcs oil fit 80/125 horizontal flue pk	£131.00
174928	Internal 21kW white heat only boiler	£1,049.00
174929	Internal 26kW white heat only boiler	£1,109.00
174939	Internal 21kW white combi boiler	£1,789.00
174940	Internal 26kW white combi boiler	£1,915.00
174951	External 21kW grey heat only boiler	£1,285.00
174952	External 26kW grey heat only boiler	£1,329.00
174962	External 21kW grey combi boiler	£1,945.00
174963	External 26kW grey combi boiler	£1,999.00

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Three trade associations, one common goal...

As we move to deliver a low carbon liquid fuel, we recognise that burning the fuel is only one piece of the jigsaw. The product has to be stored, transported and distributed to the end user. In Ireland, that's where UKIFDA and FFI come into play.

UKIFDA is the UK & Ireland Fuel Distributors Association representing the many hundreds of oil distributors up and down the country who deliver the current home heat product, kerosene, to users. FFI is Fuels for Ireland, a trade association that represents the major oil importers in the Republic. Both have a vital role to play as we plan to bring a new fuel to market.

The good news is that, at a local level, all three trade associations are already working together and meet weekly under the group name of 'Low Carbon Liquid Fuels'. The group consists of, David Blevings (OFTEC), Kevin McPartlan (FFI) and Nick Hayes (UKIFDA). Assisting the group is Gerry Treacy who is working on behalf of OFTEC and networking with liquid fuel distributors.

Detailed study

The group has recently commissioned AECOM to carry out a detailed study of the Irish home heating sector and to make recommendations on the role that biofuels could play to reduce carbon emissions in this sector.

As an industry we are looking at current and next generation biofuels as a drop-in, viable replacement fuel for kerosene. We have already seen good results with FAME and currently boiler and tank manufacturers are conducting their own trials on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO).

The AECOM report is hugely important and will clearly show that low carbon fuels (bioliquids) can be used as a 'drop-in' replacement for kerosene and substantially reduce emissions with minimal capital cost for consumers.

The report will verify what we already know about biofuels and, looking specifically at HVO, we know that this fuel can reduce carbon heating-related emissions from an oil-fired dwelling



Pictured at a recent meeting in ROI to discuss low carbon liquid fuels are (left to right): David McDonagh (Kingspan), Gerry Treacy (OFTEC consultant), Nick Hayes (UKIFDA), David Blevings (OFTEC), Marion Egan (Egan Consulting), Kevin McPartlan (FFI) and Thomas Jefferson (Kingspan)

by 85%*. Armed with this data we can lobby government to have bioliquids included in any future amendment to the Climate Action Plan.

Climate change

Our timing is excellent as a recent court decision quashed the Republic's government's 2017 National Mitigation Plan. In August 2020, judges ruled that the plan did not give enough detail on the reduction of greenhouse gases.

The plaintiffs argued that the Irish government had a responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the next couple of years or face the serious impacts of climate change. They contended the increase in greenhouse gas emissions allowed in the 2017 National Mitigation Plan was contrary to the 2015 Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act. These pieces of legislation make it a requirement to have a published plan for transitioning to a low carbon, climate resilient, and environmentally stable economy by 2050. The unanimous judgment of the Supreme

Court ruled that more specificity was needed about how objectives laid out in the 2015 legislation were going to be met by 2050.

So, this is good news for our sector as the Irish government has already said it will miss the 2020 targets and will be keen to secure 'extra' savings wherever they can. That's where biofuels come in!

In 2017, emissions from oil heated homes were running at a level of 1,055 kTCO₂ equivalent. If all 686,000 oil heated homes moved to 100% HVO, that would be reduced by 85% to 158 kTCO₂ equivalent – a HUGE reduction and one the Government should welcome with open arms! Once they've made the required policy commitments for bioliquids, industry will be able to progress with projects to scale up production and resolve the distribution challenges.

* Note: The Kerosene emission factor in the Republic of Ireland is some 9% lower than that in the UK, hence the carbon emission reduction figure of 85% in the Republic differs from the 91% achievable in the UK. (DEAP vs SAP)

LCB700 Blue Flame oil boiler helps 13th century property reduce running costs

When the owner of a Grade II listed home in Wadhurst, Kent, needed a replacement oil boiler for an ageing and inefficient system, he turned to Navien and the company's new, highly efficient LCB700 range.

"Completed in October 2019, the installation highlights the extreme flexibility and adaptability of the range," said Jason Davies, Navien's national business manager. "The new blue flame A+ rated oil boiler with Smart Plus technology, was able to overcome a number of on-site challenges, while delivering significant savings on running costs."

"The greatest challenge centred around the flue length, which needed to run from the property's cellar, up through the ground floor and exit the house into the garden. However, thanks to the flexibility of the LCB700 boiler, which is the only boiler in the market that can flue up to 21 metres vertically and horizontally, this was easily achieved."

Also, due to the underground location of the plant room, the replacement boiler was required to fit into a tight space. This made the Navien unit a perfect choice, thanks to its compact power to size ratio. Furthermore, its lightweight construction (weighing just 67kg), ensured the new boiler could be manoeuvred quickly and simply into position. Plus, with extremely low NOx emissions, the LCB700's blue flame burner meets the more stringent NOx levels expected in 2022.

The property, which dates back to 1293 and Saxon times, was previously



Talking about the project, Jason said: "This installation perfectly reflects the market-leading credentials of our LCB700 oil boiler range. We know there are a huge number of UK households relying on oil boilers, and the situation is not going to change in the foreseeable future. Therefore, we've developed the LCB700 to be the perfect upgrade for any ageing oil boiler. Not only is it able to deliver exceptional levels of performance, but it is also future proof thanks to its blue flame burner technology, which keeps efficiencies high and emissions extremely low."

heated by a non-condensing boiler that had been in operation since 2003. The ageing unit had since failed, as the homeowner, Mr Fatah, explained: "The old boiler had lasted well, but the casing had split due to it being made from mild steel, which was always going to be prone to corrosion. However, the new Navien is fully stainless steel, so I expect it to last for decades to come."

"Our LCB700 is manufactured from the highest quality materials to ensure supreme longevity and durability," Jason told Oil Installer. "It also benefits from Navien's latest heat exchanger technology, which maximises heat transfer for superb efficiencies. Plus, by utilising high quality stainless steel, the heat exchanger is resistant to surface corrosion, maintaining its performance for the lifetime of the boiler."

Commenting on the running costs of the new Navien LCB700 boiler, Mr Fatah continued: "The new boiler is significantly more economical and we have definitely noticed a difference since it was fitted; it uses a lot less fuel than the old one."

The LCB700, which is connected to an unvented cylinder, now supplies efficient heating and hot water throughout the property, catering for 40 radiators and eight bathrooms.

"Indeed, with NOx emissions as low as 57mg/kWh, the LCB700 is a UK market leader for blue flame oil boilers. And when you add in the combination of an ErP A+ rating and smart eco features, we've made it as simple as possible for property owners to reduce their energy usage and save money whilst heating their home. The built-in smart display even allows end users to monitor fuel consumption, eliminating the need to check the oil tank or install another device to read the oil level." www.navienuk.com



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Five-star Trustpilot reviews for Grant oil boilers

Grant UK has received five-star feedback on Trustpilot from homeowners and installers. The "high-quality build" and "exceptional performances" of the Vortex and VortexBlue ranges have resulted in the five-star rating from customers.

