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A positive solution to major problems...

We reach the start of another heating season after an important summer for our industry. At the OFTEC conference in June we launched our vision for the future of off grid domestic heating in England and Wales. The document presents a positive solution to two of the biggest problems



our government faces – how to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in a way that is both affordable and practical. It offers a compelling alternative to previous government policy and one that could provide a bright future for liquid fuel heating. If you haven't read it yet, see page 6 for more details and how to get a copy.

Among the challenges the government faces, few are bigger than the fall-out resulting from the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower. It was an incident that brought our building regulations into sharp focus and we are right to question whether they are fit for purpose. While heating was not a contributory factor in the tragedy, a review of the regulations that govern our buildings and building services is long overdue.

To retain confidence and ensure high standards of safety, both customers and technicians need a regulatory framework that is fit for purpose and OFTEC will push for a review. In the meantime, this tragedy has demonstrated through coverage by the media that, when things go wrong, the spotlight shines on everyone involved and that actions have to be justified, whether we believe regulations to be correct or not.

The issue of standards is also at the heart of another industry 'hot potato', the report produced by Peter Bonfield, called 'Every Home Counts'. Following its publication, a series of industry-led sub-groups have been tasked with implementing the report's recommendations. One proposal is for a new 'quality mark' to make it easier for consumers to identify and select good contractors from a wide range of building trades. It sounds a good idea but there's a catch – it probably means yet more hoops to jump through and more cost for heating businesses to absorb. OFTEC has joined with other heating industry groups to resist any proposals that will increase the burden on technicians.

Talking of high standards, OFTEC now has more than 9,000 registered technicians and, for most, a wish to do the job properly is a key reason why they join. So, with the oil price still very low, I hope your business is thriving.

Paul Rose

Chief Executive Officer
OFTEC

OFTEC conference focuses on the future

This year's OFTEC AGM and conference may go down as a significant moment for our industry. This is because it featured the launch of what many hope will become an important and influential document – OFTEC's vision for the future of off-grid domestic heating in England and Wales.

OFTEC's vision challenges previous government policy by proposing instead a new two-stage approach to tackle the challenges of home energy efficiency and carbon reduction. This would see a boiler replacement programme in the short term (2018-2022), followed by the introduction of a low carbon liquid fuel as a replacement to kerosene from 2022. **See page 6 for full report on OFTEC's vision of the future.**

Also at the conference, outgoing chairman Nick Hawkins, director of commercial operations at Kingspan Environmental, used his speech to celebrate another strong year for both the industry and for OFTEC.

Boiler sales had increased by 15%, further building on the excellent growth seen in 2015, and oil prices were predicted to remain low for some time to come, enabling the industry to retain its competitive edge.

Other conference presentations saw Tristan Suffys of Eurofuel provide a timely update on the heating situation in Europe, while Martin Cooke, CEO of EOGB Burners, showcased their modulating burner developments that will improve efficiency while reducing harmful emissions.

At the AGM Grant Engineering director, Niall Fay, officially took over the two-year position of OFTEC chairman from Nick Hawkins.



OFTEC's new chairman, Niall Fay, with Paul Rose and outgoing chairman, Nick Hawkins

Website update

It's good to be optimistic, but sometimes it can catch you out – and OFTEC's website upgrade project is one such example! We were hopeful that it would go live earlier in the year, but some technical issues have held things up – and for much longer than we expected.

Rather than going live early, and run the risk of inconveniencing our customers, we have chosen to wait until we are more confident that all is well. As *Oil Installer* was going to press, final testing was taking place, so we now expect the site to go live in the early autumn. Look out for announcements in the OFTEC e-News soon.

Oil Installer is celebrating its 10th anniversary!



The first edition of *Oil Installer* – the magazine for OFTEC registered installers, technicians and companies – was published in late summer 2007. The magazine very quickly took root and blossomed into what it is today – the quarterly authoritative voice of the oil heating industry in UK and Ireland!

Much has changed during the past decade, and we are delighted to include throughout this special 10th anniversary edition comments and reminiscences from some of the industry's most influential businesses.

Oil Installer would like to say a very big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the success of the magazine over the past ten years!

Staff changes at OFTEC

OFTEC has welcomed a number of new faces to its staff team recently.

Judy Mostert, Melissa Mayne and Catherine West have joined the registration team while Joe Bath has switched from a role as an OFTEC inspector in Wales to a new role as part of the technical support team. John Whitehall has joined as a new inspector, covering the south west of England, and a new compliance manager, Colin Aldridge, joined OFTEC in mid-July.



News faces on the OFTEC team – Joe, John, Catherine, Melissa and Judy

New technical manager appointed

Steve Webster has joined OFTEC as technical manager.

With more than 30 years' experience, Steve began his career as a research and development engineer for a large telecoms company where he gained an extensive knowledge of engineering processes and control systems. However, during this time Steve undertook a property renovation project and developed a passion for plumbing, heating and heating control systems which led him to retrain and qualify as a heating and plumbing technician.



OFTEC technical manager Steve Webster

In 2006 he set up his own business focusing on the design, installation and maintenance of oil, gas and renewable heating and plumbing solutions. With a firm belief in the importance of demonstrating competence and professionalism, Steve was both OFTEC and GasSafe registered, held MCS accreditation for a number of renewable technologies, and was a WaterSafe industry approved plumber. He is registered as an Eng Tech with the Engineering Council and remains a member of the Chartered Institute of Plumbing & Heating Engineering.

In his new role with OFTEC, Steve will draw on his extensive theoretical and practical knowledge to provide expert advice and guidance to OFTEC technicians, sector professionals and consumers.

"Blackie"

It is with regret but happy memories that we have to report the passing of Blackie (Edwin Black 1938-2017), an original oil Cory boy from the early 1960s, an independent oil boiler engineer, one of the first OFTEC registered servicing and commissioning technicians and an infamous OFTEC Inspector.

Blackie was passionate about the oil industry and its engineers, even setting up and running his own domestic oil boiler at the OFTEC bio-liquid field trial control site, from which much important data was collected. Those who met Blackie, especially when he came to see them in his old campervan and wearing his trademark deerstalker hat, will never forget him.



Introducing OFTEC's vision for the future of off-grid domestic heating...

As reported in the last issue of *Oil Installer*, OFTEC's vision document is designed to influence government policy at a time when the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is still considering the responses to its domestic heating consultation, which finished in January.

OFTEC's proposals to improve energy efficiency and carbon reduction for off-grid homes in England and Wales were officially presented at the trade association's annual conference and AGM, in June, where new chairman, Niall Fay of Grant Engineering, was also welcomed to the post.

Commenting on OFTEC's vision, Paul Rose said: "Improving energy efficiency and carbon reduction for off-grid homes is an issue which must be urgently addressed.

"OFTEC has taken the lead and developed what we believe is a practical, affordable and effective solution which addresses the Department of Business, Energy and Industry's four key requirements: to keep energy bills low; cost effectively reduce carbon emissions; ensure a secure, resilient energy supply; and avoid unreasonable upfront costs for consumers in the process.

"We now need to share this vision and its clear benefits with government and other stakeholders, and ask for the support we need to progress our plans to the next stage. Time is ticking and we can't afford to leave anything to chance. All cost effective, pragmatic measures must now be considered to accelerate the UK's progress towards its carbon reduction targets."

As most *Oil Installer* readers will know, there are two strands to the

current domestic heat policy – ECO for people on very low incomes, and the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) for homeowners who install renewable heating. The RHI was designed to help eradicate oil, as this was seen as the first step towards the total decarbonisation of our heating. But, after three years it is clear that the RHI will never achieve its intended purpose and is actually a very expensive and poorly thought-out policy.

Expensive and inconvenient for the consumer

There are several reasons for this. The first is that the renewable heating it supports is expensive, and often difficult to fit into existing homes. For example, heat pumps – which are the government's preferred heat option – cost between three to five times as much as a typical replacement boiler. Retrofitting them into older homes usually requires other upgrades such as oversized radiators and/or improvements to the thermal efficiency of the building itself – all adding cost and inconvenience to the consumer.

Subsidising the replacement of the UK's 1.5 million oil boilers in this way would cost the public billions of pounds, and that's without the upgrades to the national grid that would be needed.

Another important factor, as any installer knows, is that most replacement boilers are distress purchases and need to be installed quickly, giving consumers little time to consider alternative options such as renewable technologies. A drop-in replacement is invariably the cheapest

and most practical solution. Add in the low running cost of oil and gas boilers and it isn't hard to see why heat pumps are not an attractive retrofit proposition in most cases.

OFTEC believes that heat pumps are best suited to new homes and that tax payers should not be asked to fund them in the retrofit market, where they are probably only viable with the help of large subsidies.

Instead, OFTEC has proposed that there should be a scrappage scheme to replace older boilers with new condensing models. OFTEC's independently verified calculations show that offering a modest incentive of just £400 per appliance would be five times more effective at reducing carbon emissions than the existing RHI scheme. We also know that consumers would support this simple, affordable solution.

As well as tackling carbon reduction and energy efficiency, this approach would pave the way for phase two of OFTEC's proposal – the roll out of a renewable bio-liquid fuel to replace the fossil fuels we currently use.

The idea of 'greening the fuel' rather than replacing the appliance is rapidly gaining support across the heating industry, and for good reason – it offers a much more practical and affordable option for both government and consumers alike, and the development of low carbon solutions for gas and liquid fuels is already underway.

Want to find out more? To receive a copy of the Vision document, email: vision@oftec.org. If you would like a hard copy, please include your full address details.



Richard Gamble

It is with sadness that we must report the passing of Richard Gamble (1946-2017) who was involved with OFTEC's registration scheme from its conception (Oftec Reg C30).

Whilst running his own successful heating business, Richard gave a considerable amount of his personal time to OFTEC and the wider industry through his contribution to the Registered Technicians Committee RTC/1, which was formed to provide direct engagement with technicians following the introduction of the oil competent persons scheme in 2002.

In recognition of his skills and standing, Richard was once invited to become an OFTEC inspector, but due to his overarching loyalty to his customers he chose to remain with Heat Plant Services in Bracknell, Berkshire.

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New fuel tank valve packs available from OFTEC Direct

Following on the launch of the popular Ultra Compact fuel tank valve last year, OFTEC Direct now stocks four tank packs which incorporate the Teddington branded oil filter valve (OFV).

These neatly-boxed units offer both single and double outlet options in a variety of directional outlet formats, making them a useful addition to any tank installer's van stock.

The Ultra Compact valve is manufactured primarily of nickel plated brass and incorporates intervals of stainless steel, PTFE & Viton. This combination of materials makes the valve compliant with all fuels of today, but also with the liquid fuels of the future – right up to biofuel concentrations of 100%.

In addition, the British made tee and elbow fittings supplied in three of the four packs incorporate Viton O rings. These provide easy assembly for the installer and a strong joint downstream of the vessel's isolation facility.

For the next three months prices will start at £17.25 for the most basic pack, while the double outlet version (pictured) costs £39.50. Visit the OFTEC Direct website for more details.

www.oftecdirect.com



OFTEC event news

Earlier this year OFTEC went on the road, attending several trade events, including the popular Installer Show in Coventry during May.

This autumn we are on our travels again, and this time we will be attending the Scottish installer show – InstallerScotland – on the 6th/7th September at SEC, Glasgow. The event will feature the usual blend of trade stands and practical demonstrations, making it a must-visit event for all installers who want a fun and informative day out. You'll find OFTEC at stand P250 and to book your place in advance, visit: www.installershow.com

OFTEC is hoping to attend two trade shows on the Channel Islands during October – Romerils in Jersey, and DHS in Guernsey.

Brexit and Europe

More than a year on from the Brexit vote, there is still considerable uncertainty about what form the UK's relationship with the EU will take after March 2019, and what the consequences of any new trading agreements will be for businesses.

Far from strengthening the government's mandate, the recent general election has left it in a weakened position, although this may lead to a more conciliatory approach to the negotiations and increases the possibility of a 'softer' Brexit.

With manufacturers and markets in both the UK and Republic of Ireland, the oil heating industry could be impacted by any changes that add cost to the movement of goods. The removal of legislative links to Europe may also impact on the regulations that govern heating but, like everything else, there is no clarity yet on what may happen. However, there are good reasons to assume that any changes to legislation will not happen quickly.

Meanwhile, OFTEC's European partner, Eurofuel, has continued its important work in defence of the oil heating industry. This follows on from their recent report on the significant steps being taken by governments, at both national and regional level in Europe, to limit the use of oil heating, as previously reported in *Oil Installer*.

These efforts, which are part of wider moves to reduce carbon emissions, are likely to intensify and must serve as a wake-up call for our industry.

