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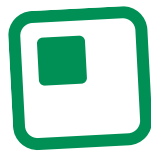
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Maximise your opportunities this autumn...



Autumn is the time of year when your customers start to think about their central heating again. With the economy improving, there are many ways in which you can maximise the opportunities.

The immediate future for oil looks very positive. Many homeowners will have taken advantage of the low kerosene prices this summer and, with their heating costs having fallen by around £500, there's every reason for them to stick with oil heating. With oil prices likely to remain well below the heights of 2013, it's a good time to convince homeowners with older boilers to upgrade to a new condensing model.

The benefits of upgrading are not limited to older oil boilers. Forward thinking installation businesses are always looking for new business opportunities and owners of LPG or electric night storage heating might be pleased to hear from you too. With both technologies costing around £600 a year more to run than oil (even more for owners of standard efficiency LPG appliances) there's never been a better time to point out the advantages that a switch to oil could offer them.

This could also be a good time to consider diversifying. Adding new technologies to your business extends your customer reach. Interest in renewable heat is growing steadily while the solid fuel stove sector is booming. OFTEC now offers cost effective registration for all the main off-gas technologies – with big discounts for existing registered technicians – so we're ready to support your business as you grow into new areas.

The recent oil tank fire in Ireland (see pages 19/20) raises again the need for safe, competent work. We are keen to pursue non-registered installers who do dangerous or non-compliant work and have a complaints facility where you can raise any concerns. Please contact us on 01473 626 298 or email compliance@oftec.org if you have clear evidence of poor or illegal work.

On the subject of competent work, don't miss the chance to tell your customers about the advantages of using an OFTEC registered technician. Our marketing department can supply you with leaflets that explain the benefits. Just call the numbers above or email marketing@oftec.org and we'll send you some.



Jeremy Hawksley
Director general
OFTEC

4-5, 8, 10, 13/ Industry News

15/ Fossil fuels in the future – a special report

16-17/ Registration News – OFTEC expands registration offering

19/ Irish News – Renewed call for competent person's scheme

20/ OFTEC Team News

21/ Tank News – Oil Care celebrates 20th anniversary

23-25/ Technical Topics

33/ Oil with Renewables – installer profile

34-40/ Spotlight on Biomass

41/ Renewables

42/ Gallery



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Change at the top for OFTEC

After two years at the helm of OFTEC's board, Martyn Bridges, director of marketing and technical support at Worcester Bosch, has stood down as chairman with Nick Hawkins, general manager of Deso – part of the Kingspan Group – taking up the reins.

During his time as chair, Martyn has drawn on 35 years' experience of working in UK and European oil, renewables and gas markets to help steer OFTEC through a period of challenge and change.

He has been instrumental in a number of key OFTEC achievements including helping to secure a major win for the oil heating industry regarding the lowering of nitrogen oxide (NOx) emission limits from boilers, with kerosene now excluded until 2022.

Martyn has also helped guide OFTEC's move into the renewables sector with the launch of new registrations in solar thermal, heat pumps and biomass. Solid fuel registrations were also introduced in April.

During his tenure, he played a major role in OFTEC's lobbying work, in particular calling for changes to UK heating policies in the wake of the failing

domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme.

Healthy oil market

Speaking at OFTEC's 2015 AGM and annual conference at the end of June, Martyn said: "It has been a privilege to be at the forefront of OFTEC's work to help secure a long term future for oil, which I strongly believe there is. Oil appliance sales are up and the price of oil is down so the 'ingredients' for a healthy oil market for the foreseeable future are in place.

"With latest figures showing RHI take up is running at just 10% of the level required to meet DECC's ambitious carbon reduction forecasts, it's imperative OFTEC maintains its pressure on the government to introduce alternative, more pragmatic carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures which are accessible to many more households – especially the elderly and fuel poor – who are currently excluded from the RHI due to the high upfront costs of renewables."

He added: "There are some big changes coming through for OFTEC and I am confident the association will remain at the forefront of the industry as a



Martyn Bridges and Nick Hawkins with Jeremy Hawksley, OFTEC's director general during the association's AGM and annual conference

quality benchmark for installers, servicing technicians and homeowners alike."