Grant oil boilers are available in internal, external, floor standing, wall hung and combi models, with outputs



ranging from 12kW up to 70kW. The Vortex boilers all feature the latest low NOx burner technology, with the VortexBlue models incorporating Riello's RDB BLU ultra-low NOx compact blue flame burner.

Comments from consumers include 'excellent, quiet and efficient', 'very reliable system and very reliable customer support', and 'best oil boiler on the market by far'.

"We are delighted with this independent feedback from our customers," says Anna Wakefield, head of marketing for Grant UK. "With extended five and 10 year guarantees available through our G1 installer network and extensive customer and technical support, we will focus on maintaining our commitment to outstanding service which will hopefully result in further positive feedback in the future. We can't thank our customers enough for taking the time to share their views."

www.grantuk.com



The next generation of Riello burners

After listening to customer and installer feedback, Riello has launched the next generation of Low NOx RDB BX series kerosene burners

The range features new technical solutions to further enhance performance. This includes increased control of air flow through the burner and combustion head, which plays a critical role in Low NOx combustion and flame stability.

One of the most popular Riello burner models is the RDB Series, which is incorporated in a large number of residential oil and kerosene boilers across Europe. Available in several models, with an output ranging from 12-110 kW, the series is easily distinguished by its compact size, making it incredibly popular with both oil boiler manufacturers and installers.

With improved ventilation performance, the new technology of the blast tube and additional further improvements, the latest RDB BX burners are a perfect match for compact, high-efficiency heating boilers, says the company. They also deliver high performance combined with reliability and durability.

RDB technology is extensively tested to ensure reliable burner and boiler compatibility and Low NOx emissions. RDB BX burners are developed on a flexible platform allowing high customisation to satisfy OEM requirements. The most critical combustion parameters are pre-set to meet the specific boiler characteristic, with each burner completing live firing performance tests to verify correct emission levels as part of the manufacturing process.

www.rielloburners.co.uk

PipeSnug now available in Toolstation

PipeSnug, the pipe seal that replaces the need to 'make good' around pipes where they exit the wall, is now available in Toolstation.

With over 400 branches nationwide, Toolstation is open seven days a week, until 8pm Monday to Friday and offers extended hours at weekends. The PipeSnug range can be purchased in store and on Toolstation's website.

"We are delighted that Toolstation is stocking all sizes of PipeSnug, including the 32mm, 40mm, the larger 110mm size and our 100mm FlueSnug product," says PipeSnug director, Alex Lever. "This partnership with Toolstation is another important step on our journey as we make PipeSnug available to as many installers in the UK as possible."

Removing any need for messy pointing, PipeSnug products can be installed in less than five seconds and snugly fit the hole in the wall through

which pipes or the boiler pipe and flue exits. The products can be used inside and outside, prevent heat escaping and act as a barrier to drafts, damp, insects and pests.

www.pipesnug.co.uk
www.toolstation.com



Toolstation celebrates the arrival of the PipeSnug range

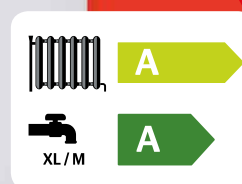
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The new Accelerate scheme is now live

Accelerate your business with the new loyalty programme from Worcester Bosch

Worcester Bosch has officially launched its new loyalty programme, Accelerate. Available for all installers, the scheme puts them in the driving seat and helps them to reach their business goals.

Following installer feedback, Accelerate makes progressing up the 'loyalty ladder' as seamless as possible. Installers can set their own pace, collecting benefits along the way. Rewards include discounts on training, product accessories and marketing and business advice, as well as transferring points onto a Worcester Bosch branded credit card to spend anywhere.

As the company continues its focus to support all installers, the programme and its benefits are open for any installer, as well as Worcester Accredited Installers. Members of the company's previous loyalty scheme – Greenstar Rewards – will also have their account and points automatically transferred across to the new scheme.

To celebrate the launch of Accelerate, the company is running a number of promotions, open to new and existing Worcester Bosch loyalty scheme users. These include:

- Free and simple gas safe registrations when registering any Worcester Bosch boiler
- Double points for any installer

who registers a Greenstar 8000 Style boiler between now and 31st December 2020

- Double points for all Greenstar oil boiler registrations

Victoria Billings, director of marketing for Worcester Bosch said: "We are incredibly excited to be launching Accelerate, our new installer loyalty programme. Like with everything we do, we have listened to feedback and created a scheme that will really help all installers progress their business at a pace and path that suits them – with lots of rewards available along the way."

Steve Moorhouse, from Cheshire-based Here4Heat said: "Worcester Bosch has helped me grow my business sustainably over the last six years. It's been hard work but a lot of fun, with an awful lot of help from like-minded installers from all over the UK.

"If you are fitting five or 500 boilers, being an installer on the Accelerate scheme will benefit your business. The new loyalty scheme is completely accessible to all installers now, meaning there is nothing to lose from signing up."

To learn more about Accelerate speak to your local technical sales manager or sign up online at www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/Accelerate.

Grant extends technical support hours

The technical departments at Grant UK have increased the hours of support to help customers. Both the technical and customer services teams are now available to answer calls and provide support via email from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Thursday and 5pm on Fridays. In addition, the technical team is now available between 8.30am to 1pm on Saturdays.

"Delivering high quality support is our primary objective and these new extended telephone hours, including Saturdays, will allow us to further increase the level of customer care our Technical and Customer Support Departments can provide," says Scott Woodham, technical services manager at Grant UK.

www.grantuk.com/professional/support



Danfoss celebrates

Danfoss recently celebrated production of its 250,000,000th nozzle.

The company, which has been producing nozzles since 1947, marked the occasion with an afternoon of hot dogs and cakes at its factory in Nordborg, Denmark.

"It is a fantastic achievement for the company and a prime example of how we are not only dedicated to producing high-quality components, but also doing it on a high-volume scale" said Stephen McElroy, key account manager for Danfoss.

www.danfoss.com



Landmark celebrations for Danfoss

Brits "baffled by boilers"

- Almost a third (29%) of boilers failed to receive a scheduled check due to lockdown delays. One in ten did not receive a check at all.
- A quarter of Brits do not know that boilers require annual servicing, with a fifth (20%) of renters not knowing whether their boiler had been checked within the last 12 months
- 40% of homeowners do not realise that having their boiler serviced can save them money

Worcester Bosch has discovered some alarming truths among homeowners and tenants when it comes to boiler maintenance – something which has deteriorated during lockdown.

Almost a third of boilers were overdue on checks, with lockdown measures delaying these further. A significant 24% of those surveyed also admitted that they were unaware that their boilers should be checked every 12 months.

On top of that, one in five of those renting said they were unaware if their landlord had organised a gas safety check on their boilers, even though it is a legal requirement.

Ensuring a boiler is regularly serviced is an important and necessary procedure that every household should make a priority, not just for safety reasons, but also financial ones too. A boiler that is serviced on a regular basis will continue to run efficiently, saving



Lockdown has limited boiler checks

money on energy bills. When asked, a massive 40% of Brits did not know that the two went hand in hand.

The company also found that a quarter of Brits believed a boiler would only last up to five years, when in fact with the correct maintenance, they can actually last up to two decades.

Martyn Bridges, director of technical communication and product management at Worcester Bosch, commented: "Our findings are

alarming, however sadly not too surprising. Heating appliances such as boilers are regularly overlooked by homeowners, even though if they are not properly maintained, they can cause a number of issues.