The drive to reduce carbon emissions will continue, irrespective of Brexit, so we must take all necessary steps to provide a low carbon solution that we can be part of. The proposals contained in OFTEC's vision document could form a crucial part of this work.

Over the past 10 years the oil heating industry has maintained its market share despite renewable heating products threatening its market. Heating oil prices rise and fall and yet it remains the most competitive fuel in the off-grid market.



Atkinson Equipment has encouraged the industry to demonstrate best practise when installing oil heating systems and has achieved its goal of designing and manufacturing the unique Tanktop valve. The Tanktop has all the required features for a top off-take system in one unit, including anti-syphon.

Industry standards have certainly improved over the past 10 years with the encouragement of the environmental agencies and OFTEC whilst the whole industry has greatly benefited from dissemination of information to heating engineers via *Oil Installer*.

– **Peter Carter, technical support consultant**

Can you afford to write a cheque for £30,000-£750,000?

By Alan Black

If you do not have adequate insurance to protect yourself in the event of a legal claim against you, then be prepared to have to shell out an awful lot of money!

The figures in the above headline are the range of financial claims being levied against oil heating engineers that are currently on my desk, and in which I am involved as an expert witness for the courts, appointed by the engineer's legal defence teams. So, will your insurance cover you if you end up in a similar position?

To answer that question, it's essential to understand the difference between public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance and why you need both. The correct insurance industry explanations were given by Judy Hadden in the spring edition of *Oil Installer* magazine, but let's put it into field terms.

Public Liability Insurance: required every time we do a job of work

This is normally expected to cover you for on-site accidents. For example, when you knock a vase off a shelf, burn the carpet, scorch the wall, spill some oil or drip sludge out of a radiator on to the owner's cream shag pile carpet. But many oil engineers expect public liability to cover them for oil-related incidents as well – and not just when on-site, but between service visits too.



It's the oily claims and incidents that occur during a service visit, and worse-still after we have left site, which appear to be the ones some insurers are not covering in the small print. You know, the "little incidents" such as 2,000 litres of kerosene lost into a dwelling from a 'flexi' which let go three months after fitment, or a hidden filter bowl leaking underground into the customer's and their neighbour's houses! The best advice is, if in doubt, check your policy or speak to your insurer.

Professional Indemnity Insurance: required every time we open our mouths!

This is normally expected to cover professional activities, such as system design and specifications given as compliant, but which are later called into question. For example, the correct sizing of a replacement boiler using the Energy Savings Trust CE54 form, or heat loss calculations and correct radiator sizing such as is contained in the Domestic Heating Design Guide, etc. The fact is, we are all human and, as my old chap used to say, "the only buggers who don't make mistakes are those that do nothing!" This is why we have insurance – because we are human and not infallible.

To take a typical real-world example, when you supply and fit a new oil tank you take "professional design" responsibility. That means it's your responsibility to make sure that what you fit is of the correct type and specification, is itself fit for purpose and is fitted correctly.

You must also not forget that even as a service engineer you give "professional" advice to our customers which, if not clearly explained, or incorrectly applied by your customers, can lead to consequential claims being levied against you. Just think about the potential consequences of not completing an OFTEC TI/133D risk assessment form correctly. For example, of the customer "believing" or "understanding" that there is nothing wrong with having an old single skinned tank in their garden, which subsequently fails and causes a pollution incident. It's a situation that can be pretty financially horrendous, both for the customer and the last engineer on site.

It is important to note that legal claims are based upon what a civil court could reasonably expect a "reasonably competent" engineer to have done under the circumstances. The measure of what is deemed "reasonable" is not as you might expect. The civil judgement is not restricted to what is legally required under law such as Building Regulations, which are mandatory, but against what the engineer "should" have done, such as in accordance with industry standards and codes of practice – in other words British Standards and OFTEC technical books.

The greatest industry legal risk I encounter is where single skinned oil tanks are being installed at domestic premises "because it isn't mandatory under the Building Regulations to provide secondary containment", even though the provision of secondary containment with all new and replacement domestic oil storage tanks has been a civil (British Standard) recommendation since 1st January, 2015 in BS 5410 Part 1 2014.

Please do not think that getting a customer to "sign a disclaimer" exempts you from completing a compliant installation as the definition of negligence is doing something that you know is wrong, and knowing that it is not as it should be. Does your insurance cover you for negligence as well?

10
years

BES has always listened to their customers and after primarily starting in gas and LPG, oil was a natural progression. BES delivers next day all around the UK which is vital for customers in far flung corners that are not linked to the grid.

Oil Installer has always played an integral part in highlighting to readers that when they need plumbing, heating and oil supplies....FAST...we've got it!

– Sarah Meredith, managing director

Householders warned about home heating DIY dangers



As part of OFTEC's work to promote registered technicians, the trade association has been using the consumer media to highlight that heating repairs are best left to the professions and that householders should think twice before they attempt to repair their own heating system to avoid the potential dangers of a bodged job.

Typical 'DIY fails' include trying to service or replace a broken down boiler, moving a heating oil tank to a new location, accidentally blocking up flues and attempting to fit new radiators.

In a message to householders, Malcolm Farrow, OFTEC's marketing and communications manager, commented: "It is easy to get carried away and attempt to fix or repair jobs which really should be left to the experts. Some registered technicians have raised concerns over the growing trend of DIY heating fixes.

"Undertaking this kind of work without appropriate training is fraught with risk, not just to you but also your family and neighbours. It can potentially lead to a fire or explosive hazard or the possibility

of a serious fuel leak. There is also the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning which is notoriously hard to detect because it is a clear and odourless gas – but it can kill.

"A botched job can also leave you in the cold with a heating system that is even more costly and time consuming to repair."

Householders experiencing problems with their heating system are advised to always contact a local Gas Safe (for gas heating) or OFTEC (for heating oil and solid fuel) registered technician to deal with the issue professionally.

OFTEC has also been advising consumers to have their heating systems serviced in readiness for the colder weather of autumn and winter, and that by using a registered technician, they can be confident the work will be completed professionally and to a high standard. The association has stressed that this is particularly worthwhile for oil heated households that are continuing to benefit from a significant fall in the price of oil, helping them make major savings.

Danfoss is pleased that the RHI has had minimal effect on the oil heating industry which goes to show the level of consumer and technician confidence that remains in oil heating. This is in part due to hard work in protecting the image of our industry by producing highly efficient boilers and components that are used within these products.

We constantly use *Oil Installer* to get our message to the market as it reaches not only the engineers but the wholesalers and manufacturers. It is the best form of communication to reach such a number of relevant customers.

– Mark McElroy, key account manager

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Taking the frustration out of OFTEC registration renewal

One of the most regular frustrations that OFTEC hears from registered businesses is that they often forget their annual registration renewal. This can cause inconvenience when tendering for work, self-certifying work, or buying supplies from OFTEC Direct at preferential rates.

To solve the problem, OFTEC has improved the online renewal system so the next time you renew through your online registration account you will be automatically enrolled into a new service called the 'automatic renewal service'. This service will keep your OFTEC registration continuous (subject to you maintaining current qualifications) by conveniently billing your credit/debit card when you are due to renew in exactly one year's time. Only one year registrations are included in the service. Those who choose to register for five years, or who are on PAS2030, MCS or Part P registration, will not be enrolled on to the automatic renewal service.

The key benefits of automatic renewal are:

- Peace of mind about your registration not expiring
- Time saved in that you don't have to do anything. You will receive by post a few days later a receipt invoice and updated registration certificate and technician ID card(s)

- Convenience in that you will enjoy continuous registration until you inform us you no longer wish to continue, or 'opt out' via your registration account

To remind you about your automatic renewal OFTEC will send an electronic notification six weeks in advance of your next payment, advising you of the amount and the date it will be taken. This will give you ample time to stop the automatic renewal if it is no longer required.

You can 'opt out' of automatic renewal at any time by logging on to your OFTEC account at www.ofteconline.com, clicking on the 'disable automatic registration renewal' button and following the on-screen instruction. If you choose to opt out, you will need to renew your registration manually when it expires.

It is important to remember that if you do not renew by the expiry date, you will lose your registration privileges and, after six-months, you will be treated as a 'new applicant' should you apply to re-join OFTEC, which means you will have to pay the joining fee again.

We hope this new system takes the pain out of remembering to renew your registration year-on-year and makes running your heating business just a little bit easier.

10
years

Apart from B10 compliance, the oil burner industry has experienced relative stability over the last decade. However, it is now facing a monumental adjustment thanks to the impending Energy Related Products Directive (ErP) in 2018. This is set to reshape the burner market, with the need for many manufacturers to completely redesign their burners in order to achieve the low NOx levels required.

As a manufacturer, and as part of the Ariston Thermo Group, **Ecoflam** has continued to invest heavily in R&D to ensure it remains at the forefront of technological advancements, including yellow flame, blue flame and fully modulating blue flame burners. This high level of competence has meant Ecoflam is always ahead of the development curve and able to offer the latest products to meet the standards of today – and the future.

Oil Installer has been key to the communication of these developments, with the publication allowing us to effectively promote Ecoflam's products and key messages to the UK's installers and engineers.

– **Mark Bingley, managing director**

Top accolade for family business

An OFTEC registered Essex heating business with offices in Thurrock and Wickford has been crowned East and East Anglia Family Business of the Year 2017. Warmer Homes Heating and Renewables, owned by brothers Steve and

Andy Pearce, was crowned regional winners of the award during a ceremony at the Mayfair Hotel in London in June.

Warmer Homes Heating and Renewables, which specialises in boiler replacement and central heating services, was established in 2014 following the Pearce family's desire to create a business that puts the customer at the heart of everything they do, and members of the family are involved in every stage of the business.

Steve Pearce told *Oil Installer*: "We are absolutely thrilled to be the winners of the East and East Anglia Family Business of the Year title. These awards recognise the role families play in business across the UK – and family really is key to the successful running of our business. Members of our family are involved in every aspect of what we do, from the initial meeting of customers right through to handing over of the boiler equipment following installation."

www.warmerhomesuk.com



Members of the Pearce family of Warmer Homes Heating & Renewables collect the award for East and East Anglia Family Business of the Year

EOGB supports business growth with new appointment

Burner manufacturer and distributor EOGB Energy Products Ltd has announced the appointment of Phil Pett as technical sales manager.

Phil joins the company with over 14 years' experience in the combustion industry, starting his career as a design engineer before moving into export sales in the Middle East and Africa for a combustion technology company.

Phil is based in Portsmouth and in his new role at EOGB will be responsible for all industrial and commercial burner sales across the UK.



Phil Pett, EOGB's new technical sales manager

Commenting on his appointment, Phil said: "I'm delighted to join the team at EOGB. It is a forward-thinking company with a very positive future and I'm thrilled to be on board during this exciting time of growth."

Paul Barritt, managing director at EOGB, said: "Phil's industry knowledge and experience is impressive and he will be a great asset to EOGB as we look to develop and grow the business to meet our customers' changing needs."

EOGB are one of the UK's leading manufacturers and distributors of oil, gas and dual fuel burners for domestic, commercial and industrial applications.

www.eogb.co.uk

Altecnic appoints new technical manager

Heating and plumbing components supplier, Altecnic, has strengthened its technical support team with the appointment of Ed Morris as its new technical manager.



Ed Morris, new technical manager at Altecnic

Ed has worked in the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and plumbing industry for 18 years, having begun his career as an apprentice in 1999. For 15 years he was 3D CAD engineer and service manager for a global pump manufacturer.

Ed says of his new appointment: "I am very excited to be joining Altecnic and will bring a new wave of enthusiasm to the technical team which is growing and developing as the business changes. Altecnic is known throughout the industry for its technical expertise and superb support packages and I am really looking forward to helping the team to move forward in both these areas."

Gary Perry, technical director at Altecnic, adds: "Our reputation is based on top quality products and extremely high standards of service and with Ed joining us we will be able to push ahead still further on those fronts. Ed's appointment is great news for Altecnic and for our customers who, I'm sure, will benefit considerably from his expertise."

Part of the Caleffi group, Altecnic is known for its technical innovation and ability to create solutions to deliver cost savings for the construction and plumbing industries.

www.altecnic.co.uk/

Oil Installer hits the screens!

Over the years, the popular BBC satirical programme, *Have I Got News For You*, has featured some obscure, if not esoteric, magazines in its "missing words" round – including publications such as *Drain Trader*, *Potato Storage International*, *Lighthouse World*, *Modern Ferret*, *Teddy Bear Times*, and even *Fuel Oil News*. So when *Oil Installer* popped up on the screen recently, it seemed quite normal... and in good company!