OFTEC's new chair, and previous vice chair, Nick Hawkins, is general manager at Deso, a rotational moulding company specialising in the design and production of liquid storage and dispensing containers, part of the Kingspan group since 2001.

Progressive support

Speaking at the OFTEC event Nick commented: "OFTEC will always work hard in the best interests of the industry. Our mission is to listen to and understand the needs of our 7,500+ technicians and one million oil using households and ensure we continue to provide the best, progressive support

and services going forward. Over the coming months, we will ramp up further our lobbying for more realistic carbon reduction and energy efficiency to be introduced that will encourage far greater consumer take up.

"These would still include renewable technology incentives but also encompass more affordable measures such as a boiler scrappage scheme to incentivise the switch to high efficiency condensing boilers. There is still clearly a strong demand for these greener, cheaper to run boilers with sales to the end of May 2015 reaching 23,845 – up 9.2% on the same time last year."

He added: "I look forward to building on the outstanding contribution Martyn has made during his time as chair."

OFTEC's Awards for Excellence – it's time to get your application in!

OFTEC's Awards for Excellence celebrate all that's best about our industry, so if you are proud of the work that you do – or a member of your staff does – make sure you enter. The closing date is the 31st January, but don't leave it to the last minute to apply.

For the winners, the positive impact is always considerable, bringing far more than the £500 cheque for the winners. A previous two time winner of boiler installer of the year, David Ewins, comments: "I have always pushed for the highest professional standards and the award strengthens the work that we do and undoubtedly benefits the business." Daniel Pannell, last year's trainee of the year, highlighted the personal benefits: "Winning the award is massive, a real surprise

and a confidence boost that will definitely help me along the way."

Award entries are welcomed in the following categories:

- **Boiler installer of the year**
- **Tank installer of the year**
- **Cooker or stove installer of the year**
- **Renewable installer of the year**
- **Solid fuel installer of the year**
- **Servicing and commissioning technician of the year**
- **Trainee of the year**

Application forms for the installer awards are available from the OFTEC website. They only take a few minutes to fill in, but the benefits of winning could have a lasting impact for you and your business. So, what

are you waiting for? You'll find the forms at: www.oftec.co.uk/Events/Detail?id=286

If you would like to be sent a hard copy of the forms, contact OFTEC's marketing team on 01473 626 298 from the UK, or 01-8645771 from the Republic of Ireland. Alternatively, email: marketing@oftec.org.

Servicing and commissioning awards are nominated by OFTEC's team of inspectors during inspection visits and are just as keenly contested. The winners of all the awards will be announced in the summer of 2016.



OFTEC to showcase new scopes of registration at Roadshow events

OFTEC has announced that it will be showcasing its new scopes of registration at the Heating and Renewables Roadshow – the UK's only regional event for heating and renewable energy professionals.

Beginning on September 10th at Coventry's Ricoh Arena, the Roadshow is visiting five strategically located venues across the UK and will present some of the best and most innovative heating and low carbon technologies currently on the market, specifically for installers, specifiers and contractors.

OFTEC registrations director, Adrian Lightwood, says: "The Heating and Renewables Roadshows present an excellent opportunity to showcase OFTEC's new scopes of registration covering heat pumps, solar thermal systems and solid fuel, with biomass registrations to be launched later this year.

"With oil prices remaining so low and the trend predicted to continue, the future for oil looks positive. However, OFTEC recognises the increasing role domestic renewable heating technologies will play in the longer term and fully supports the UK's transition to low carbon heat.

"That's why we have launched the new renewable registrations, as well as solid fuel, to help forward thinking oil installation businesses expand their customer reach. Those installers already working in the renewable and solid fuel sectors can also take advantage of the extensive benefits, from self-certification to free technical advice, and value for money OFTEC registration provides.

"It's an exciting time for OFTEC as we move into a more energy diverse era. Our aim is to consolidate OFTEC's position as one of the leading competent persons scheme operators within the heating sector and remain the quality benchmark for installers, servicing technicians and homeowners alike."