"Having your boiler regularly serviced can ensure it is running efficiently and safely, as well as avoiding unavoidable – and sometimes costly – issues later down the line."

www.worcester-bosch.co.uk

Worcester releases FlueSnug technical bulletin

A technical bulletin featuring FlueSnug, part of the PipeSnug product range, has been released by Worcester Bosch. The bulletin, designed for reference by installers, shows how FlueSnug can be installed with Worcester Condensfit II Horizontal Flues, making flue installation quicker, easier and less messy.

FlueSnug is designed primarily to help ensure new build properties meet air tightness requirements, simplify the installation of flues in older properties and when fitted, can eliminate the need for any further pointing with mortar or sealing around the flue to the building fabric. The bulletin is available on the Worcester Bosch and PipeSnug websites.

In proposed changes to Part L of the Building Regulations, expected to be announced in late 2020, it will become mandatory to seal pipes where they exit a wall with a pipe collar or grommet. PipeSnug's products solves this issue for heating engineers too by helping them comply with building regulations without a second thought.

"We are absolutely delighted that a company with the reputation of Worcester Bosch endorses the use of FlueSnug and provides its installers with the reassurance, technical information and peace of mind that it can be used and is fully compatible with its Condensfit II Horizontal Flue system," says Alex Lever, director of PipeSnug.



To view the bulletin visit: www.pipesnug.co.uk

Next Step for Knipex

Knipex has launched StepCut cable shears, which, says the company, cut through wires and strands effortlessly thanks to stepped blades

With its new product, Knipex has made it easier to cut single and multi-conductor cables made of copper and aluminium up to a diameter of 15 millimetres (50 mm²). Solid NYM cables can be cut easily and precisely up to a maximum of 5 x 4 mm².

The StepCut is made from forged and oil-hardened tool steel of special quality. At just 160mm long, the StepCut Shears are light and feature a pinch guard to prevent injuries. The shears are not suitable for steel wire and



Clean-cut – the new cable shears from Knipex

hard-drawn copper conductors.


www.knipex.com



HiKOKI launches "collectible" skull tool range

HiKOKI Power Tools UK has launched a "collectible range" of limited edition 'Catacomb' tools, featuring an eye-catching skull design. The range includes the DV18DBXL 18V brushless combi drill, the WH18DBDL2 18V brushless impact driver and the WR18DBDL2 18V impact wrench. The company says that the limited edition tools look set to become collectors' items and are available from a select number of distributors and for a limited time only.


www.hikoki-powertools.co.uk



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Job opportunities at OFTEC

Inspection Services Manager

We have a fantastic opportunity for the right person to head up our inspection services operations at OFTEC to cover our registration activities. This role is pivotal to the compliance of our accredited registration schemes and will also help to maintain the high standards of work our registrants provide to consumers.

- If you have previous 'hands on' experience in the heating sector
- Knowledge of MHCLG competent person scheme (CPS) and the microgeneration certification scheme (MCS)
- Experience of managing a field-based team (contractors)
- Full driving licence as travel is required.
- Ability to manage an administration process, assess reports and give constructive feedback showing you have good written and communication skills, then we would like to hear from you.

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This is a great opportunity to come and work for a long-established, accredited registration scheme operator and help shape the future direction of the heating industry.

Regional Inspectors (contractors)

As the OFTEC registration schemes go from strength to strength through diversification we need to increase our field-based inspection team with the skills and experience that mirrors the future direction of home heating.

OFTEC inspectors carry out the valuable work of auditing heating business and checking individual competence through on-site visits. As well as registering oil and solid fuel heating businesses we have seen an increasing demand from renewable technology installers therefore our inspection team needs to follow the same direction.

Working under a service level agreement this is a great opportunity to be your own boss but also represent a long-established registration scheme operator in your area and help maintain the high standards of work our registrants provide to consumers.

We have immediate vacant positions in Scotland and the South East of England, but would be interested to hear from those with good technical knowledge and a proven track record from all areas of the UK as we prepare for the increase in demand for renewable technology installations.

The closing date for both roles is 4th December

To request an application form and job description for either role, please contact Andrew Peirson (Office and HR Manager) on 01473 618552 or apeirson@oftec.org



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Walking the Worcestershire Way for Alzheimer's Society

Worcester raises £30,000 for Alzheimer's Society

Worcester Bosch has been working hard for 12 months to raise money for charity partner, Alzheimer's Society. The first donation of £30,000 has already been handed over and the company has pledged to keep raising money until the end of the year.

Each year, Worcester Bosch employees choose a new charity partner. This year, Alzheimer's Society, which provides support to thousands of people across the UK affected by dementia, proved a firm favourite with staff.

From cake sales and coffee mornings to employees carrying boilers up Snowdon and walking the 31-mile Worcestershire Way, the company has found numerous creative ways to raise over £15,000 for the charity. This figure has been matched by the company to bring the current total to £30,000. Additional fundraising efforts will continue throughout the rest of the year, with a second charity contribution planned for December.

In addition to the partnership, 90 Worcester Bosch employees joined the Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends initiative. As well as learning what it is like to live with dementia, they are using that understanding to take better action in both their work and personal lives.

Sue Pennington, corporate communications manager at Worcester Bosch, said: "We are incredibly proud of the work our team has achieved and hope our funds raised can go some way in helping Alzheimer's Society this year. They are such an important charity, and we hope the funds will ensure that they can continue offering valuable support to people affected by dementia.

"We typically donate to a different charity partner at the end of each year but knowing the difficult time everyone, especially the vulnerable, is going through, we've been able to fast-track this to help out sooner."

Georgie Davies, from the charity's fundraising team, added: "A huge thank you to everyone at Worcester Bosch for their support. £30,000 is an incredible total to have raised and will enable us to continue providing support for families affected by dementia across the UK. Thank you for uniting with us against dementia."

www.worcester-bosch.co.uk

Oil Installer Winter 2020

Worcester Bosch named Which? Best Buy Boiler

Worcester Bosch has been awarded the Which? Best Buy endorsement for its oil boiler range manufactured in Clay Cross, following rave reviews from homeowners across the UK. The company also scooped a Which? Best Buy endorsement for its gas boilers.

The annual Which? report revealed that Worcester Bosch is the most trusted boiler brand for owners in terms of reliability, with survey respondents also holding the company's customer service in high esteem.

Which? further reported: "Worcester Bosch performs so consistently well in our annual reliability surveys that its name is synonymous with dependability."

The report has seen the manufacturer perform remarkably across a range of categories, with a strong brand score for its oil boiler range made up of a combination of reliability, customer score and engineers' views.



Worcester Bosch's Greenstar Danesmoor boiler

Victoria Billings, director of marketing of Worcester Bosch said, "We are thrilled to receive Which? Best Buy endorsement for our oil boiler range.

"We are extremely proud to be market leaders in the UK boiler industry and constantly strive to improve and develop our boiler ranges for our customers. In these uncertain times, we want homeowners to be reassured that they can rely on Worcester Bosch for their home heating needs."

The report was based on a survey conducted in May and June 2020 of 7,500 people who had purchased a new boiler in the past six years. Engineers' views were gathered from a survey of 153 Which? Trusted Traders, who rated boiler brands on factors such as build quality and the availability of parts and spares. www.worcester-bosch.co.uk

OFTEC online training from EOGB

EOGB Training is now offering OFTEC online training.

The online course allows oil engineers to cover the theory training content of OFTEC 101-105e-600a at home, rather than having to go into EOGB's training centre. They will however still need to undertake theory and practical assessments on site.

EOGB provides specialist training in oil, gas and water systems for both individuals and businesses at its purpose-built facility in St Neots, Cambridgeshire.