Naturally team captains Paul Merton and Ian Hislop – together with guest presenter Victoria Coren Mitchell – raised a few laughs at the expense of some of the *Oil Installer* headlines, but, as they say, in the best possible taste!





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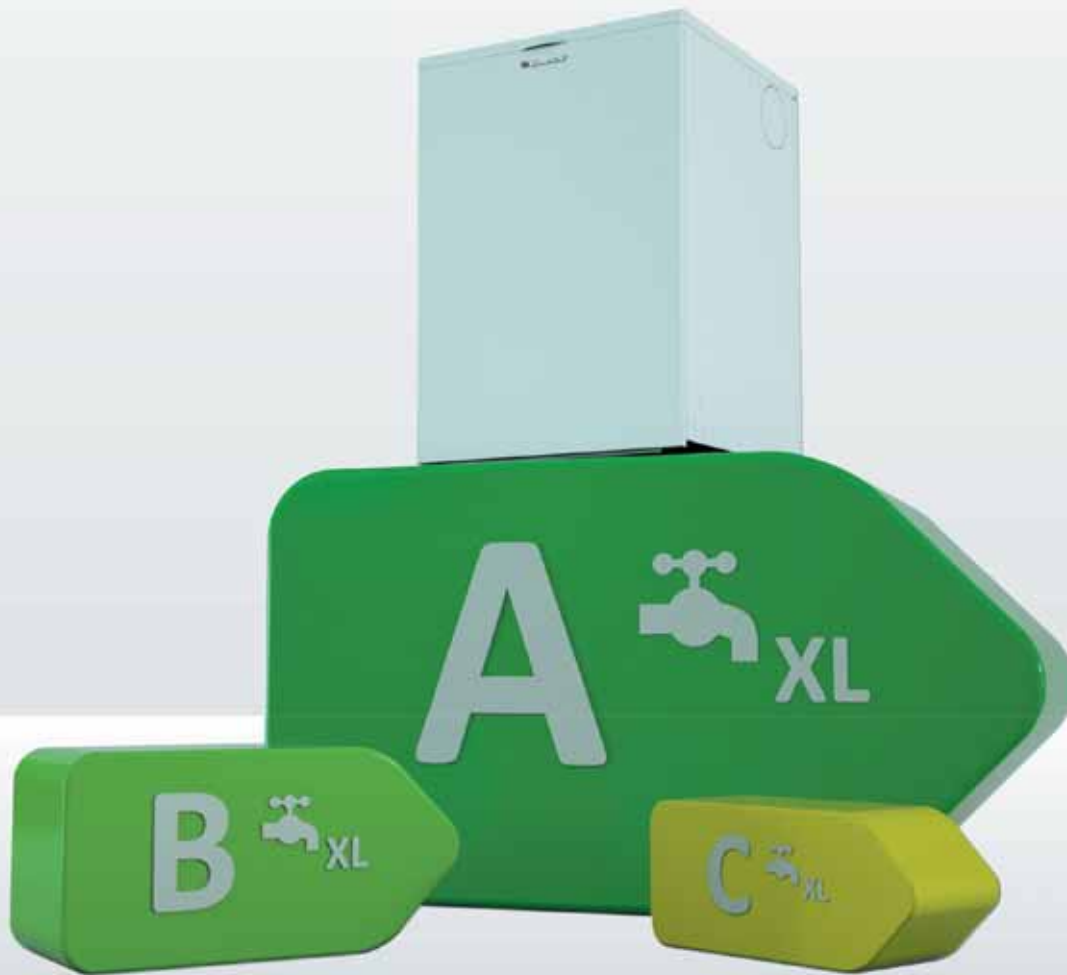
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Silver year for Specflue

Specflue is celebrating its 25th year in business and, says the company, its guiding principles remain the same today as they were in 1992 – a deep commitment to the highest possible quality, pioneering innovation, and a passionate belief in offering outstanding customer service.

During its quarter of a century, Specflue has become one of the UK's foremost suppliers of flue, chimney, wood burning fire and renewable heating products.

The company began life with just five members of staff. Today the company employs more than 100 people and boasts a turnover in excess of £20 million.

The product range it stocks and distributes includes pre-fabricated chimney and flue systems as well as renewable products comprising pellet stoves, biomass boilers, solar thermal and thermal stores.

Apart from product distribution, Specflue also runs a state-of-the-art training centre comprising a mix of classrooms and practical areas to educate and raise standards within the solid fuel and renewables sectors, while also improving product awareness and accrediting competency and skill with national HETAS qualifications and first aid training.

www.specflue.com



Back row: Lee George – operations manager; Ian Sams – commercial director; Richard Hall-Roberts – finance director.
Front row: Jan Fry – managing director; Shirley Williams – director; Jeremy Fry – chairman; ... and Dave the dog!

FTA film focuses on van safety

A thought-provoking film featuring the death of a child in a van collision has been released by the Freight Transport Association (FTA) – the UK's biggest freight transport membership organisation – to highlight the importance of safety and compliance in van operations.

In the film – *One Fateful Day* – the van driver is distracted by talking to his office on his mobile phone. He is also found to have been taking drugs and to have a defective vehicle – all of which have catastrophic consequences for the driver, operations manager and company owner.

The film is the brainchild of FTA's head of vans and LCVs Mark Cartwright, who has recreated the scenario at Van Excellence operational briefings throughout the UK this year to raise awareness of the issues of driver distraction and compliance. FTA's Van Excellence is the only scheme of its kind in Europe, providing a baseline code of practice for operators to ensure they are meeting set standards of safety and compliance and enabling members to share good practice.

Mark said: "This film has been a few years in the making but I wanted to create something that

would really hit home and resonate. The story we've used illustrates some of the typical failings we see amongst van operators who think they're compliant but are only paying lip service. HGVs are strictly regulated through O Licencing but all too often van operations are overlooked, compromising safety and putting drivers and the public at risk.

Recent increases in penalties for mobile phone use while driving and changes to corporate manslaughter legislation have all impacted on van operations, but many operators are unaware of the implications.

Mark added: "Van safety is a serious business and it's vital that operators understand the consequences of not treating it as a priority. This film clearly outlines what can happen from the perspective of the driver, operations manager and company owner. It will serve as a wake-up call to those who are currently turning a blind eye to many of the issues highlighted."

Clips from the film can be viewed on FTA's YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/theftachannel> and the film can be downloaded at: www.vanexcellence.co.uk/one-fateful-day

10
years

Always happy to contribute to *Oil Installer*, **Envirostore Tanks** sends 10th anniversary congratulations.

The publication gives both sides of an argument and always tries to highlight the good things in our industry, rather than focusing on negatives.

One of our highlights over the past 10 years is the fact that industry does seem to be finally waking up to the need to install bunded tanks in all applications. The Welsh government's decision to make this law is a move in the right direction.

Among low lights we still see trade bodies and associations failing to work together to hammer out important decisions which would make everyone's life easier. It is good to see OFTEC and the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS) finally working together after all these years.

We wish *Oil Installer* all the best for another successful 10 years. Keep flying the flag for the industry and continue to advise us of the facts not the fiction!

– **Richard Marsh, director**

NEW RANGE COOKER SPARES BROCHURE

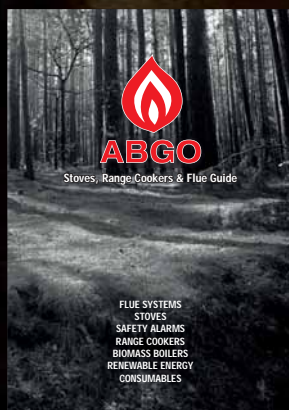
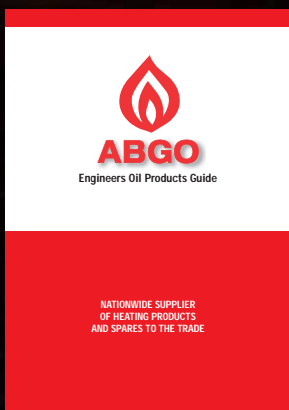


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Home Energy Scotland loan scheme "hugely encouraging"

A spokesperson for a leading UK manufacturer of heating and hot water technologies has praised a new incentive designed to encourage homeowners and landlords in Scotland to make energy and money-saving improvements to their properties.

The Home Energy Scotland Loans Scheme offers the opportunity to make a variety of energy efficient improvements in the home, with a total of £34 million in funding available in interest-free loans for measures ranging from insulation and double-glazing to high efficiency boilers and renewables systems. The policy even sets aside selected funds in grants, giving homeowners the opportunity to receive up to 25% of their loan in cashback for a limited time only.

Formed by joining two existing programmes, updates to the scheme now mean consumers can make any changes to their homes at the same time – a practical approach which Neil Schofield, head of external affairs at Worcester, Bosch Group, has praised.

He commented: "In order to encourage the UK's homeowners to adapt a proactive attitude toward their heating efficiency, the aim should always be to make things as simple as possible for both the installer and the householder. Combining two schemes has allowed policy-makers to cut red tape and make more funds available, and this is a commonsense tactic which should be commended.

"The Home Energy



Neil Schofield, head of external affairs at Worcester, Bosch Group

Scotland Loans Scheme is certainly something manufacturers and installers can get behind. We are very much hopeful that, should the scheme prove a success, we may see similar incentives adopted throughout the UK."

www.worcester-bosch.co.uk

10
years

EOGB has celebrated many successes over the past decade, including opening a purpose-built training facility in Cambridgeshire, the 10th anniversary of its popular XSeries burner range, and has developed and launched the industry's first fully-modulating blue flame domestic oil burner to run on kerosene – Sapphire.

One low point in the industry over the past 10 years has been the exclusion of bio-liquids from the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme. The introduction of EU legislation which penalised oil-fired equipment was also disappointing. However, a highlight has been seeing NOx emissions finally set to a sensible level after the initial limits were totally unacceptable. We are excited for the new challenges ahead that will shake up the industry for a cleaner image.

Oil Installer is an excellent publication which is always well read and respected.

– **Martin Cooke, technical director**

Plumb Center launches commercial online hub

Plumb Center has launched a dedicated commercial plumbing and heating section on its website designed to make life easier for installers looking for commercial-grade products and helpful advice.

The site, which features more than 2,500 products, has been launched in response to customers asking for more sector-specific products to be all in one place. It also allows Plumb Center to collate its branch network's extensive knowledge and commercial insight into one regularly updated hub.

With more products being added to the site all the time, installers and contractors can log in to see technical details, sector specific information and view their closest commercial branch and account manager if they require.

Richard Redfern, category director for plumbing at Plumb Center,

said: "Venturing into new sectors is challenging enough, without having to trawl through a large database of products to find which ones are right for the job. Our new commercial hub allows you to search by application rather than product, which is fast and simple.

"We are working to evolve the content and aim to bring sector specific brochures, extend the product range, add content and videos relevant to the commercial sectors and to provide training and explanations of the relevant specifications and regulations that guide commercial product decisions."

The website features products from all the leading brands including Armitage Shanks, Bristan, Geberit, Rada, Saracen, Fluidmaster, Delabie and many more.

www.plumbcenter.co.uk/commercial

10
years

For reasons that still escape **Fuel Additive Science Technologies (FAST)**, even educated and trained people within the oil installation industry can still recoil when fuel additives are mentioned and will find any excuse under the sun not to use them or to actively denigrate their use. The science is well-founded, however, and the active components contained in reputable products are little different to those used in road fuel day in day out.

exocet® products have been added to literally billions of litres of kerosene for more than 10 years, providing benefits and solving problems. Over the next 10 years why not take another look at fuel additives?

– **Neil Ryding, managing director**

Leading the way in blue flame technology...

David Hall, UK director of Firebird Products, looks at the role his company has played in the development of blue flame technology and how it is being utilised to not only meet, but to exceed the stringent new legislative requirements of the Ecodesign Directive

The second phase of the Ecodesign Directive (EU813/2013), which comes into effect from September 2018, will introduce new limits on flue gas emissions and states that harmful NOx emissions from domestic oil-fired boilers must not exceed 120mg/kWh. In response to these changes in legislation – and further planned changes in 2022 – the UK heating industry has seen the rapid introduction of high-efficiency blue flame oil-fired boilers.

A common assumption however is that blue flame technology has only been developed in response to these pending changes in legislation, when in fact it has been used throughout Europe for over 30 years.

Nitrogen oxide emissions – or NOx emissions as they are more commonly known – is the general term that relates to the release of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and the chemically related colourless gas nitrogen monoxide (NO). These gases are released into the atmosphere when fossil fuels are burned. The high temperatures produced during the combustion process result in high levels of nitrous oxides being liberated, which medical evidence suggests can lead to health problems when in excessive concentrations.