The series of Heating and Renewables Roadshow one-day events will visit:

- **Coventry (Ricoh Arena), September 10th**
- **Exeter (Westpoint), September 15th**
- **Farnborough (FIVE), September 17th**
- **Edinburgh (Royal Highland Centre), September 22nd**
- **Manchester (Event City), September 24th**

The Roadshow has the support of a significant range of exhibitors and associations with stand space fully booked. Visitors will also gain access to the latest advice on consumer protection legislation, thanks to the involvement of TrustMark – the government-endorsed quality scheme for all trades in and around the home – which has been confirmed as the key-supporting organisation.

"This is very much a show for the industry, bringing together a full spectrum of renewable and low carbon technologies under one roof in five different locations,"



Adrian Lightwood, OFTEC registrations director

says Paul Stephen of A&D Publishing, organisers of the Roadshow and publishers of several industry magazines, including Oil Installer.

"Each regional event will include a series of hands-on demonstrations for installers, bringing products and solutions to life in an engaging and informing manner," he adds.

"We are delighted to welcome OFTEC to the events as we recognise the importance of equipping our visitors with all the necessary knowledge to help them diversify and increase their profits."

For further information, visit: www.heatingandrenewablesroadshow.co.uk



Are you ready for Ecodesign? Get up to speed at an OFTEC event

With the holiday season now almost over, OFTEC's technician seminar events are about to resume.

The main focus of the seminars is the Ecodesign and energy labelling regulations (often called the Energy-related Products Directive or ErPD), which comes into force on 26th September.

Earlier this summer a survey by Worcester Bosch revealed that three out of four installers were uncertain about how Energy Labelling will impact on the business. With the changes now imminent, it is essential to get up to speed and OFTEC's seminar events are an excellent way to find out the facts.

We have events planned for the following locations:

- Ireland (Dates TBC)
- York – 10th September
- Treforrest, Nr Cardiff – 16th September
- Penrith – 6th October
- Inverness (Date TBC)

Check OFTEC's website and e-news for venues and times.

As well as energy labelling, the events will feature an update on BS 5410-1 together with presentations and demonstrations by equipment manufacturers. They will also provide an opportunity to chat to OFTEC's technical team, find out about our new scopes

of registration and meet your local inspector. The events held earlier in the year were popular and the feedback from attendees was very positive, so don't miss out.

To book a place, simply call OFTEC on 01473 626298. Alternatively, email: marketing@oftec.org with your name, technician number, and the event you want to attend.

If there isn't an event near you, we recommend you read the technical articles in this, and the previous two issues of Oil Installer. New information on energy labelling has also been posted in the technician area OFTEC website.

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OFTEC members favour boiler scrappage scheme

The vast majority of OFTEC members favour a universal government-backed boiler scrappage scheme, according to a survey conducted at the association's mini conference in June.

During an industry debate, around 50 attendees were asked: "How might the percentage of oil homes using condensing boilers increase beyond the current 60,000 p.a.?" Thirty-five respondents opted for a government boiler scrappage scheme, 29 of whom wanted it open to all, with six suggesting it should be restricted to the fuel poor. Meanwhile, seven respondents favoured new legislation demanding immediate replacement of standard efficiency boilers with government funding, whilst six wanted an industry funded boiler subsidy, open to all.

Attendees were asked ten questions during the conference's industry debate, encouraging input on subjects ranging from the introduction of energy labelling to the effectiveness of the government's Renewable Heat Incentive. Other results of the survey were as follows:

1. Is the government's heat strategy for 2050 realistic and what proportion of the UK domestic heating market will be from renewable sources by then?
Less than 50% – 33; 50% – 8; 75% – 5; 100% – 1.
2. Is the Renewable Heat Incentive the right mechanism to move UK homes on to renewable heat? (i.e. a substantial cash grant for seven years)
No – 29; Yes – 14.
3. It is estimated that there could be over 500,000 single skin domestic oil tanks still in the UK and the RoI in use that are over 15 years old and need replacing urgently. How might the industry and/or government address the need to encourage consumers to replace these tanks?
New building regulations requiring annual inspection and replacement of tanks that are hazardous – 24; Government and industry subsidy schemes to encourage replacements – 20; An industry led information and subsidy scheme – 2.
4. Does the lack of mandatory registration for oil boiler installers and service technicians mean that the public is more at risk of CO poisoning from poor install and servicing compared to mains gas users?
Yes – 34; No – 14
5. Will the introduction of the energy label system through the Energy Related Products Directive make a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions in UK and RoI?
No – 33; Yes – 15.
6. Assuming low NOx (blue flame) boilers are made mandatory by the ErPD in the early 2020s, with larger and more expensive boilers, will the UK and RoI market for oil heating decline?
Yes – 32; No – 15.
7. Do you think heat pumps are a realistic replacement option for a retro-fit to replace a 20-year-old oil-fired boiler – without significant upgrading of thermal insulation and controls?
No – 46; Yes – 1.
8. Do you think building regulations have gone too far and new houses are now too airtight which may result in health problems for future generations?
Yes – 33; No – 16.
9. What could be the next major technical development for oil fired heating in the UK and Ireland?
A move towards hybrid oil and renewable heating (eg oil + solar thermal or heat pumps) – 37; A shift to bio-liquid fuel like OFTEC's B30 K (30% FAME and 70% kero) – 9; Minor technical improvements only to existing condensing boilers and to banded oil storage tanks – 4.

Registered technician fined after sub-standard installation

An OFTEC registered technician has been fined £250 after he installed an oil fired boiler that could have caused death from CO poisoning.

The court was told that the boiler was installed in a compartment with inadequate ventilation and an unsuitable material flue liner had been used to link the boiler into the chimney.

No problems occurred for around six months until the householder came home to find the house full of smoke and fumes. Condensation had collected in the flue liner and formed a moisture trap which blocked the flue. These conditions led to incomplete combustion and the spillage of products of combustion including carbon monoxide. Following an investigation by the HSE, the technician pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

As a result of the incident OFTEC was asked by the HSE to check the competence of the installer on other installation work he had recently undertaken. HSE were satisfied with the results of these inspections and concluded that the non-compliant installation was a one off.

OFTEC would like to remind installers that adhering to regulations and manufacturers' instructions for boiler and flue installations is critical to ensuring the safe and correct use of oil fired appliances.

Registered technicians can contact OFTEC's expert team of technical advisers for industry advice on any aspect of their installation and servicing work. Sub-standard work by non-registered technicians can also be reported by using the online reporting facility.

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Planning for the future

– What does OFTEC predict for oil and the wider heating market?

The heating industry is always changing as new technologies and opportunities drive forward product innovation, and as consumer demand and expectations evolve. But there is also another factor that influences change in our industry – government (and EU) policy. The impact of this has become more significant in recent years and is likely to have a growing influence over the future course of our industry.

One reason why heating is important to government is because it produces a lot of the emissions associated with global warming. The Climate Change Act established a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% below base (1990) levels by 2050 – a pretty tough challenge. In the shorter term, the UK also has a legally binding target to secure 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020.

Left purely to market forces and consumer demand, it is unlikely that the heating industry will change sufficiently for this target to be achieved. To engineer change, the EU has rolled out measures, such as the Energy-related Products Directive (ErPD), while the UK government has developed a strategy aimed at moving households and businesses away from fossil fuels such as oil and gas, to heating solutions that have lower emissions. Their road map envisages a future where most heat would be supplied by heat pumps, using electricity

generated from renewable sources and, in urban areas, heat networks. Oil and older-style electric heaters would be the first to go by around 2025, with gas boilers being replaced, first by hybrid systems, then eliminated completely in the 2040s by fully renewable alternatives.

To start the process, DECC launched its Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), but it's fair to say that the domestic version has so far been a flop: just 11,149 new renewable heating systems were installed under the RHI in its first year of operation. This figure falls well short of the 10,800 installations required each month to meet the government's ambitious target of 750,000 installations by 2020.

High up-front costs

This low take up is due to a number of factors which OFTEC foresaw and highlighted from the outset. The main one is that, although the annual subsidy payments are attractive, most homeowners simply cannot afford the high up-front costs of installing renewable systems, while the low oil price means that oil users are happy to keep their existing heating for the moment.

Alongside these carbon reduction policies, the government is also trying to improve energy efficiency and help those suffering from fuel poverty. But in Great Britain at least, these policies have been widely considered

a disaster, with the retrofitting of insulation falling dramatically, and the controversial Green Deal scheme – now scrapped – failing to engage with homeowners.