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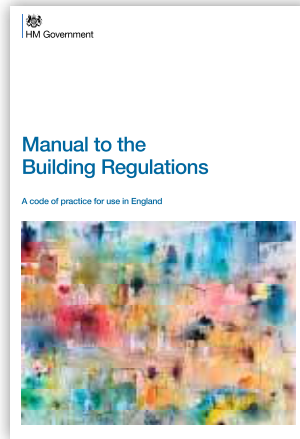
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Building regulations myth buster

Although it is very easy to access regulations through www.gov.uk, no one can argue that they are an easy read. In fact, sometimes they appear to be written in a style intended to confuse the reader! This creates a problem – if the information is not clear, misunderstandings can easily arise and, in this digital age, they can circulate widely.

Building Regulations are no exception. In recognition of this fact, HM Government has recently published a new Manual to the Building Regulations for use in England. It is designed to be easily understood by all audiences and is divided into two volumes:



- Volume 1 is an overview of the building regulations system. It is written to give a simple overview of how the system works.
- Volume 2 gives more detailed guidance. It is written for people working in the construction industry.

As the Manual includes guidance on how to ensure the requirements of the Building Regulations are met when carrying out work, it is recommended that all registered businesses working in England should familiarise themselves with its content. OFTEC's technical department has reviewed the document and summarised the key points in Technical Notice 030, available in the registered technicians section of www.oftec.org.

Below are some bold statements you may have heard, or perhaps even used yourself. Although the manual contains nothing new, it makes it very clear whether these statements are fact or fiction, truth or tosh. Test yourself – you may be surprised.

I am replacing an existing non-compliant fuel storage tank, appliance, flue, heat pump, or cylinder, etc. If I put the new equipment back in the same place it does not need to comply with current Building Regulations – I just need to make sure it is no worse than it was before.

False. Both new and replacement installations need to fully comply with current Building Regulations.

I only need to notify new installations, not replacement tanks or appliances etc.

False. Both new and replacement installations require notification.

Moving, repairing, or altering existing equipment is not covered by Building Regulations.

This is only true where the following can be achieved:

- If the installation complied before work started, it must still comply upon completion of the work.
- If the installation did not comply before work started, it must not be less compliant upon completion of the work.

If my customer does not want a compliant installation, I get them to sign a waiver so I cannot be held responsible.

False. All those involved in carrying out the work are responsible for compliance, including any designers, builders, installers, and the building owner.

Extending an existing installation does not require notification or compliance with Building Regulations.

False. Extending a fuel supply pipe, metal twin wall system chimney or heating system, for example, is notifiable work that must comply with current Building Regulations.

Hopefully, the information above will prove useful. If you wish to access the Manual to the Building Regulations, you can do so via the QR code below. If that's too technical, a quick internet search will point you to the manual hosted at www.gov.uk.



F&E cistern materials

When was the last time you installed an open-vented heating system?

The answer may depend on whether you predominantly work on oil-fired or solid fuel systems. Oil-fired boiler installers generally install few open-vented heating systems these days, whereas for solid fuel technicians, they are the norm. Whichever camp you fall into, technicians need to know which type of feed and expansion cistern and associated overflow pipe is suitable.

The following information should help. It applies to both oil-fired and solid fuel systems.

The cistern, cover and all materials in normal contact with the water should be able to withstand boiling water without damage. In practice, this means using a metal float valve with a metal float. The cistern itself can be either metallic or another material able to withstand boiling water (such as a plastic cistern conforming to BS 4213).

Do you remember that sagging sheet of chipboard you saw being used as a cistern cover, the one with notches cut out for the open safety vent pipe? Surprise, surprise, that's just not good enough! Cistern covers need to be moisture proof, self-supporting and designed in a way that means any condensation that forms on the underside, will end up in the cistern.

What about overflow warning pipes? A well supported metallic pipe or other material that can withstand a temperature of 100°C is suitable. Be aware though that not all plastic pipes are rated to withstand 100°C without sagging; and if these products are used, they will require continual support.

Obviously, there are further requirements, such as insulation, support, height, capacity, and access. OFTEC Technical Book 4 provides further helpful information on these requirements and many other factors of heating design.

Internal fire valves

All technicians know that remote acting capillary fire valves should be installed outside buildings. However, is it ever permissible to have them located internally?

The only circumstances in which this is permitted, is where an existing fire valve is being replaced, or a fire valve is being installed at an installation where there was not one previously fitted and the fuel supply pipe runs underground from the tank and first appears inside the building (in other words, there is no pipework accessible outside the building to connect on to). In these circumstances, the fire valve can be installed inside the building at the point where the fuel supply pipe is first accessible, as shown in Figure 1.

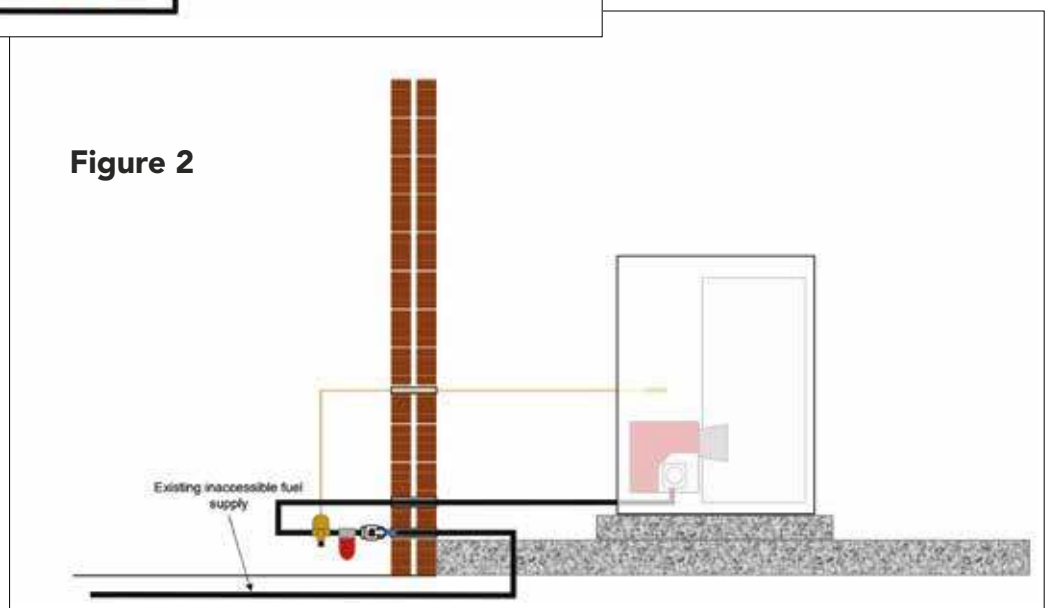
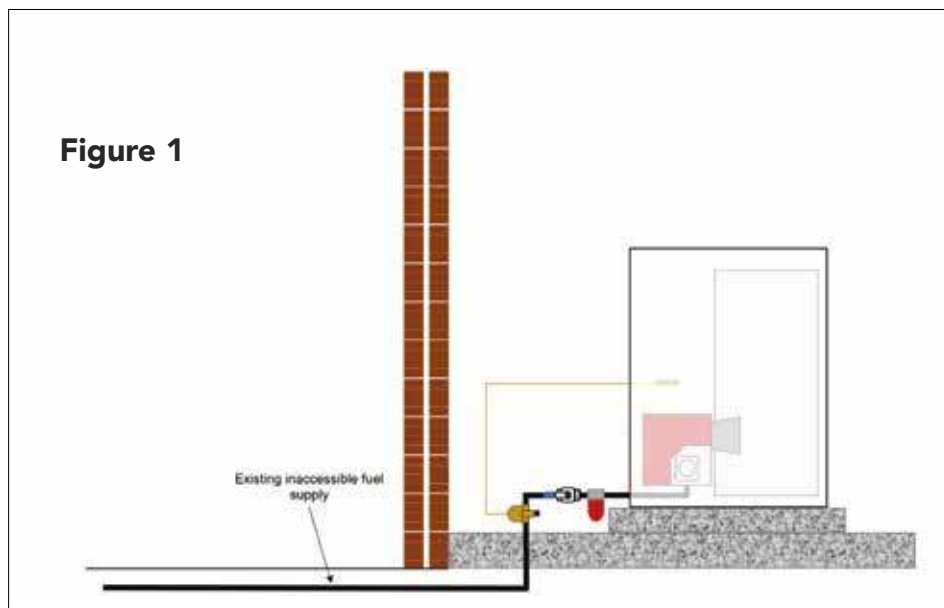
Some technicians have been known to carry out further work in an effort to improve the situation. They have run the pipework outside so that the fire valve can be installed externally and have then run the pipework back inside to the appliance, as shown in Figure 2. Although this is well motivated, it is not necessary and does not bring about a more compliant installation.