As well as being responsible for the destruction of vegetation, these gases are known to be a major contributor in the formation of acid rain due to their water solubility. When in high concentrations, these potentially harmful by-products of the combustion process are thought to contribute significantly to global pollution.

The limit on NOx emissions produced by oil-fired boilers is outlined in the Ecodesign Directive. This legislation governs the design and performance of energy-using products to reduce the amount of energy consumed and the subsequent impact on the environment. The Ecodesign Framework Directive is a European initiative put in place to address climate change. The initiative forms part of Europe's commitment to transform itself into an energy-efficient, low carbon economy and achieve its 20-20-20 target to lower

carbon emissions by 20%, increase energy-efficiency by 20% and increase the share of renewable energies by 20% by 2020.



The MHG blue flame burner

So what is blue flame technology and how does it reduce NOx emissions?

The principle of blue flame technology is simple and is demonstrated by the blue burner range that Firebird have adopted for their Blue Supreme boiler range: Heating oil is converted to a gas at high pressure, through a high tolerance nozzle (using the thermodynamic premixing principle). This is then premixed with the air required for combustion, via a special mixing system diffuser. The perfectly homogenised air/fuel mixture is directed into the centre of the intended burning zone, prior to ignition and the flame produced is channelled down the burner tube to form an intense, elongated flame. A percentage of the hot combustion gasses produced are then recirculated back through slots in the burner head, where a degree of integral reburning takes place. The intensity of the flame, and the recirculation process, burns off high concentrations of NOx that are usually generated in the combustion process.

The result is a reduction in NOx emissions, a substantial reduction in oil consumption and a soot free blue flame.

The history of blue flame technology

The first blue flame burners used by Firebird were developed by German manufacture MHG Heiztechnik GmbH. Firebird have worked in partnership with MHG for many

years and together developed the first mainstream blue flame oil-fired condensing boiler in the UK (the Blue Supreme Range), which has been available for over three years.

Utilising the revolutionary third generation MHG blue flame burner, application figures from the field have shown NOx levels produced to be as low as 65mg/kWh – nearly half the 120mg/kWh limit for 2018. The burner is also fitted with the latest Siemens digital control box providing full diagnostic information to the maintenance engineer.

The Blue Supreme range of domestic oil-fired boilers from Firebird not only exceed the exacting standards of the Ecodesign Directive in terms of lower emissions, but also in terms of performance by achieving high seasonal efficiency ratings of 97.4%* (*SAP 2005 Seasonal Efficiency. Source: www.ncm-pcdb.org.uk/sap). This has been achieved by utilising a patented, high-efficient heat recovery unit in conjunction with the boilers secondary heat exchanger that pre-warms the air required for combustion.

The result – high seasonal efficiency figures that surpass any other boiler in its class. The Firebird Blue Supreme range is available in outputs of 20 and 26kW with internal, external and boilerhouse models. Firebird also manufacture the Enviroblue range of domestic oil-fired boilers which features the Riello RDB BLU burner option. The Enviroblue range is available in outputs of 20-35kW and a wide range of internal and external model options with higher outputs to compliment the range anticipated for 2017.

Any major shake-up to an industry is usually brought about by a significant change in legislation and this is no different for the UK heating industry. With the future looking uncertain there is at least one certainty – that the cutting-edge technology currently available in the UK more than futureproofs the domestic oil boiler market against current and future changes in Ecodesign Directive legislation.

www.firebird.uk.com

PipeSnug makes an immediate impact!

PipeSnug, the new product designed to make installing waste pipes easier and neater, has made a big impact with the trade, following its launch earlier this year by Snug Solutions Ltd.

The evolution of an idea by Chris Burdett, a builder and bricklayer with over 25 years' experience in the trade, PipeSnug is designed so that any plumber or builder can use it to seal the hole where a pipe exits a wall. Traditionally the job is done by pointing or sealing the hole with mortar, silicone or expanding foam which can become messy to prepare and use, and often doesn't look good on the building's exterior.



PipeSnug has already made an impact on the trade...

Since PipeSnug's launch, the Snug Solutions' team, which includes Chris's business partner Alex Lever, has exhibited at InstallerLive, secured distribution with builders' and plumbers' merchants and received significant support from the trade.

"We are delighted by how PipeSnug has now been received by the trade and merchant network after nearly three years of research, development and hard work by myself and Chris to bring the product to market," explains Alex. "We are now looking to expand the range, secure more distribution and look to spread knowledge of the product far and wide!"

PipeSnug can be used in all weathers and on any plumbing or construction project, says the company. The product's snug fit also means that PipeSnug helps to maintain the energy efficiency of the property by tightly filling in any gaps where heat would otherwise escape.

<http://pipesnug.co.uk>

New high-efficiency combi launched by Firebird

Firebird have launched a new high-efficiency combi boiler range. The new Combi HE range offers the homeowner greater performance in terms of efficiency, together with a sleek and stylish new design, which features a hidden control panel, suitable for any kitchen or utility room.

At just under 600mm in width, the boiler has been designed so it can be incorporated into new or existing room configurations. Available in two product ranges with outputs of 20kW, 26kW and 35kW, the Enviroblue Combi HE and Enviromax Combi HE both feature Riello RDB burners, in blue and yellow flame options respectively.

With models available for both internal and external applications, the high level of efficiency is achieved by adopting state-of-the-art-technology, which includes a single high-efficiency Grundfos circulating pump. The upgraded heat exchanger affords a more efficient and rapid heat transfer which further improves the levels of efficiency. Incorporating a robust 'positive shut-off' filling loop and check valve, together with the latest digital burner

control, the Firebird HE Combi range also features electronic diverter valve technology. Designed for ease of maintenance, the diverter valve technology also provides an instant switch over from the direct hot water or central heating function.

The innovative and compact hot water store design easily meets the Ecodesign Directive requirement for combination heaters by achieving a load profile of XL. It also provides excellent hot water performance and flow rates, together with a rapid reheat after water draw-off.

Commenting on the launch, David Hall, UK director of Firebird Products Ltd, said: "The launch of the new Combi HE range is testament to Firebird's ongoing commitment to provide the industry with innovative heating solutions that not only meet, but exceed present and future legislative requirements. The stylish new design and outstanding performance should position the Firebird Combi HE ranges as the number one choice for installers and homeowners alike".

www.firebird.uk.com

More products added to Greenstar Rewards

Worcester, Bosch Group has announced further expansions to its popular Greenstar Rewards promotion, adding some of its most widely-installed boilers to the scheme.

With the incentive offering installers the chance to collect points for the products they install on a daily basis, the manufacturer is helping installers to boost their tallies even quicker with the addition of the Greenstar Compact and Greenstar Classic ranges.

The points that installers collect can be redeemed for a variety of rewards from Worcester-branded workwear and Bosch power tools, to selected training courses.

Now, engineers can collect up to 30 points for each Greenstar CDi Compact they install, and 35 points for

each Greenstar CDi Classic, allowing them to claim for even more of their installs.

Martyn Bridges, director of technical communication and product management at Worcester, Bosch Group, commented: "With so many of our installers regularly fitting boilers from our Compact and Classic ranges, it made perfect sense to add those appliances to the growing list of eligible products.

"Installers are now able to collect points on almost all of our Which? award-winning Greenstar range, as well as a host of eligible accessories. So, whether they focus on gas or oil, it's never been easier for an engineer to build up those points to redeem against a host of rewards."

www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/greenstar-rewards

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England stars take on the Boiler Box Challenge!

Worcester, Bosch Group is inviting installers to take on the "Boiler Box Challenge", after taking ex-England stars Wayne Bridge and Kyran Bracken back to their roots for its "Rely On" campaign.

With the campaign aiming to celebrate the things and people that we rely on every day, Worcester took the two sporting legends from the world of football and rugby back to surprise the players, parents and coaches at their childhood clubs in Southampton and Liverpool.

As well as offering pep talks and coaching sessions, Wayne and Kyran were on hand to deliver hot beverages and snacks to keep parents warm once the matches got underway. After the games, a final surprise was in store – each club being presented with a £1,000 cheque on behalf of the heating and hot water manufacturer.

Then, back on the very pitches where they first learned to play, the ex-pros took on Worcester's Boiler

Box Challenge, which saw the former internationals attempt to chip or throw a football or rugby ball into an empty boiler box.

Now, Worcester is inviting installers to submit their own efforts. From rainbow flicks to scorpion kicks, the manufacturer is asking for the most impressive ways engineers can get a football or rugby ball into an empty boiler box – with a host of signed balls to give away for the most creative clips.

Martyn Bridges, director of technical communication and product management at Worcester, Bosch Group, commented: "Youth sport is an important part of local communities, so we wanted to give something back to the parents and coaches who give up their time and energy every week to celebrate their children's love of sport. Teaming up with Wayne and Kyran was fantastic, and it gave us the idea to challenge installers to show us their skills. All they need is a ball, an empty boiler box and some open space – so we can't wait to see what they can do!"



England soccer star Wayne Bridge takes on the Worcester Boiler Box Challenge

You can watch Wayne and Kyran taking on the challenge on Worcester's social media channels. Then, post your own attempts using

#BoilerBoxChallenge for your chance to win a signed football or rugby ball.

www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/rely

EOGB invests in skills...

Burner manufacturer and distributor EOGB Energy Products Ltd has appointed 25-year-old Harry Holmes to its technical team as a full-time apprentice, enrolling him on to a bespoke training programme to become a fully qualified combustion engineer.

Previously based in the production department, with responsibilities including building EOGB's popular XSeries domestic oil burners, Harry showed a keen interest in engineering and was offered the chance to train up at EOGB by technical director, Martin Cooke.

Harry has since completed a domestic burner course at EOGB and will move on to complete his OFTEC oil and ACS gas qualifications before attending the company's commercial burner course at Baltur in Italy to gain valuable hands-on experience. He has recently achieved his NVQ Level 2 diploma in performing manufacturing operations and will progress on to the Level 3 NVQ diploma in engineering technical support.

In his new role at EOGB, Harry's main responsibility will be overseeing in-house R&D projects, including burner testing and problem-solving.



Harry Holmes becomes a full-time apprentice

Martin Cooke told *Oil Installer*: "We're very pleased to welcome Harry to the technical department at EOGB where I have no doubt he will be a great asset to the team. He has the enthusiasm and potential to become a great combustion engineer."

www.eogb.co.uk

Riello develops new blue flame residential burners

Riello has developed new RDB burners based on blue flame technology, designed to meet the most stringent standards for NOx emissions in oil-fired residential boilers.



The new models include RDB BG BLU, and RDB BX and BT Yellow/BLU as well as two-stage variants on both model families. Riello's two stage operation system with suitable controls allows a significant increase in the overall efficiency of oil fired heating systems, along with reduced electrical consumption, making them the perfect solution for high efficiency residential boilers.

RDB BG BLU two-stage burners are suitable for use with kerosene

and gasoil, utilising Riello's new BG combustion head design for cleaner combustion. The combination of two-stage operation and low NOx emissions makes them suitable for condensing and combination oil boilers.

RDB BG BLU burners use a single motor to drive the coaxial fan and the pump, the latter delivering two stages of pressure. When using gasoil, they offer a turndown ratio of up to 1.5:1.

RDB BX BLU two-stage burners use a new BX combustion head to guarantee low NOx emissions in compliance with the ErP Ecodesign Directive. They are suitable for use with kerosene, using a specially designed kerosene pump, and also incorporate an advanced head-setting system.

All Riello RDB burners can be used in a balanced flue or conventional flue configuration and are designed for ease of installation and servicing.

www.rielloburners.co.uk

How to meet future requirements...

Firebird are offering installers and heating engineers a unique opportunity to learn more about developments in burner technology and how these changes can be adopted to meet future legislative requirements.

Through a series of early evening presentations, guidance will be given on how compliance with the second phase of the Ecodesign Directive, which comes into effect from September 2018, can be met by adopting this technology.

In addition to gaining valuable information on new burner technology, installers and heating engineers will also be able to receive advice on how accessing Eco funding could benefit their own business. Visiting Firebird's new UK headquarters in Plymouth also provides the opportunity to view the 'working' showroom and gain first-hand knowledge of the recently launched Enviroair air source heat pump.

www.firebird.uk.com

Flying start to the year

Burner manufacturer and distributor EOGB Energy Products Ltd has reported a successful first half of 2017, with total burner sales up by 10%.

The number of service aids sold also increased by 15%, while sales of 'Abzorb' organic oil spill products more than doubled compared with the first half of 2016. This is thought to be as a result of an increased focus on environmental issues and prevention of insurance claims.

EOGB has continued to invest heavily in research and development, introducing its first domestic blue flame oil burner, 'Sapphire', at ISH Frankfurt earlier this year.