Contrast this with smaller but very popular initiatives such as the boiler replacement scheme in Northern Ireland which has seen around 20,000 new condensing boilers (70% oil) installed by offering a simple grant of up to £1,000 to replace boilers over 15 years old for consumers earning less than £40K pa. Similarly, in the Republic of Ireland grants to upgrade oil and gas boilers of €700 have seen more than 30,000 oil boilers installed in the last six years.

With government budgets again feeling the squeeze and further spending cuts widely expected, OFTEC believes a joined-up carbon reduction and energy efficiency policy is urgently needed. It surely makes sense to use what budget there is to the greatest possible effect, by addressing the need for carbon reduction and eradicating fuel poverty at the same time.

Renewable technologies clearly have a part to play in new builds and buildings that can be converted easily. However, in many instances – and particularly rural homes – the need for major renovation and the high installation costs means that relatively few people can benefit from renewables at the moment.

Re-assessment package for technicians

For technicians who need to renew their OFTEC qualifications, a re-assessment package will shortly be available, resulting in less time spent in the assessment centre.

Following the example set by the gas industry, the new package is being introduced in recognition of the fact that current qualifications have been available for five years. In practice this means that technicians will not need to repeat a lot of the theory questions that they took previously.

The re-assessments will contain the same practical tasks as before, but the theory papers will concentrate on changes to regulations during the last five years. In addition, there will be questions on subjects which are most commonly picked up by the OFTEC inspection team as areas where technicians may need guidance.

The new package will be available from 1st September.

Grab a bargain from OFTEC Direct

With the heating season not far away, don't miss the opportunity to check out the latest OFTEC Direct flyer that came with this edition of Oil Installer. It's a great way to stock up on essentials or grab a bargain from a long list of best sellers, new products and specials offers.

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Three in four installers “unprepared for ErPD”

More than three-quarters of installers do not feel prepared for the introduction of the ErP Energy Labelling Directive in September, according to a survey by Worcester, Bosch Group.

The study of more than 500 installers revealed the knowledge gap many have regarding the forthcoming legislative change, with over 50% admitting that they were even unsure which month the new labelling system will come into force.

As a result of the poll – which also revealed that half of all installers were concerned about the effect that ErP will have on their day to day duties – Worcester pledged to make the new directive easier by creating a dedicated ErP Week during June.

During the week, Worcester hosted a twice-daily online webinar on the installer section of its website to enable a live Q&A session to take place on screen.

Prior to Worcester’s ErP week, the survey revealed the following statistics:

- 78% of installers felt unprepared ahead of the introduction of the directive;
- Over 50% of installers could not accurately name which month the new directive will come into force;
- 50% of installers were concerned about

the effect the directive will have on their day to day duties;

- Over 50% of installers were unaware that it was their responsibility to pass on an ErP label to the end-user after installing a boiler;
- 65% of installers were unaware that ErP labels will not be required for an unvented hot water storage cylinder;
- 70% of installers did not know up to what output of heating appliances the ErP Energy Labelling Directive applies to;
- 37% of installers did not know whether an ErP label must be displayed when compliant products are on display in a showroom.

Martyn Bridges, director of marketing and technical support at Worcester, Bosch Group, commented: “Our survey has revealed that the industry still has a knowledge gap to bridge in order for the new energy labelling scheme to be implemented successfully.

We want installers to know that there

is a vast support network in place at Worcester to aid them over the coming months, and that we’re here to help.”

www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/installer



Worcester’s ErP Label calculator

Helping installers with the new energy labelling scheme

AGA to be acquired by US corporation

AGA Rangemaster is to be bought by Middleby Corp, of Elgin, Illinois.

The American company, whose main business is food services equipment, will pay £129.2m for the Leamington Spa-based business, which has been manufacturing its cast-iron kitchen ranges for more than 80 years.

The AGA portfolio of brands includes AGA, Rangemaster, Mercury, Falcon, Marvel, Stanley and La Cornue. The group employs around 2,500 people.

Originally established in the early 1930s, AGA’s main Shropshire factory in Coalbrookdale, began making cookers in 1946. The company also has plants at Leamington Spa, Long Eaton in Derbyshire and Ketley in Shropshire.