What can a technician do if an existing fuel supply is accessible externally, but the route to run the fire valve capillary to the internally located appliance is long and/or complex? A fire valve still needs to be installed externally. The following points may prove helpful:

- Many technicians are not aware that fire valves are available with capillary lengths of up to 35m – this should be long enough for even the most demanding installations.
- The route of the capillary does not have to follow the route of the fuel supply pipe. For example, some technicians have struggled to run a fire valve capillary through internal walls and under kitchen units to protect an appliance in the middle of a bungalow, following the route of the fuel supply pipe. However, the installation would have been greatly simplified if the capillary had been run in the loft and then dropped down to the appliance.

If the guidance above does not resolve the issue, are there alternatives? Possibly, yes.

An electrically operated fire valve system may be used if the appliance manufacturer gives approval. This system comprises of a 'normally closed' solenoid valve on the fuel supply pipe, held open by an electric current. Within the power supply circuit, a thermal fuse in a ventilated case is installed above the burner. In the event of a fire, the thermal fuse melts, the power supply to the solenoid valve is disconnected, and the solenoid valve closes. Routing a power cable from the appliance to an externally located fire valve may be an easier prospect.





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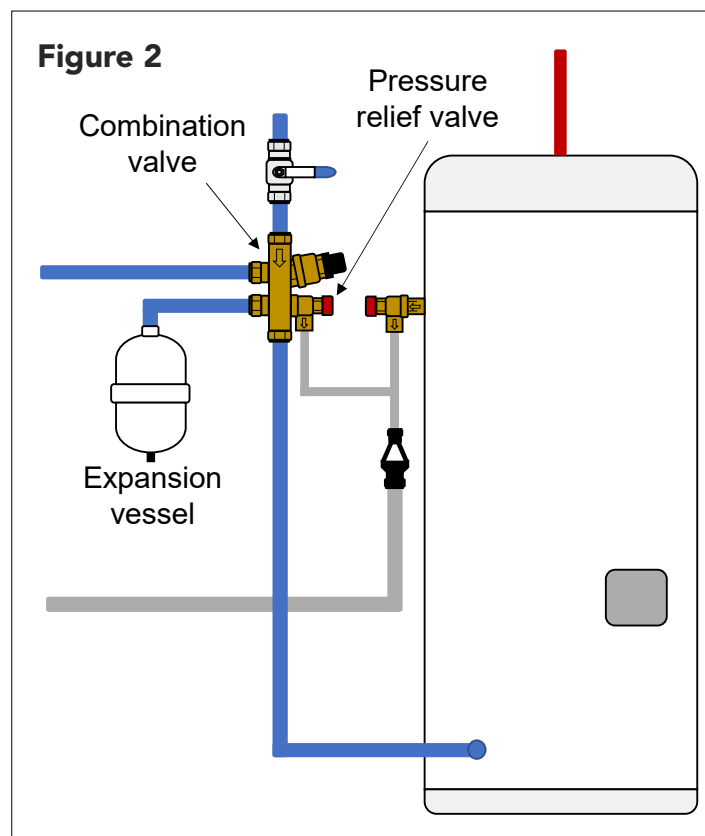
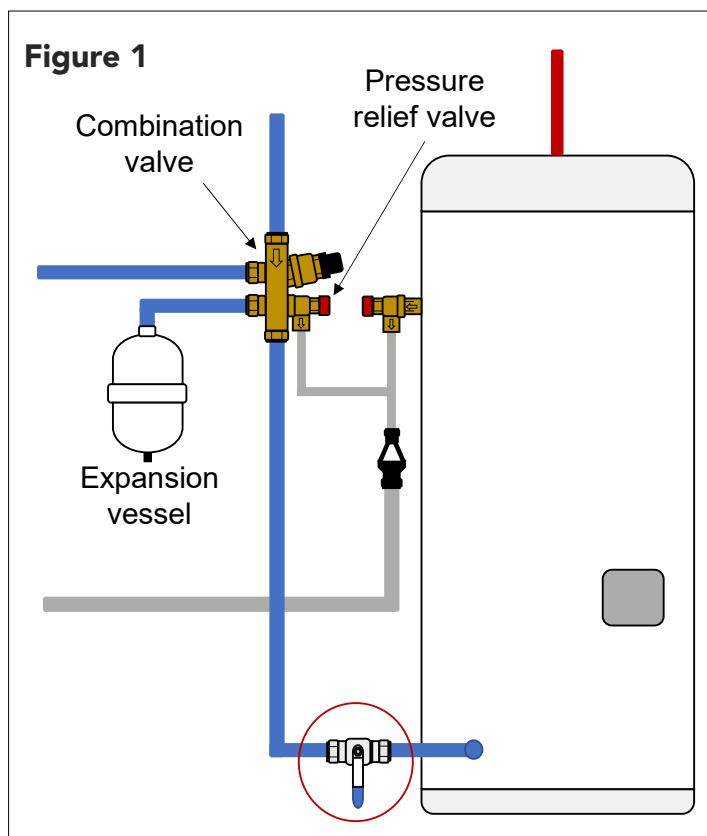
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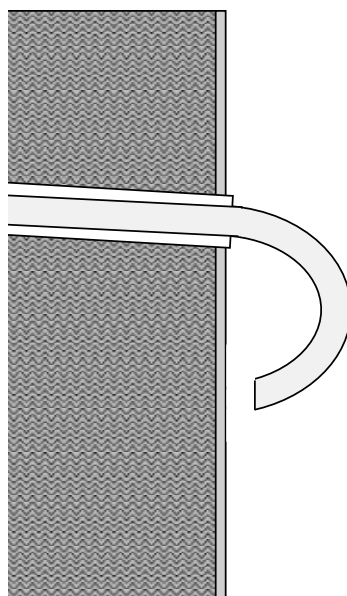
Design defects in unvented hot water storage cylinder installations

In this article, which is part of the series reviewing common heating design defects, OFTEC's technical team turns its attention to unvented hot water storage cylinders.

The key safety devices on unvented cylinders are the temperature and temperature/pressure relief valves, and the D1 and D2 pipes that discharge any water expelled by the relief valves to a safe, visible location. All installers should be familiar with their function and the correct design and sizing of associated pipework. For this article we will address two separate issues that have tripped up well-intentioned installers.