The company's training services have also continued to increase in popularity. Compared with the first half of 2016, there has been a 300% increase in the number of engineers undertaking unvented hot water training at the facility in Cambridgeshire and a 283% increase in bookings for entry-level OFTEC 50. Additionally, the number of engineers completing their main OFTEC qualifications at EOGB is up by 8% and ACS gas course attendees have more than doubled.

EOGB has also introduced the OFTEC 201 commercial burners course, being the only training provider in the UK to offer additional manufacturer training to satisfy the requirements of BS5410 part 3.

www.eogb.co.uk



10 years ago the oil industry looked as if it was in serious decline due to high oil prices and the concerted efforts from LPG and the renewables sector to take market share.

Following the stabilisation of oil prices, householders have once again realised that oil boilers are a reliable and cost-effective heating option, which has resulted in an increase in boiler sales overall.

The market seems as strong as ever, with recent developments in low NOx technology to meet current and future legislative requirements only helping to further prolong the sector's life.

Firebird were pioneers in the development of blue flame technology in conjunction with German partners MHG Heiztechnik GmbH, together we developed the most efficient domestic oil boiler in Europe. With a presence firmly established in the UK, Firebird will continue to lead the industry by developing market-leading technologies to drive the industry even further; and in doing so create a positive future for oil.

Congratulations to *Oil Installer* for providing such an effective voice for the oil industry over the last 10 years.

– **David Hall, UK director**

Ecoflam celebrates 25 years in the UK burner market

This year Ecoflam is celebrating 25 years at the forefront of product design, development and manufacturing in the UK burner market.

The company is widely considered to be a leading authority on the technology, with one of the largest portfolios of products in the market. Today, Ecoflam offers a full range of blown air pressure jet burners for all fuels in monoblock and duoblock versions up to 45MW.

Since the company's UK inception in 1992, Ecoflam has built up an enviable reputation within the heating market, especially for its compact, highly efficient burners, such as the Max Oil range. It is able to offer a full spectrum of outputs for the UK heating market, from wall hung domestic boilers and central heating range cookers, through to the floor standing commercial units, hot water and diathermic boilers.

Having established itself in the sector from the outset, Ecoflam has, in more recent years, broadened its appeal. It is now a significant supplier of burners to many other industries, including agricultural and food; textile, glass and ceramic; incinerator and waste; chemical and petrochemical; wood pellet, as well as process. Part of the company's success is due to its ability to customise and adapt units to suit a customer's specific needs, such as including pre-purge or continuous aeration, or direct or indirect hot air production.



Research and development

As an original manufacturer and a major company within the internationally renowned Ariston Thermo Group, Ecoflam has continued to invest heavily in research and development over the last 25 years, ensuring it remains at the forefront of technological advancements.

This has included yellow flame, blue flame and fully modulating blue flame burners, and such a high level of expertise has allowed Ecoflam to continuously be ahead of the

development curve, offering the very latest products to meet standards of the day – and the future.

This commitment to continuous improvement has been reflected in the company's decision to increase warranties on many of its burner models to three years. This confidence in the product has clearly filtered through to customers, with Ecoflam burners now being specified on more projects and contracts than ever before – resulting in a doubling of UK business in the last five years.

As part of a worldwide group in heating technology, Ecoflam UK has become the main UK distributor for ELCO Burners. This allows Ecoflam to offer a broader range of burners for heating and industrial applications, from 11kW to 80MW.

The future

With the burner industry facing monumental adjustments in the years ahead, due to the impending Energy Related Products Directive (ErP) in 2018, Ecoflam is well placed within the UK market to be a trusted source of compliant products. While the company already supplies burners to meet ErP, it is in the process of updating its burners to achieve the low NOx levels required from future legislation. This will ensure Ecoflam UK continues to offer customers the finest, high-quality products for decades to come.

www.ecoflam.co.uk

Ecoflam celebrates with ticket giveaway

To celebrate the company's silver milestone, Ecoflam is offering customers the opportunity to win two VIP tickets to the final race of British Touring Car calendar at Brands Hatch in late September. To be in with an chance of grabbing the exclusive tickets, customers should register the serial number of any Ecoflam burner purchased between 1st May and 31st August 2017 – calling 01905 788010.

Commenting on the company's achievements, Mark Bingley, Ecoflam's operations director for the UK and Ireland, said: "We are obviously delighted to celebrate our 25th year of trading in the UK and Ireland, and this competition is a way of thanking our customers for their loyalty and support over the years, providing them with the opportunity to experience a great day out at a fantastic British sporting event."



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POINTS

WORK WEAR
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POINTS

COLLECT
25
POINTS

POWER TOOLS
50-250
POINTS

Commercial bunding – a legal requirement in Northern Ireland

The legislation to introduce secondary containment or bunding to commercial oil storage in Northern Ireland was introduced back in 2010 with a five-year lead-in period to give commercial businesses time to upgrade their storage.

While many businesses have upgraded their oil storage there are many hundreds of local businesses that have not yet complied with the legislation.

To remind businesses of their obligation, OFTEC and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) joined forces recently to launch a campaign on oil tank awareness for business owners. The campaign is reminding businesses of ALL sizes that the Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) Regulations (NI) 2010 primarily required any above ground oil tank over 200 litres to be provided with 110% secondary containment by December 2015.

Kevin McGrady, emergency pollution officer with NIEA, commented: "There were almost 150 oil related incidents confirmed by NIEA in 2016 and this awareness raising initiative aims to help reduce the number of oil related pollution incidents throughout Northern Ireland."

David Blevings, OFTEC Ireland manager, added: "Oil is a very safe and useful product if stored correctly. The aim of this joint campaign with NIEA is to remind business owners that, if they have an oil tank on the premises, it should be installed and serviced appropriately. This legislation affects all businesses and includes offices, warehouses, factories, garages and churches.

"Any storage over 200 litres requires secondary containment and we would encourage OFTEC registered technicians to advise business owners of the requirement to upgrade their storage." Further information is available at www.daera-ni.gov.uk



David Blevings, OFTEC Ireland manager, and Kevin McGrady, emergency pollution officer at NIEA, are urging business owners to be aware of oil tank regulation requirements and associated fines. The legislation strives to ensure businesses store oil safely to reduce the risk of pollution and offer better protection for the environment

OFTEC consulted by ROI councils

As a widely recognised brand in the Republic of Ireland, OFTEC was recently consulted by local councils on guidelines for housing authorities and the minimum standards for rental accommodation. Following these discussions, the councils have now included references to OFTEC for oil and solid fuel.

The guidelines now recommend the use of a registered technician to demonstrate compliance, while control documentation is recommended for both oil and solid fuel installation. The document references CD11 and T1133 for oil installs and CD80 for solid fuel.

The guidance document was due to be published over the summer months and will be used by all local authorities. This is a positive step and gets the OFTEC brand and awareness in front of decision makers in local government.

We would encourage all technicians to issue the control documents to all customers and employers, including for local council work, to demonstrate that the work has been completed to current regulations, but also to protect yourself by pointing out any deficiencies or rectification requirements.

Always put any advice in writing and keep a copy for yourself as evidence – just in case anything goes wrong!



Congratulations to the Oil Installer team on its 10th anniversary issue from all of us here at **Grant UK!**

The industry has experienced some highs and lows over the past decade. For instance, the move to high efficiency oil-fired condensing boiler technology mandatory in the UK for 10 years now and, of late, we have witnessed even cleaner burning products hit the market, like our VortexBlue blue flame condensing boilers.

Over the last 10 years Grant has continued to develop its product offering and we have also invested heavily in our manufacturing facilities. Above all though we have enjoyed serving an exciting and dynamic marketplace. Who knows what the next 10 years will bring, but one thing is for sure, our commitment to the oil industry remains a priority and we continue to work hard behind the scenes, developing exciting new products.

– Anna Wakefield, marketing and corporate communications manager

OFTEC energy savings drive supported by SEAI

With many households in the Republic of Ireland unaware of the significant savings they could be making on their energy bills, OFTEC is urging consumers to book a professional boiler service that could reduce fuel bills by as much as 10%, saving up to €150 per year.

Recognising that over 600,000 homes in Ireland use oil as their main heating source, OFTEC has produced a series of short, practical videos to help keep households safe and cut bills.

This campaign is very timely with a recent study showing that Ireland is set to be hit hardest by Brexit.

The OFTEC videos aim to arm consumers with tips to make their budgets go further.

The campaign not only focuses on cost and energy savings but reinforces the importance of home heating and oil tank safety to protect homes and the environment.

The new campaign will see OFTEC

registered technicians raising awareness amongst consumers of responsible steps that can be taken to protect homes and ensure storage tanks are fit for purpose.

Tom Halpin, head of communications for the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), said: "We welcome this initiative from OFTEC highlighting the importance of boiler servicing by appropriately trained and qualified personnel. A properly serviced boiler is safer and more reliable which gives homeowners peace of mind. Plus, because it is more efficient, it will save you money as well. Regularly servicing your boiler is as important as regularly servicing your car. And choosing the right person to do it is equally important."

David Blevings, head of OFTEC Ireland, commented: "Feedback from technicians indicate that many households unfortunately only get their boiler cleaned, rather than serviced.

"An OFTEC registered technician will ensure your boiler is serviced correctly

using a flue gas analyser which is the only instrument that can detect carbon monoxide.

"In addition, you will receive a CD11 report advising you of what work has been done, the efficiency level of your boiler and any recommendations to improve your heating system.

"We are delighted to work together with the SEAI in Ireland to bring this message to households, with the independent body reinforcing the importance of using an OFTEC registered technician to ensure a reliable service.

"Organisations such as OFTEC exist to reassure consumers that their home is in good hands. Technicians all have an identification badge with the OFTEC logo clearly visible to enable customers to easily ascertain if the technician is registered."

For more information and to view the videos, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCirzg7kbVhwVupsVK7Ju8IA>

SOLAS adopt OFTEC training

Dublin-based further education and training authority, SOLAS, have adopted the OFTEC syllabus into their plumbing programme which means that all apprentices finishing level 6 from September 2017 will have completed the OFTEC assessments as part of their qualification, and can register with OFTEC on completion of practical experience.

www.solas.ie



Niall Elmes (SOLAS) with Norman Armstrong and Sean McBride (OFTEC)



The last 10 years in the oil heating industry have seen a revolution in the way in which systems are designed and installed.

Whilst we have seen a surge in renewable energy, oil heating is still for many the only sensible heating solution, until hybrid units become more mainstream.

Oil Installer magazine has proven to be the go-to publication to keep up to date and **GTEC Training** has been proud to partner with them on many occasions and with big expansion plans on the horizon be sure to look out for our latest offerings.

– **Griff Thomas, managing director**



Atkinson extends its range of oil heating products with the acquisition of the Fuelstop Fire Valves that is now manufactured in the Westbury facility alongside the Tankmaster, Tanktop and Filstop.



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When is a fire barrier required?

Contrary to general opinion, a fire barrier is not there to stop an oil tank fire spreading to a neighbouring building or adjacent boundary but is to protect the oil tank from a fire originating from within a building.

Current regulations across the UK and Ireland require fire separation distances to be observed when placing a new oil tank. Domestic tanks should be sited:

- 1.8m away from non-fire rated eaves of a building
- 1.8m away from a non-fire rated building or structure (e.g. garden sheds)
- 1.8m away from openings (such as doors or windows) in a fire rated building or structure (e.g. brick built house/garage)
- 1.8m away from oil fired appliance flue terminals
- 760mm away from a non-fire rated boundary such as a wooden boundary fence
- 600mm away from screening (e.g. trellis and foliage) that does not form part of the boundary.

If it is not possible to comply with these requirements, then a fire protection barrier with at least 30 minutes fire rating should be provided. A minimum separation distance of 100mm is required between the tank and fire rated barrier unless a larger distance is specified by the tank manufacturer.

Locally-made solution

One company has developed its own solution to fire barriers after finding difficulties sourcing a locally made product. That company is H&A Mechanical Services which was established in 1993, initially delivering mechanical and electrical services within the social housing market throughout Ireland.

Following major contract wins and their subsequent successful delivery, H&A has established a reputation for quality of workmanship and expertise in its particular field. The business has further diversified into renewable technologies, refurbishment programmes and ECM, and since 2010 has operated a metal fabrication facility in Desertmartin, County Derry.

H&A's Mark Williamson commented: "We opened a fabrication plant to provide H&A with 'in house' solution for various aspects of projects to include such things as fire protection barriers, trunking, boiler houses, fire valve and tiger loop covers.

"Through developing these products and supported by substantial investment in plant, machinery and human resources, we now have a unique manufacturing facility which has the capacity to develop these products to the wider market.