“The addition of AGA’s world class brands, product range and manufacturing capability to our existing portfolio will further strengthen Middleby’s global reach and enhance our position as a leader in the premium segment for residential equipment,” says Selim Bassoul, chairman and CEO of the Middleby Corporation. “We believe this transaction will provide meaningful synergies as we build upon the combined strengths of both Middleby and AGA.”

William McGrath, AGA Rangemaster’s chief executive, said the board decided to sell to Middleby because its offer was good value for shareholders. The American company, which owns Viking range cookers in the US, would help AGA Rangemaster to increase sales outside the UK and would take on the company’s large pension liabilities.

Middleby says it will carry out a strategic review of operations later in the year, once the deal with AGA Rangemaster is completed. It says it plans to keep AGA’s manufacturing in the UK. The transaction is expected to close in the third quarter of the year, conditional upon the approval of AGA shareholders.

Providing customer peace of mind in England and Wales...

OFTEC is reminding installers that, for the protection of their customers, they need to offer a workmanship warranty – a requirement imposed on all competent persons schemes by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Workmanship warranty is an insurance scheme designed to give customers peace of mind when they have installation work carried out. Available through OFTEC Insurance Services, it covers the cost of rectifying any contravention of building regulations directly attributable to the installation, and includes oil boilers, cookers, storage and supply installations. It also covers plumbing installations, ventilation and electrical work providing the business is registered for these disciplines.

The householder would be able to claim up to £10,000 for rectification work if the original OFTEC installer is no longer trading. The warranty lasts for six years from the date OFTEC receives the job notification, and is fully transferable if the property is sold during that period.

For further information, e-mail registration@oftec.org or call 01473 626298.



Step by Step videos: This is how it's done!

Now you have a chance to update your know-how on basic oil burner maintenance through a series of 18 new training videos. The short videos show how to perform basic maintenance procedures when required, thus

optimizing the service and saving time. They are ideal tools that can be used as part of a training session for new engineers looking to work with servicing oil fired heating – or simply to update your know-how.

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When in doubt – see how it's done!

18

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What is the long term future for fossil fuels in domestic heating?

Roger Webb, until recently director of the Heating & Hotwater Industry Council (HHIC), shares his thoughts...

Roger was involved in all aspects of HHIC's service delivery and took particular responsibility for work on energy policy and legislation and for representing the industry with government and other stakeholders. As part of this work Roger was a member of many influential UK policy committees and working groups. He was also an active participant in the Association of European Heating Industry and represented the UK on EHI's Executive Council. Although he has retired from his HHIC position, Roger continues to support the industry through a number of other roles. Roger was guest speaker at OFTEC's recent mini-conference and AGM.



Roger Webb

The calls to move away from fossil fuels for domestic heating continue, but the difficulties of achieving this are enormous. To understand the scale of the challenge we must look firstly at today's energy system.

The current pattern for heating our homes was established in the 1960's when natural gas was introduced to the UK. This transformed the way that homes were heated by making central heating available to everyone, changing householder expectations about comfort and hot water availability, raising standards of health and doing all this at a very economical cost.

Central heating with oil also became the norm. The UK's gas infrastructure makes it unique within the EU and this, together with consumer reluctance to move away from their established and trusted methods of heating, makes it very hard to move to

something different, even recognising the importance of decarbonisation.

"This was undoubtedly a highly successful move"

The decision to make condensing boilers mandatory in the period 2005-2008 was very significant and it reinforced the dominance of gas and oil boilers for home heating. This was undoubtedly a highly successful move and there are important lessons that could be adopted in future decarbonisation work.

Perhaps the two most important of these are that the government set a clear goal and stuck to it and that the industry and government worked in close partnership on the implementation of the new regulations to ensure a smooth transition. It is also instructive to note that the UK is still the only EU member state to introduce such a regulation and this is more evidence about the uniqueness of the UK market.

Whilst it remains difficult to change our well established methods of heating, environmental and energy security concerns remain and the demands to radically transform the market and to move away from fossil fuels continues – and is unlikely to go away.

In the UK there have been a succession of targets and strategies to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. The current strategy for heating still envisages that fossil fuels for the heating of buildings will be largely replaced by a combination of zero carbon electricity driven heat pumps and district heating by 2050.