First up, the incorrect location of an isolating valve on the cylinder cold water inlet pipework. Notice the position of the isolating valve (within the red circle) in Figure 1. You will see that it is positioned between the combination valve (which contains a pressure relief valve, expansion vessel connection etc) and the cylinder. This isolating valve location is sometimes selected in an effort to make the valve easier to reach, especially if the combination valve is installed some distance from the cylinder. However,

Figure 3



with the valve in this location, it is possible to isolate the cylinder from its expansion vessel and one of its pressure relief valves – which is not good. The correct position of the isolating valve is upstream of the combination valve, as shown in Figure 2.

The second defect relates to the incorrect high-level termination of D2 discharge pipes. D2 discharge pipes should not terminate at high level against a building wall in the manner shown in Figure 3*.

Discharges at high level should be either:

- a) into a metal hopper and metal downpipe (with the end of the discharge pipe clearly visible), or
- b) onto a roof capable of withstanding such a high temperature discharge of water (not asphalt or roofing felt). Discharges onto a roof should be at least 3m from any plastic guttering systems.

In Northern Ireland, there is no guidance in Technical Booklet P to suggest that a high-level termination is ever permitted.

* NOTE – The Scottish Domestic Technical Handbook states "In Scotland, discharge at high level may be possible if the discharge outlet is terminated in such a way as to direct the flow of water against the external face of a wall. However, evidence of the minimum height of the outlet above any surface to which people have access, and the distance needed to reduce the discharge to a non-scalding level, should be established by test or otherwise".

The hidden oil line time bomb lurking in our midst...

By Colin McCord, Lisburn City Heating

Oil line fittings and components used with annealed copper pipe or tubing have been operating in the oil heating industry for a number of years – I have seen some horrific sights when attending jobs, as I am sure you all have.

The oil storage tank balancing on a few unsteady bricks, the low-level flue discharging directly towards and within inches of the oil tank, a rotted wooden base barely supporting a bowed tank. Disasters waiting to happen, all caused by a trusted workman and in most cases, the homeowner is blissfully unaware of the impending disaster.

Usually, the first time homeowners are made aware of an impending disaster, is when the service engineer brandishes the OFTEC CD/11 service sheet under their nose, with some large 'X's appended in the checklist. *Oil tank X! Oil line X! Fire valve X!*

Some homeowners' first thought must be: "Is this a scam for these guys to try and bill for unnecessary work?" Others are simply horrified and immediately want to know how and when we can rectify it and make the oil line safe for use.

In most cases they want to know the following;

- Why was it installed like that in the first place?
- How much will it cost them to repair and bring up to a safe standard?
- Who can they blame and perhaps seek compensation from?

Oil tank installation blunders are very visible and obvious to the engineer, but what about the less obvious non-compliance issues? Are they equally as hazardous or dangerous?

It is apparent that another less visible, more sinister menace is patiently lurking at many installations, ready to bite the unwary.

A danger not so easily seen or identified as those ludicrous but



genuine previous examples of incorrectly fitted oil tanks... one that is poised to cause much more damage and distress to homeowners over the coming years than that caused by leaking tanks.

This slowly unfolding disaster is set to cost the insurance industry much more than all of those oft photographed oil tank disasters put together.

Leaking oil line joints

Currently, a considerable amount of our company's effort has been directed at examining, testing and rectifying leaking oil lines fittings on oil lines previously fitted by other installers. This usually follows a call from a distraught householder who reports a strong smell of oil and often visible tell-tale tide marks on the ground or house brickwork.

Homeowners and insurance companies are currently reeling from the damage and associated costs of oil spills and leaks.

Fire valves, shut off valves, filters, tank connections and flexible oil lines are frequently all examined for visible signs of leakage, before the metal pipework is pressure tested with a standard oil line pressure test of 1 bar for a period of 30 minutes. It may



come as no surprise to you that far too many of the oil line installations fail this test.

The offending fittings are identified, opened and the reason for the leak determined. At all stages the process is photographed for record purposes and referral.

The vast majority of failures and leaks are mainly due to one simple component omission – a component that all OFTEC engineers and registered technicians should be well aware of – *the cheap and uncomplicated brass or hardened copper 10mm pipe insert.*

A joint being made with a Type 'A' compression fitting on annealed copper pipe without the use of an appropriate brass or hardened copper sleeve will leak. It may not leak for a while, but rest assured it *will eventually leak*, especially if disturbed or knocked.

BS EN 1254-2 highlights concern over using Type 'A' fittings with R220 soft copper, annealed pipe oil line. This is explained in OFTEC Technical Book 3 which states that Type A fittings used without an insert *"can distort the pipe causing weeping, sweating or leaks which is unacceptable for environmental and fire safety reasons"*

and that inserts are required "to allow compression of the ring onto the copper tube, without distortion."

The scale of the potential problem due to this glaring omission is immense.

The fixing of a leaking oil line and checking the other joints is a relatively simple and inexpensive matter, completed usually in under an hour, including a final pressure test. However, that's the simple bit...

The oil-soaked ground or building will then require the appropriate treatment from a company specialising in investigation and remedial work to ascertain the extent of the damage and oil contamination in the immediate area.

A full written report on the cause of the leak is usually sought from a suitably qualified engineer along with photographic evidence of the cause.

Remedial actions frequently take several months to complete, with the homeowners being housed in temporary accommodation and an insurance company left to foot the bill. In extreme cases, entire properties have had to be demolished due to the extent of the contamination, some of which has taken place unnoticed over many years. These bills frequently run into many tens of thousands of pounds.

This omission of inserts from oil lines is not just some historical occurrence that has taken place years ago. This is still happening. Currently, a large number of newly built housing estates and properties in many areas are having oil supply lines and fittings incorrectly fitted.

Adjacent householders, after being made aware of oil leaks and defects on their neighbours' properties, are now asking for our engineers to test their oil lines and fittings when on site. If defective, the installation is promptly brought up to standard to prevent future oil contamination.

This remedial work is part and parcel of a normal day for an OFTEC registered engineer and provides an additional welcome steady source of income.

Homeowners and insurance companies are currently reeling from the damage and associated costs of oil spills and leaks.

The burning question that we must ask ourselves is: "Have we fitted this



oil line, inserted sleeves and fittings to the correct standard required and used the appropriate components?"

- If the answer is YES and you have fitted the oil line and complied with the current regulations guidance you certainly have nothing to worry about.
- If the answer is NO, what excuse can you offer to a loss adjuster? He will almost certainly be aware of the content of OFTEC Technical Book 3.

The loss adjuster will be aware of Section 2.1 from the book and Regulation 7 from Building Standards and may ask why you repeatedly failed to comply with the regulations guidance when installing the oil line and fittings and why have you not fitted brass reinforcing sleeves inserts in an annealed copper oil line. What will be your excuse?

Greater care and adherence to the regulations guidance must be taken with the installation of oil lines and fittings or the industry's image will greatly suffer.

It is much better to be safe rather than sorry – use the appropriate sleeves inserts when using type 'A' compression fittings.

Further reading in relation to the fitting of oil lines and approved fittings is contained in OFTEC Technical Book 3, section 2.

At the age of 60, Colin McCord has recently stepped back from Lisburn City Heating which he started 20 years ago. He has now handed the reins to his son Adam McCord, who is now the chief engineer. The company is based in Lisburn, County Antrim, Northern Ireland, and specialises in oil heating installation, breakdowns and servicing. The company is also engaged by two larger organisations, which specialise in the damage caused by oil leaking into the ground. Lisburn City Heating examines, tests and repairs the offending oil installations and relocates oil tanks, oil lines and boilers to facilitate rectification.