"Oil is a very safe fuel, if stored correctly. Tank protection has become a primary focus for us as we have seen the damage that can result from an oil tank fire."



H&A's fire protection barriers are fully compliant with current industry regulations and have been tested to comply with BS476 Part 22 for integrity and insulation. Standard stock sizes are 1800mm x 1400mm and 1800mm x 1100mm and the manufacturing plant has the facility to produce bespoke product to meet most specific situations.

www.hamechanicalservices.com/services/oil-tank-protection

At **J Seed** we always look forward to receiving our copy of *Oil Installer* and can't believe it's been running for 10 years! Always relevant and informative, we get a good response from articles we contribute or advertisements we place.



For the oil heating industry there is no other publication like it – the oil heating industry can be a rather lonely and isolated place so for many installers the magazine provides a link.

We enjoy reading the installer profiles and like reading about everything that's going on in the industry. We particularly like articles that demonstrate action is being taken on misrepresentation of the OFTEC logo; it's good to see that when installers report misuse action is taken. We also enjoy seeing the rogue's gallery of dodgy tank installation pictures and look forward to the next 10 years of *Oil Installer*.

– **Wendi Whittle, sales manager**

Congratulations on *Oil Installer's* 10th anniversary! **Kingspan Environmental** is delighted to support a magazine that continues to be the trusted voice of the industry.



It's certainly been a busy 10 years and we've all had to adjust to rapid legislative change. Our job as a global manufacturer has been to ensure our customers have solutions that are compliant and which provide safe, secure storage for oil. We continue to innovate in this area, in our determination to create pioneering solutions that help set new industry standards.

We're consulting with key industry partners including installers, oil distributors and heating oil consumers as we develop new generations of tanks – one example being the latest EcoSafe Slimline oil tanks which have one of the smallest footprints available.

– **Kristina McCoy, international marketing executive**

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Warmflow donates latest equipment to SERC

With increasing emphasis on reducing carbon emissions, Warmflow Engineering has donated the UK and Ireland's first double A-rated oil boilers to South Eastern Regional College (SERC). The equipment will ensure that local businesses and the engineers of tomorrow have the skills to operate and maintain modern day, energy efficient technology.

The new boilers have been installed at the college's Newtownards campus and their new Professional Skills Centre in Nutts Corner which is set to open in September. The equipment will be used to upskill both engineers already working in the sector as well as SERC apprentices.

Given access to the latest equipment, SERC lead business manager, Paul Henry, said: "We pride ourselves on developing work ready graduates and modern equipment is critical to enable us to do this. This will give engineers and apprentices the skills they need to be successful in the sector and maintain a competitive edge."

Warmflow sales director, Oliver Cormican, commented: "As a local company, based in Lisburn, developing a partnership with SERC was a natural fit. Through supplying new Warmflow boilers to the college, we hope to ensure that the next generation of installers have the opportunity to work on state of the art, modern technology to ensure they are adequately equipped for their future career."



SERC has enhanced its training capabilities following the donation of Warmflow energy efficient oil boiler systems. Pictured is SERC's lead business manager Paul Henry and Oliver Cormican, Warmflow Engineering sales director (Ireland)

"We have enjoyed a long standing relationship with our local college and are delighted to have the opportunity to provide equipment that will enhance training and skills development."

www.warmflow.co.uk

Sentinel awarded Centre of Excellence status

Sentinel's state-of-the-art training facility, located within the company's headquarters in Daresbury, Cheshire, has been awarded Centre of Excellence status by the Builders Merchants Federation (BMF).

"Sentinel is proud to partner with the BMF, an organisation that works so hard to deliver tangible and effective support to builders' merchants across the country – support that not only benefits the merchants themselves but also their customers, who receive better services and deals as a result," says Neil Davies, marketing director at Sentinel.



Daniel Cheung, Sentinel's UK trade marketing manager, Matt Haynes BMF regional manager, and Neil Davies, Sentinel's trade marketing director

"As a Centre of Excellence, we have a greater opportunity to strengthen our awareness of the market and undertake initiatives, such as research and product surveys, with its members. Ultimately, the partnership enables Sentinel to deliver enhanced services to our customers."

The BMF is the only trade association that represents and protects the interests of builders' merchants and suppliers to the merchant industry in the UK. In January 2017 its membership stood at 578 merchant and supplier companies operating from over 4,800 branches. The federation has 14 Centres of Excellence throughout the country, where its members can access training and events closer to home.

Matt Haines, BMF regional manager comments: "The BMF is very appreciative of Sentinel allowing us to use their impressive facilities in Daresbury. In addition to being a modern and superbly equipped venue, it is very conveniently located for members in the North West region, being just five minutes off the M56. We very much look forward to welcoming merchants to this Centre of Excellence."

www.sentinelprotects.com

New oil and unvented training provision from Steve Willis

Steve Willis Training have opened a new OFTEC approved oil heating training and assessment facility at their Portchester training centre.

OFTEC's chief executive officer, Paul Rose, recently performed the official opening, noting that out of 84 OFTEC approved centres in the UK Steve Willis Training was in the top five in terms of technician throughput.

As he cut the ribbon Paul said: "This is a fantastic facility. It is bright and well laid out with latest tech, and the investment shows the level of confidence that remains in the oil heating market."

The new oil centre has been created with the support of Worcester Bosch as part of a long standing partnership between the two companies.

Worcester have provided all the boilers for use in the training and assessment, and training manager, Nick Fothergill, was at the opening.

"We have worked successfully with Steve Willis Training for many years, with both our own engineers and our customers coming through the centres, and we are delighted to



Paul Rose, OFTEC CEO, performs the official opening of the new Steve Willis oil heating training and assessment facility

continue our relationship through sponsorship of the new facility," said Nick. He went on to explain the benefits of the south coast location: "We're three hours away from Worcester down here, so getting our working products in front of our customers has been a real challenge. Now we can show off our range of products in a fantastic facility."

Manufacturers Danfoss, Kane, Heatrae Sadia and TWS also supported the centre by providing equipment.

The centre includes four purpose built assessment bays, and Steve Smith, director of certification body ERS, was another of the guests at the opening. He commented: "Steve and I have known each other for over 30 years now, and he's always been one for doing the job right. For ERS it's all about the integrity of the impartial assessment and we know at Steve Willis Training Centres that's second to none."

www.stevewillis.com

Awarding-winning METAC adds to its course programme

METAC Training is known for its specialist courses in oil, gas, solid fuel, electrical, welding and electrofusion together with renewable energy such as domestic photovoltaic systems.

One of its latest additions is a one-day solid fuel awareness course, aimed at providing participants with the knowledge to enable them to assist customers in choosing the correct solid fuel appliance and to recognise the installation and fuel requirements. The five-day dry solid fuel stove installer course aims to provide participants with the knowledge and understanding to enable them to install dry stoves to meet requirements of customers, building regulations and standards. On successful completion candidates, receive an OFTEC 15-108-IRL (Dry) certificate.

The wet solid fuel stove installer course is a further three days for plumbers with an OFT15-108 IRL (Dry) certificate. Both dry and wet solid fuel courses allow the candidate to then become an OFTEC Registered Installer.

www.metac.ie



Plumb and Parts Center believes the oil market is currently stable and resilient.

Over the past decade, it has adapted from the threat of renewables with products like the Grant Blue Flame Hybrid now encompassing both areas.

Plumb Center has set the industry standard on oil boiler availability over the past 10 years with more than 75 oil boilers in stock and available next day, giving rural customers the same level of choice and availability as domestic gas installers.

Alongside this, *Oil Installer* fast became the go-to source of up-to-date industry news and information when it launched and is now a well-established title for oil installers and I think its association with OFTEC has encouraged standards to be raised at the same time.

– **Richard Harvey, category director for heating**



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New work notification descriptors released

In April, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) revised the list of notification descriptors for installers self-certifying their work of heating and hot water systems.

Three new descriptors have been added with the explanation from DCLG in a statement that *"this is required to capture all the permutations that might happen."*

The newly added descriptors and their meanings are:

- Install a hot water system with vented hot water storage: ('hot water system' refers to parts of the hot water system that delivers the hot water to outlets from a new vented storage cylinder).
- Install a hot water system with unvented hot water storage: (as above but hot water is delivered from a new unvented hot water storage cylinder).
- Install heating system controls separate from the heating appliance: (heating controls not integral to a heating appliance i.e. separate timer, thermostats, weather compensators etc.)

These new descriptors are now live on the OFTEC online work notification system and have been included on the revised fax back form (reference R518), which can be downloaded from the technician section of the OFTEC website.

www.ofteconline.com



A combination of rising oil prices and the crash of 2008 has meant that oil burner manufacturers have had to be innovative in employing the latest technologies to meet challenges and develop opportunities. Burner manufacturers that have failed to do so have seen their businesses diminish over the last 10 years. During this time **Riello** has been at the forefront of product development, introducing products that not just meet, but exceed, legislative requirements to deliver improved efficiency with minimum environmental impact.

These developments have been augmented by the key educational role that *Oil Installer* has played in raising awareness of new technologies and educating installers on how to apply them.

– Paul Sharp, C&I sales & managing director

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The importance of being in control: setting the scene for efficiency and energy saving

Installing effective controls has a major impact on the energy efficiency and hence the energy consumption of heating and hot water systems. This in turn has repercussions for the home owner, in terms of fuel costs and comfort, and the environment in respect to CO2 emissions. This article is the first in a series that will look at the control of domestic heating systems. Later articles will look at increasingly advanced methods of improving the efficiency of heating systems by using control systems.

Space and hot water heating in domestic homes accounts for approximately 24% of the UK's energy consumption, of which oil heating forms 8%. This is a significant source of energy consumption and, for this reason, carbon emissions from heating are coming under ever increasing scrutiny.

The emphasis from government has been on reducing heat losses by improving insulation levels. A well-insulated home needs less energy to bring it up to a comfortable temperature and it retains the heat longer once the heating system has been turned off. The focus, more recently, has been on improving the efficiency of heating systems through the replacement of inefficient boilers and by installing or upgrading heating controls.

Current building regulations require a minimum set of controls that will provide for a boiler interlock and the independent time and temperature control of both the space heating and hot water systems. The boiler interlock is not generally a physical device itself but an electrical wiring arrangement of various existing control devices that prevents the boiler firing when there is no demand for heat.

Energy savings

Typically, 80% of energy consumption in a home is for space heating and hot water, so the savings and comfort benefits of improved heating control should not be underestimated. Temperature controlled heating in each room can result in energy savings of up to 40%, compared to systems with time control only. Not all homes will necessarily be able to achieve such levels of improvement, but substantial energy savings can usually be made.

Whilst over 90% of UK homes now have central heating, research

indicates that up to 70% of these do not have a full set of controls and that 4% of homes still have no controls at all. According to Energy Saving Trust figures, over 40% of homes don't have a full set of thermostatic radiator valves (TRV's), and 30% have no programmer or room thermostat. Clearly there is an opportunity for homeowners to reduce their energy costs and improve the comfort levels within their homes – which means lots of work for heating technicians.

Optimum energy savings will be achieved with a modern high efficiency oil boiler that supplies heat to a well-balanced heating and hot water system using modern radiators and controls. Having said that, significant energy savings can still be made by installing new controls to older systems. Boilers and radiators are typically sized to provide sufficient heat output to compensate for heat losses at an external temperature of -3C, depending on locality. This means that although a heating system may provide space heating for up to eight months a year, there may only be a few days each year when the external temperature is cold enough to require each radiator to be fully on.

Comfort levels

During days with warmer outside temperatures, a radiator with no temperature control may over heat a room, wasting significant amounts of energy and potentially reducing comfort levels. The use of TRV's can regulate the temperature of individual rooms during a heating cycle and can also compensate for the effects of heat gain from other heat sources. A suitably positioned room thermostat, located in a reference room (where there are TRV on the radiator), would provide overall temperature control and act as one of the devices that forms part of the boiler interlock system.

The boiler interlock also helps to reduce 'short cycling' of the boiler. In systems where a room or hot water thermostat is not installed, short cycling occurs because the boiler will continually 'free run' during timed period, controlled solely by its own internal thermostat, irrespective of the need for heat. This results in increasingly short and repetitive boiler firing cycles that impact the boiler efficiency and longer-term reliability. In older gravity heated hot water cylinders this could often result in overly high domestic hot water temperatures.

Where TRV's are only installed these will close off the flow to the radiators as the various rooms reach their desired temperatures, the boiler and pump, however, will continue to run as there is no heat demand control. Under these circumstances a means of providing sufficient flow through the boiler needs to be provided to prevent the possibility of boiler overheat.