A dim future for heating oil or a sparkle of hope?

Asks James Shenton, general manager of Tuffa UK

HVO is a viable and sustainable alternative to kerosene which rivals the emissions of alternative renewable heating technologies. In order to facilitate change within the industry to help the UK meet its emissions target, the government should recognise and incentivise HVO and liquid fuel firing technology as a pragmatic alternative to less environmentally-friendly domestic heating.

The challenges...

Kerosene is used to heat around 1.5 million UK homes (6%) and generates tens of thousands of jobs for service personnel. Despite this, with the UK government's aim to bring all carbon emissions down to net zero by 2050, the future of heating oil seems dim. The government's "Clean Growth Strategy" (2017) outlined plans to phase out the installation of high carbon fossil fuel heating in new and existing homes currently off the gas grid. Subsequently, the "Future Homes Standard" (2019) proposed that all new buildings will need to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and world leading levels of energy efficiency which, while it doesn't exclude oil altogether, would need considerable mitigating measures to reach parity with a new gas-heating building.

In 2015 domestic and commercial heating accounted for large chunk of UK greenhouse gas emissions at 32% and so with the net zero target set for 2050, it will take a huge collective effort from industry and government to succeed. We know from recent years that incentivising low carbon heating technologies such as air source heat pumps and biomass boilers, which in theory show good emissions statistics, have poor utilisation across the UK due to high setup costs. For off grid homes there has not been an affordable or effective solution to decarbonise heating systems, until now.



James Shenton, general manager of Tuffa UK

The solution...

There is an alternative liquid fuel in hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) with distinctive environmental benefits, which can act as a direct replacement to kerosene. HVO is currently available in the UK and benefits from being a fossil-free, sustainably produced, renewable paraffin deriving from waste used cooking oil and vegetable oil processing waste. Currently, HVO is largely being marketed and used as an alternative to diesel, boasting a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions up to 90%. This looks great on paper to help meet a transport emission initiative, however its introduction is severely challenged with heavy investment into EV tech. The absence of a viable marketplace for HVO should see it turn to the domestic heating industry, which has high consistent demand for a low carbon liquid fuel.

The properties of HVO are more likened to kerosene than diesel with some distinct advantages, its benefits include an absence of

aromatics like traditional crude oil derived fuels, making it safer to handle, a significantly higher flashpoint of 61 degrees Celsius, making a good argument to declassify its categorisation as a flammable liquid and that pure HVO is a fully biodegradable substance and so could be classed as a none pollutant.

Its similarities allow for the modification of existing heating oil systems to use HVO. From this we can expect to achieve a lower carbon emission output than alternative low carbon heating technologies on the market. Furthermore the low cost adaptation to an existing oil burning heating system should make this a much more attractive scheme to incentivise, in turn softening the outlay required by the end user and boosting take-up far sooner.

The future...

By having similar properties to kerosene, our material testing shows that our current fuel tank range aimed at the heating oil market, is fully compatible with HVO. This means our customers don't have to worry about replacing tanks in the field or distinguishing a HVO compatible product in the future. What we need now to drive innovation and investment in this sector is support from the government by acknowledging and incentivising HVO as a pragmatic low carbon heating solution, passing the savings of what should be a tax efficient fossil free fuel to the end user. The liquid fuel market has the potential to expand across the UK, safeguarding and increasing sustainable job opportunity within the sector by better competing with other well advocated renewable heating technologies and giving off grid homeowners a more realistic solution to change their fuel source without the need for disruptive and costly installs.

www.tuffa.co.uk

Harlequin launches horizontal bunded tank

Harlequin Manufacturing Ltd has launched the 2525 ITE – an addition to the company's bunded oil tank range.

The new tank, says Harlequin, has been developed in response to increasing demand from customers for a horizontal tank with a small footprint with more storage capacity.

The UK-made 2525 ITE is integrally bunded and best suited for installations at larger homes. The tank's narrow base allows for it to be installed where space is at a premium.

Its unique lockable access lid style has been designed to prevent water ingress and provides convenient access for tank filling and maintenance. The tank itself has been independently tested and certified to OFCERT standards.

The tank's statistics are: Length – 2450mm; Width – 1200mm; Overall Height – 16285mm; Capacity – 2550L; Net Weight – 235kg.

The new tank is available to purchase immediately and comes equipped with a range of standard fittings, including an Apollo gauge and a bottom outlet kit.

"At Harlequin, we have bunded oil tanks ranging from 350 to 10,000 litre models catering to all our customer requirements be it domestic, commercial, industrial, or agricultural," says the company. "Each tank has been designed and manufactured to exceed the most technical, environmental, and regulatory requirements."



Headquartered in Northern Ireland, Harlequin has a 35-year heritage and exports to over 20 countries internationally.

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A rose amongst the thorns... still going strong after all those years!

The Gallery pages mainly feature photographs of disasters – usually caused by neglect and incompetence. Some are amusing, but many are shocking and potentially down-right dangerous. So it's a pleasure to be able to feature the odd photograph and story about successes! In this edition we are featuring a fully-functioning boiler thought to be in excess of 25 years old! *If you can top that and can send in evidence of something even older, then we would be delighted to hear from you!*

OFTEC registered technicians who have their photographs featured on these pages win a special prize – a generous 20% discount on orders from OFTEC Direct! So, for a chance to win this valuable discount, send in your snaps showing the good, the bad and the ugly sides of oil-related installations. Don't forget to include your name, address and OFTEC registration number, and, if published, you will qualify for the special OFTEC Direct discount! (www.oftecdirect.com).

Send your pictures, together with a brief description of your business and where you came across the subject of your snaps, to: liz@oilinstaller.co.uk



Down memory lane...

OFTEC registered **John Brakspear** was in for a trip down Memory Lane recently when he was called out to replace a thermostat in an ancient – but fully operational – Hotspur oil-fired boiler. Thought to be at least a quarter of a century old, the MK3 Hotspur is still in every-day use.

"The boiler is in a boiler room of a house in a place called Little Frieth which is between Henley-on-Thames and High Wycombe," explains John. The Hotspur was already installed when the owner brought the house more than 25 years ago. New parts for the boiler are almost impossible to get hold of, says John, but he did manage to find a suitable replacement thermostat. The owner of the property is experienced in servicing the boiler himself and adapting second-hand parts to suit the purpose! Perhaps not to be recommended, but – according to John – the old Hotspur is still in fine fettle!

Is this one of the oldest oil-fired boilers currently in full-time use? If you work on anything older, do let us know!



Under cover operation...

Warren Thomson of J&W Thomson Ltd was recently called out on a very secret mission. When he arrived at the property in Cuminestone to repair a broken boiler, he was shocked to find this oil tank hiding under a huge pile of ivy.

"I asked the customer where her oil tank was and she pointed to this," recalled a horrified Warren. "I advised her that it was not up to current standards, if any at all – I couldn't actually tell. I explained that it was a fire hazard, but she was more concerned about theft and the safety of her oil. It definitely wasn't put in by an OFTEC engineer as it hadn't been commissioned or installed correctly. I had to strip it down, clean it and rectify the faults."

J&W Thomson is based in Aberdeenshire and boasts more than 90 years' combined experience in the industry.