The inclusion of the room thermostat reduces the tendency for short cycling as the room thermostat will control the boiler based on actual heat demand. That said, short cycling will not be completely prevented because when the TRV's gradually close, the system's ability to dissipate the supplied heat will diminish, resulting again in increased water temperature returning to the boiler. Differential pressure 'automatic bypass valves' (ABV's) are often specified to assist with the maintenance of flow through the boiler during the periods where flow through radiators has been reduced. It is essential that an ABV is correctly set up to ensure that it only begins to operate when the flow rate has fallen to the minimum required by the boiler.

Future articles will consider specific types of controls, their application and the inter-relationships between them, the oil boiler and heating circuits, and ultimately energy efficiency.

Installing the Grant Vecta external biomass boiler...



Step 1: The Property

In this special “renewables” feature, *Oil Installer* follows the installation of the Grant Vecta external biomass boiler at a rural stone barn in Settle, North Yorkshire.

The Grant Vecta 4-16kW external biomass boiler was installed and commissioned by Fieldhouse Heating Services, a Grant G-One accredited installer based in Ingleton, Lancashire.

The heating system within the barn consists of three circuits, all of which are now being heated by the Vecta, including the underfloor heating throughout the property, the towel radiator circuit, and the domestic hot water.

The Grant Vecta has its own 80kg integrated pellet store, specifically designed for filling the pellets from bags. In addition, a 140kg side pellet store can also be fitted to increase the combined pellet storage capacity.

Both the Vecta external boiler and side store have a high quality powder coated finish which is weather proof.

The boiler itself has automatic pellet feed and ignition, as well as having a self-cleaning system for its heat exchanger and burner brazier. Furthermore, the Vecta external model comes with a remote indicator kit which is located internally and provides the user with a clear indication of when the pellets need to be topped up and when the ash pan requires emptying.



Step 2: The Vecta boiler is craned into position



Step 3: The 140kg Vecta external side hopper is fitted to the boiler, to give additional pellet storage



Step 4: The Grant biomass flue is installed utilising extension pieces to ensure plume is kept away from windows and doors



Step 5: Plumbing connections are made inside the property and a Grant MagOne filter is fitted



Step 6: The Vecta is filled with pellets and commissioned



Step 7: Installer Fieldhouse Heating Services with their first Vecta External installation ready to hand over to the householder



Step 8: The finished installation and a warm house...

For more details on the Grant Vecta biomass boiler range, visit:

www.grantuk.com

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Helping installers to unlock the benefits of renewables...

Grant UK has launched a new scheme called G-CERT, which aims to support engineers who wish to offer their end-users MCS compliant installations, without having to undertake MCS accreditation themselves.

Through G-CERT, Grant UK can certify renewable installations for MCS accreditation on behalf of the installer, allowing the engineer to fit RHI eligible systems for their customers without needing to be MCS accredited. Consequently, the installer spends less time doing the desk-based administration often associated with MCS, enabling them to spend more time on the road assisting their customers with their heating needs.



Grant helps installers to unlock the benefits of renewables

Under the G-CERT Scheme, Grant UK acts as the MCS accredited organisation, assisting competent installers to complete renewable installations which will be eligible for RHI payments.

"The time and costs associated with becoming MCS accredited can sometimes be off-putting for installers," explains Anna Wakefield, marketing and corporate communications manager for Grant UK. "G-CERT offers these engineers the opportunity to access customers which they would otherwise be unable to serve, delivering MCS compliant installations to customers wishing to claim RHI without having to operate their own MCS quality management system."

Installers wishing to join G-CERT must meet the scheme's eligibility criteria which are set to ensure that the highest levels of quality workmanship and service are maintained. In turn, installers who join G-CERT will be giving their customers the added peace of mind that comes with MCS compliant installations.

www.grantuk.com/trade/g-cert-scheme



We've come a long way with appliance efficiency but there's more to be achieved with the use of modulating burners. Fuel spillage incidents have seen an overall reduction, but that's only really down to the wider use of bunded tanks.

Specific Oil Solutions has designed, manufactured and presented to market, a copyrighted fuel isolation valve specifically for bottom outlet fuel storage tanks.

Just over one year on the popularity of the Ultra Compact fuel tank valve is growing with the smaller tank manufacturers, plus fuel distributors and tank installers alike.

I believe *Oil Installer magazine* has been at the forefront of reporting product innovation, industry news and highlighting all manner of oil-fired products.

– **Stuart Bratt, owner**

Get ready for solid fuel energy labelling

The Energy Labelling directive has been introduced in the UK and Europe to help consumers make informed choices on solid fuel appliances in relation to the efficiency of the appliance. With the first of the new energy labelling requirements for solid fuel

appliances coming into effect in April, industry body HETAS has compiled a guide to help installers and manufacturers get to grips with the changes.

"The new energy labelling directive affects both installers and manufacturers," says Bruce Allen, CEO of HETAS. "While the new legislation has been brought in to make consumer choice on appliances easier, manufacturers will need to ensure that their products are appropriately labelled, and installers will need to have a good understanding of the requirements to ensure commissioned installations are in compliance."

In April, the directive was implemented on independent boiler appliances and in January 2018, room heater stove appliances will be required to comply with the new legislation.



Woodburning and biomass appliances will likely be categorised as an A rating due to their renewable and zero carbon characteristics. Appliances capable of burning solid mineral and other fossil fuels such as gas and oil are likely to be classed lower.

To help ensure the new regulations are being met, the European Commission has created an "Energy Label Generator" which manufacturers and installers can use. HETAS has also developed a range of calculator tools and guides which can be found in the members' technical area on its website.

"Consumers will want to know what a higher rated energy labelled appliance will mean for them. Installers will need to know what to look out for in ensuring compliant solid fuel appliances and boiler systems are being purchased from reputable suppliers," Bruce adds. Energy labels will be associated with a relevant reference number, allowing installers to track energy ratings back to the supplier/manufacturer should any queries arise during installation.

www.hetas.co.uk



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Promoting *Excellence* in Heating

The importance of quality woodfuel...

With wood burning stoves estimated to account for 10% of the government's carbon reduction targets by 2020, the efficiency of modern heating appliances is at the forefront of both the industry's and consumers' minds. Yet, while manufacturers can continue to develop new and enhanced products to improve efficiency, it is the critical issue of the quality of the woodfuel that is used is often overlooked, says Helen Bentley Fox, director of Woodsure – the UK's only wood fuel quality assurance scheme.

"Today, modern heating appliances and biomass boilers are highly engineered, efficient pieces of technology that do a fantastic job – but they can only do so much if the fuel burned in the appliance is not the right quality woodfuel. Even the most sophisticated of appliances could be relatively ineffective when it comes to reducing carbon if the user isn't burning the right wood. Think about it, if you bought a super clean energy-

efficient car, would you choose to fill it with a fuel that you were unsure of? It's true that modern heating appliances are not as complex as car engines, but the same principles apply. Poor quality woodfuel leads to smoke and a poor fuel economy," explains Helen.

"The ENplus quality scheme is a benchmark for pellet quality and sign that the product allows for CO2-neutral heating with the highest energy efficiency," she adds.

However, a benchmark is yet to be recognised for logs and other wood fuels. As it stands, the supply chain is made up of many types and sizes of supplier. It is possible to purchase wet wood for seasoning, recycled wood, and wood that has been carefully chosen and ready to burn.

Woodsure advises burning properly sourced wood (hardwood timbers such as ash, birch and beech) and making sure it is around 20% moisture content. If seasoning at

home, a moisture content meter is an extremely helpful tool for monitoring this.

Helen comments: "Wet woodfuel is very inefficient as it demands a lot of heat to boil off the water before the appliance can give out the proper level of heat to the room, hot water or heating systems. Burning wet wood also creates a lot of smoke which damages the chimney and blackens the appliance."

Helen continues: "Installers of wood burners or biomass boilers know that if it is not operated properly it will need extra servicing, maintenance and repair. Ultimately it will cost more for the user to run, the benefits will be fewer and the environment will be harmed. Using clean, quality wood fuel is key to improving air quality and is a better use of our wood fuel reserves and forests."

www.woodsurre.co.uk

Plumb Center returns to Royal Highland Show

For the second year running, Plumb Center's renewables team attended the Royal Highland Show at the end of June.

Five renewables installers – members of the Plumb Center Energy Efficiency+ Installer Scheme – joined the merchant's stand to talk to visitors. Mark Hastie, co-founder of BlueTech Energy in Glasgow, joined Plumb Center at the annual farming and countryside showcase for the second year running after his company secured significant business from the show last year.

Plumb Center was also joined by biomass boiler manufacturer, Windhager; heat pump manufacturer, Mitsubishi; ground source heat pump manufacturer, Warmflow; and heat emitter manufacturer, Myson. Home Energy Scotland, the energy advice service from the Scottish government, was also on hand to offer help and advice on installing renewables and the latest information on funding.

www.plumbcenter.co.uk



The Plumb Center renewables team – together with five renewables installers – returned to the Royal Highland Show recently



Over the past 10 years **Tuffa UK's** key achievements have seen the development of the FireStop fire tank system.

Leading the industry in the introduction of this new concept into the domestic and commercial markets, we were the first to develop and invest to have LABC certification for a fire protected tank development ensuring fire safe installations – tried and independently tested to BS476: Part 22: 1987.

Tuffa was also named as a local small manufacturer of the year 2015.

Low lights in the industry have been high fuel costs, carbon footprint issues and dangerous installations resulting in fire damage.

Oil installer is an important voice for manufacturers and installers.

– Richard Whitehurst, marketing manager

Top award for Schiedel

Schiedel Chimney System's ICID Plus Double Wall Adjustable Starter Section – a quick and easy way of disconnecting a stove for inspection – won 'best flueing and ventilation product' at this year's Hearth & Home exhibition, in Harrogate during June.

David Wright, residential sales and marketing manager for Schiedel, said: "We are delighted to win this award for a product that has been specifically designed to make life easier for the installer."

"At Schiedel, we are continuously looking for ways to meet the demands of our sector, offering versatile solutions that work with the changing needs of the market, while supporting our installers through improved warranties – the lifetime guarantee on ICID Plus is a first for the industry – and easier ways of getting the job done."



www.schiedel.co.uk

Elmhurst acquires the iATS

Energy performance assessment specialists, Elmhurst Energy, has announced the acquisition of the Independent Airtightness Testing Scheme (iATS).

iATS is a government approved scheme created for companies and individuals undertaking air tightness testing services on commercial and residential buildings. Members of the iATS provide accurate air-testing reports to their clients. Air tightness is a significant factor in constructing energy efficient buildings and meeting building regulations.

"We are delighted to be working with iATS and are fully committed to making this a long and happy relationship," says Martyn Reed, managing director of Elmhurst Energy.

"Our knowledge and expertise of government's Standard Assessment



Martyn Reed, managing director of Elmhurst

Procedure (SAP), and Part L of the Building Regulations ensures we are well placed to provide support to iATS members and take the scheme to the next level."

www.elmhurstenergy.co.uk



It has been a positive decade of growth at **Warmflow**.

The business has continually invested in infrastructure and production capability to remain in a strong market position and ensure that we offer customers quality built, well-designed products with real benefits and cost savings.

Robotic welding and unique barcoding were introduced to ensure consistently impeccable product quality and we launched the UK & Ireland's first and currently only double A-rated combination oil boiler. Warmflow also launched Europe's most efficient ground source heat pump (SCOP 5.0) and one of the most efficient and intelligent biomass boilers.

At the heart of everything we do is the drive to ensure that we deliver highly efficient, well-designed products giving customers value for money, reliability and tangible benefits.

Providing industry expertise and reviews *Oil Installer* has been a key partner to Warmflow. The publication has been an essential vehicle through which to communicate our many milestones.

– Brian Beattie, head of marketing & GB sales



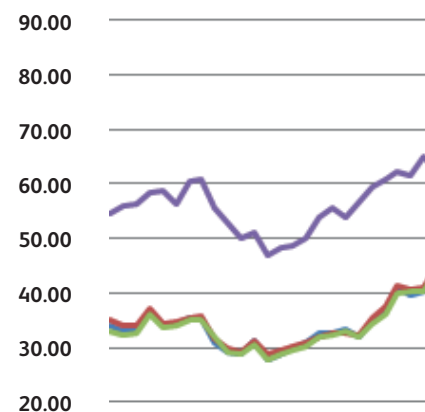
Average selling price of heating oil Pence per litre / Euro per litre 2006-2017

Starting in 2006, the year before *Oil Installer* was first published, this graph illustrates the peaks and troughs in the average price of 1,000 litres of heating oil (kerosene).