Hidden horror

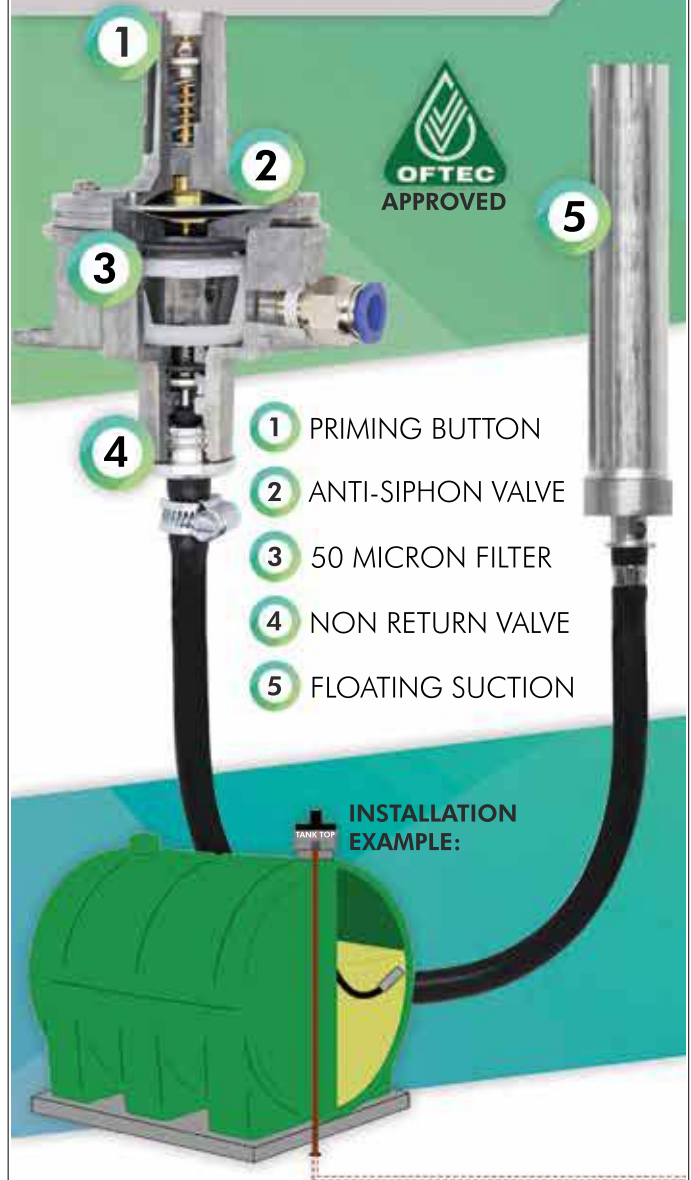
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Fuel price commentary

We would normally greet the news that heating oil prices have risen with dismay, particularly if the price of competing fuels has stayed the same or decreased. However, at present there is little cause for concern. Yes, the price of heating oil in Great Britain has crept up slightly but, overall, liquid fuel retains a strong competitive advantage over all alternatives. In fact it doesn't matter whether you live in any part of the UK or the Republic of Ireland, if you use heating oil, you're using the cheapest heating fuel out there, simple as that.

For the last six months the price of heating

oil has been remarkably stable – stable and low – not two words we always associate with oil. Current prices are below the levels seen during the dramatic price falls of 2014-15 so it is fair to say that households that depend on oil heating are enjoying something of a Covid windfall – welcome no doubt as many will have seen incomes affected by the impact of the virus.

Analysts suggest that the low prices are set to continue for at least the next six months. This is because the second wave of Covid across Europe and America has choked demand further, leading to a glut of crude

oil on the world market and barrel prices in the \$30-40 region – roughly half the normal recent price. There is a real risk now of a world recession which could suppress demand for some time to come – certainly for much of next year. This will have many unpredictable economic impacts. Yes, it will keep the oil price low, but it will damage national economies, affect household budgets, and erode consumer confidence. It will also render renewables less competitive, weakening hopes of a green recovery. And then there's Brexit to consider too. We will just have to wait and see what happens with that one!

Comparative space and water heating costs for a three-bedroomed home in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

GREAT BRITAIN

	Average: Oct16-Oct20	October 19	October 20	Price change	% difference
Anthracite Grains	£1,159	1209	1209	£0	0.00%
Electricity (Economy 7)	£1,955	2088	2069	−£19	−0.91%
Gas (British Gas - condensing)	£975	1016	877	−£139	−13.68%
LPG	£1,885	1933	1890	−£43	−2.22%
LPG (condensing)	£1,552	1590	1555	−£35	−2.20%
Oil	£1,185	1356	771	−£585	−43.14%
Oil (condensing)	£971	1110	636	−£474	−42.70%
Wood Pellets	£1,439	1491	1507	£16	1.07%
Air source heat pump radiators	£1,725	1835	1793	−£42	−2.29%
Air source heat pump underfloor	£1,388	1404	1373	−£31	−2.21%

NORTHERN IRELAND

	Average: Oct16-Oct20	October 19	October 20	Price change	% difference
Anthracite Grains	£1,006	1047	1075	£28	2.67%
Electricity (Economy 7)	£1,699	1924	1882	−£42	−2.18%
Gas (Phoenix - condensing)	£937	1050	861	−£189	−18.00%
LPG	£2,530	2708	2431	−£277	−10.23%
LPG (condensing)	£2,075	2219	1994	−£225	−10.14%
Oil	£1,165	1326	740	−£586	−44.19%
Oil (condensing)	£955	1086	611	−£475	−43.74%
Wood Pellets	£1,134	1104	1200	£96	8.70%
Air source heat pump radiators	£1,553	1686	1670	−£16	−0.95%
Air source heat pump underfloor	£1,262	1271	1259	−£12	−0.94%

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	Average: Oct16-Oct20	October 19	October 20	Price change	% difference
Anthracite Peas	€1,579	1628	1628	€0	0.00%
Electricity (Urban Night Saver)	€2,077	2194	2176	−€18	−0.82%
Gas (Bord Gais condensing)	€1,348	1431	1299	−€132	−9.22%
LPG	€2,807	2986	3032	€46	1.54%
LPG (condensing)	€2,308	2454	2491	€37	1.51%
Oil	€1,584	1834	1004	−€830	−45.26%
Oil (condensing)	€1,296	1499	827	−€672	−44.83%
Wood Pellets	€1,363	1400	1385	−€15	−1.07%
Air source heat pump radiators	€1,823	1919	1907	−€12	−0.63%
Air source heat pump underfloor	€1,491	1509	1504	−€5	−0.33%

Notes. The tables above are based on quarterly data published by the Sutherland Tables. They show the annual average cost of a range of heating options for a typical pre-1980 three bedroomed semi-detached home with a heat requirement of approximately 16,000 kWh.

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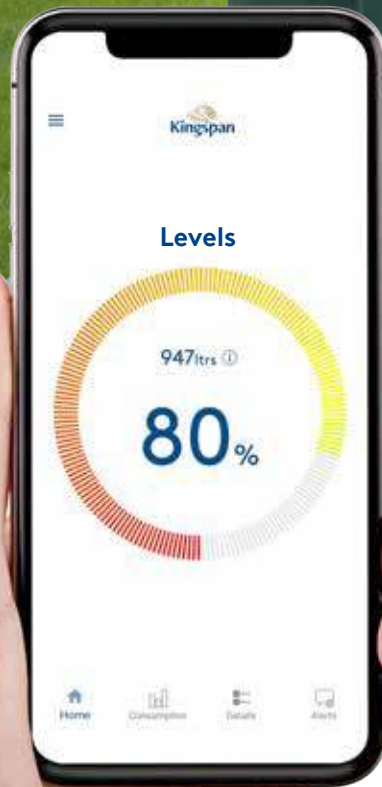
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