Reaching its highest price peaks in 2008 & 2012, the price of heating oil was at its lowest in 2009 & 2016. With an average high of 63 pence per litre to a low of 33 pence, how was your business impacted?

Having ridden this price roller coaster over the past 10 years are you now more or less optimistic about oil's future?

Oil Installer would be very interested to hear your views - jane@oilinstaller.co.uk.



Fire valves and flues – the latest additions to the rogues' gallery...

Judging from the photographs sent in by readers, the most common disturbing installations encountered by OFTEC installers and technicians during their every day work usually involve oil storage tanks. But for this edition of Oil Installer's rogues' gallery, a couple of other contenders have raised their ugly heads!

Keep your photographs coming so that we can share your experiences with all our readers! Send your photographs, together with a brief description of your business and where you came across the subject of your snap, to: jane@oilinstaller.co.uk



Send your photographs to jane@oilinstaller.co.uk

When Stephen Hanna of Hanna Bros. in Lurgan, Co. Armagh, was fitting a new Grant Vortex boiler recently, his eyes were drawn to the next door property where he spotted a potentially dangerous flue installation. "The boiler and flue were fitted less than a year ago and the wooden fascia was badly charred," Stephen told *Oil Installer*. "Also, the hole cut for the flue wasn't sealed, allowing fumes from the non-condensing boiler to leak into the cavity. Local building control were notified..."

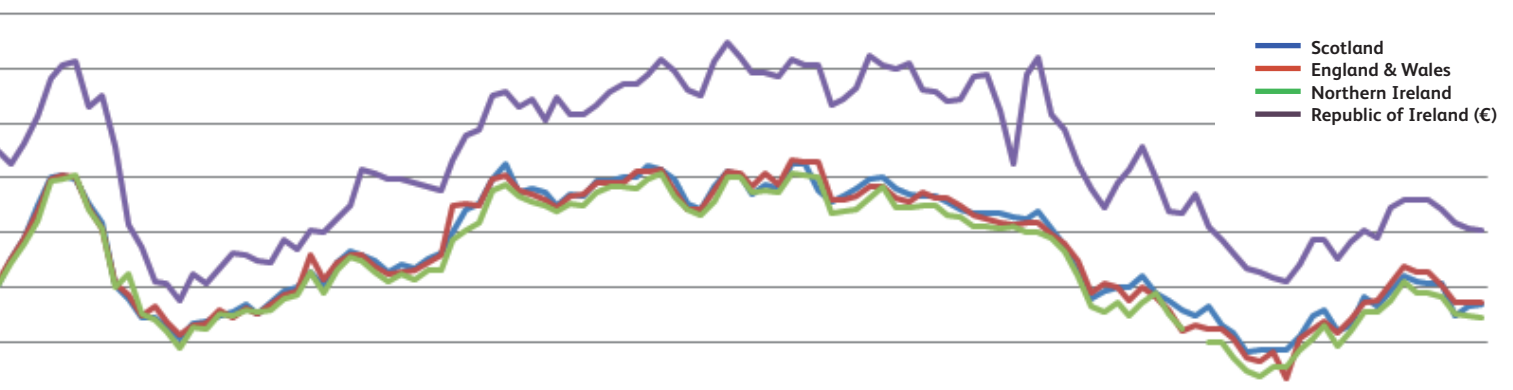


When Carmarthenshire-based OFTEC registered technician Nick Lloyd went out to service a boiler, he was faced with far more than he expected. "This was the first time I'd worked on the boiler which had been installed for around seven years," Nick told *Oil Installer*. "So I was really surprised to find a clothes peg holding the fire valve open!"

"On removal of the peg, the valve closed down and the boiler then locked out."

I explained to the customer how important it was to have a functioning fire valve and it has now been replaced!

"It's never as easy as you first think! A simple oil service now involved climbing under the static home to thread the new phial and also extend the return oil pipework so that it terminated within the boiler casing – not attach two oil hoses together so that they were long enough to reach!" added Nick.



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Letters to the Editor...



Dear Editor,

I would like to include a photo for the next issue of *Oil Installer*. The photo can be found on page 30 of the Summer issue (Vol 11, No.2) of *Oil Installer*. It shows an expansion vessel fitted with the filling loop attached in such a way as it contravenes water regs, along with an isolation valve on what I'm assuming is the pipe work to the heating system and no such valve on the fill side.

Surely as a magazine for tradesmen you should be using photos that at the least comply with the regulations when writing an article unless that article is to highlight the poor working practice of so many people who think they are 'tradesmen'?

This is not the first photo I've come across in you magazine that makes me cringe when I see something supposed to be right yet oh so wrong!

Robert Cole,
R.Cole Plumbing Services, Scole, Suffolk.

OFTEC responds...

The article on expansion vessels in the Summer 2017 edition of Oil Installer magazine included a picture, for example purposes only, of an external supplementary expansion vessel. This image showed the expansion vessel with a temporary filling loop still connected which, as correctly identified by Robert Cole of R Cole Plumbing Services, would contravene the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 in respect to back flow protection.

The supplied photograph does not convey the whole story as it was taken just after the associated system had been manually re-pressurised via the filling loop, but unfortunately prior to the filling loop's subsequent disconnection. The installed filling loop, once disconnected and with the open system ends capped, meets the necessary Water Regulations requirements. These requirements, for back flow protection, being a double check valve and service valve (out of view in the picture) installed on the connection point to the mains water supply, with an optional additional service valve or double check valve on the connection to closed circuit filling point.

We are glad that technicians take such an interest in the articles provided and for their feedback as this enables an interesting discussion. Should you have any exemplar photographs of your work that you would like to feature in future articles we would be pleased to hear from you.

Dear Editor,

I've just read the latest OFTEC newsletter. It now seems OFTEC are now trying to stop home owners from doing there own diy jobs... Moving boilers and fuel tanks I can understand, but replacing or fitting new radiators!

You will never stop anyone from doing such jobs – and how can replacing a radiator be fraught with danger? Having seen some of the work that registered installers do, some householders would actually do a better job! And as for making replacement room thermostats and programmers a notifiable job... I don't think so. Do you really believe anyone will bother?

Ben Clarke, (OFTEC registered over 20 years)

OFTEC responds...

The purpose of OFTEC's news release was to encourage homeowners to use registered technicians, rather than attempting work themselves, and to discourage inexperienced diy-ers from attempting tasks that could result in leaks and potentially serious damage.

Reflecting on the last 10 years in the oil industry, **Worcester Bosch Group** says it's been quite a rocky road, we've survived one of the worst recessions since the Victorian days, seen the introduction of condensing boilers as a minimum efficiency requirement and seen oil prices go as high as 60 pence per litre to as low as 35 pence per litre.



The ERP directive was introduced and the industry did a sterling job in getting a deferment to the introduction of lower NOx emissions for kerosene using oil-fired boilers, giving more time to develop new burners that fit into the constraints of UK sized oil-fired boilers.

We have also seen great growth in sales of both oil fuel and oil firing boilers after the threat of heavily subsidised renewable energy products, particularly biomass. We see this year as being no different with sales being very buoyant for the first five months of 2017.

It just goes to show that this is a vibrant, and working sector of the heating market and despite numerous obstacles being placed in front of it, it overcomes them all the time.

Through these interesting and turbulent times *Oil Installer* has been invaluable in providing a vital communication link between industry and technician. As the only publication working solely on the oil sector there is an intimate knowledge of what the industry needs and how it works... so here's to another 10 years of *Oil Installer*!

– Martyn Bridges, director of marketing and technical support

Editor's note: *Oil Installer* reserves the right to edit readers' letters to ensure that what is printed is legal, honest and decent. Neither *Oil Installer* nor OFTEC necessarily agree with the opinions expressed within readers' letters. However, all correspondence is welcome whether it is highlighting a new subject, commenting on articles within *Oil Installer*, or responding to a previous reader's letter.

Share your thoughts, tips and experiences now. Email: jane@oilinstaller.co.uk

Pricing page

More good news for oil users

The latest price comparison figures make good reading for anyone who uses oil for heating or installs or services oil appliances. The average annual cost to heat a typical home in the UK using an oil condensing boiler fell by just over £100 in the last quarter to just £840pa. The price in the Republic of Ireland also fell sharply to just over €1,000pa, making oil heating there more than €200 cheaper than any competing rival.

Comparing the price now to the situation four years ago reveals that oil heating costs have fallen more than any other major fuel while others have actually risen. This is particularly significant because heat pumps and

biomass boilers are two of the UK government's preferred low carbon heating options and are promoted through schemes such as the Renewable Heat Incentive in England and Wales. It isn't hard to see why enthusiasm for these technologies remains muted, given that both installation and running costs are far higher than for oil. It should be noted that where possible the costs shown here are for systems using radiators – to show a fair like-for-like comparison. Better performance could be expected from a heat pump by using underfloor heating, but at the expense of higher installation costs.

The most common alternatives to oil for off-grid homes remain LPG or electric storage heaters. The annual

cost of using these options remains far higher than oil, although the price of LPG, like oil, has fallen significantly in all regions except Northern Ireland where it is now prohibitively expensive.

Looking at the global price of Brent crude oil, over the last year this has fluctuated between \$43 and \$56 a barrel. This has led some OPEC countries and Russia to join forces in a bid to push the price of oil up by cutting back production. So far, this has not been very successful and has probably helped the US fracking industry, which are their main competitors. Despite OPEC's efforts, price commentators are increasingly united in predicting that crude oil prices will remain at around the current level for some time to come.

Comparative space and water heating costs for a three bedroom house

GREAT BRITAIN

	Jul-13	Jul-17	Price change	% Difference
Anthracite Grains	1094	1114	20	1.85%
Electricity	1456	1910	454	31.20%
Gas (British Gas)	1079	967	-112	-10.40%
LPG	2382	1850	-532	-22.33%
LPG (Condensing)	1956	1524	-432	-22.08%
Oil	1582	1022	-560	-35.40%
Oil (Condensing)	1294	840	-454	-35.06%
Wood Pellets	1252	1283	31	2.49%
Air Source Heat Pump Radiators	1360	1681	321	23.57%

NORTHERN IRELAND

	Jul-13	Jul-17	Price change	% Difference
Anthracite Grains	1065	953	-112	-10.52%
Electricity	1748	1437	-311	-17.79%
Gas (Phoenix)	1128	885	-243	-21.54%
LPG	2571	2530	-41	-1.59%
LPG (Condensing)	2111	2075	-37	-1.71%
Oil	1742	1022	-720	-41.33%
Oil (Condensing)	1425	840	-585	-41.05%
Wood Pellets	1038	1098	60	5.78%
Air Source Heat Pump Radiators	1493	1384	-109	-7.30%

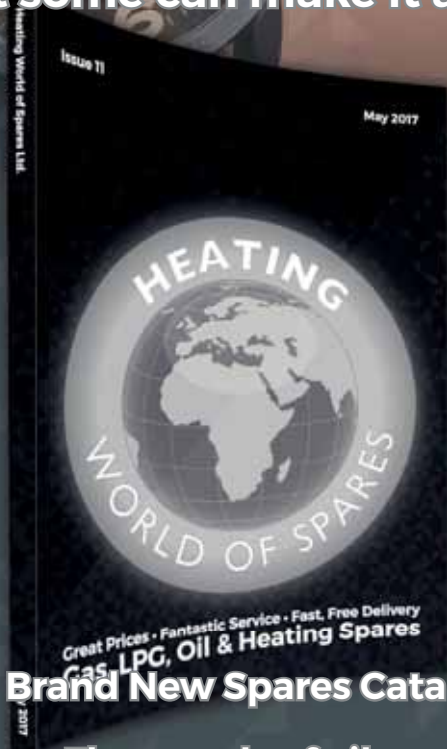
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	Jul-13	Jul-17	Price change	% Difference
Anthracite Grains	1297	1510	213	16.42%
Electricity	2086	1953	-133	-6.38%
Gas	1346	1291	-55	-4.09%
LPG	3479	2620	-859	-24.69%
LPG (Condensing)	2853	2157	-696	-24.40%
Oil	2215	1228	-987	-44.56%
Oil (Condensing)	1807	1008	-799	-44.22%
Wood Pellets	1167	1335	168	14.40%
Air Source Heat Pump Radiators	1766	1718	-48	-2.72%

The tables above show the average annual costs for a range of heating options. Prices are shown in pounds sterling (£) for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Euros (€) for the Republic of Ireland. Figures are for a semi-detached three bedroom house, requiring 13,500 kWh space heating & 2,500 kWh DHW heating. Great Britain (Average) is calculated using South East, South West, Wales, Midlands, Northern England and Scotland. Data from the Sutherland Tables.

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