The EU is expected to publish a new

heating and cooling strategy later this year and is also expected to favour the electric heat pump and district heating combination. Even the G7 leaders at their recent meeting made a statement about decarbonising electricity by 2050 and eliminating the use of fossil fuels by 2100.

"The challenges of meeting these ambitions are enormous"

The economic and technological challenges of meeting these ambitions are enormous and the programmes to deliver them will have to be very far reaching and long term. The policies that have been introduced in the UK and in many cases more widely in Europe to decarbonise home heating have not been great successes, with the notable exception of the condensing boiler regulations.

What then can industry do to play its part in the decarbonisation agenda and in doing so provide itself with more confidence about a future direction? HHIC has been addressing this issue through its Heat Pathways programme. The focus of this work was on 2030 and the development of scenarios and pathways which will deliver real reductions in carbon emissions but which do not require the wholesale electrification of heating.

This work has shown that substantial decarbonisation is possible without the need to remove fossil fuel from the energy mix and it is hoped that the new government will take note of this when devising its new heat policies.

OFTEC expands registration offering

As the leading competent person registration scheme for oil heating technicians, OFTEC has become the quality benchmark for installers, servicing technicians and homeowners alike.

Customers look for the OFTEC logo for reassurance when selecting a technician, making registration the best way to demonstrate competence and win new business.

However, there is much more to OFTEC than oil. In line with an increasingly diverse energy market, OFTEC has widened its scopes of registration to include renewables and solid fuel heating appliances, as well as the established oil, Part P and PAS 2030 registrations. Biomass registrations will also follow later this year.

Becoming OFTEC registered means you can also take advantage of the wide range of benefits on offer, from self-certification and free technical support to regular industry updates and product discounts via online shop OFTEC Direct.

Here we take a look at the different OFTEC schemes and scopes of registration and the qualifications needed to apply:

Oil registration

Now cheaper than all other major heating fuels, and with an excellent record for reliability and safety, oil is used by one million homes in Great Britain and a similar number across Ireland. With prices predicted to remain low for the foreseeable future, oil is likely to remain a popular choice for off mains gas homes for years to come.

Scopes of oil registration available:

- OFT10-105E: Installation of oil combustion appliances, heating and vented hot water systems
- OFT10-600a: Installation of oil storage tanks and supply systems to fixed combustion appliances
- OFT107: Installation of unvented hot water systems
- OFT10-101: Commission, service, maintenance of single stage pressure jet appliances
- OFT10-102D/W: Commission, service, maintenance of vaporising burner appliances (D = Dry systems, W = Wet systems)

- OFT10-201: Commission, service, maintenance of multi-stage pressure jet appliances (i.e. commercial use)
- Non-operative oil registration covering the above
Training and assessment for oil registration is available via a network of OFTEC approved and accredited training centres. Having passed the assessment, technicians receive a certificate which they must have before applying for OFTEC registration.

Oil non-operative registration

For those working in the oil heating industry but not 'on the tools', OFTEC offers 'non-operative' registration – ideal for those managing a business, specifying and pricing work or involved in training and education.

Non-operative registration includes the full package of OFTEC benefits apart from access to the work notification system for self-certifying installations. To register, applicants must hold a current assessment/qualification for the relevant categories.

Solid fuel registrations

Open fires, room heaters and wood burning stoves are always popular with homeowners and provide a key area of business for many installers.

Scopes of solid fuel registration available:

- OFT15-108(D): Installation, commissioning and servicing of solid fuel burning appliances (dry space heating)
- OFT15-108(W): Installation, commissioning and servicing of solid fuel burning appliances with space heating and hot water heating

Applicants must have a recognised technical qualification in solid fuel installation taken within the last four years e.g. MTC for solid fuel or an NVQ level 3 diploma in plumbing and heating with solid fuel option. Those already registered with OFTEC can apply to extend their existing business registration for a little as £50 per year.

Renewable registrations

Recognising the increasing role domestic renewable heating technologies will play in the longer term, OFTEC has launched renewable registrations for heat pumps and solar thermal systems to enable technicians to extend their customer reach.

Any installation business can join OFTEC's combined competent person's scheme (CPS) and microgeneration certification scheme (MCS) which have become widely recognised benchmarks of professional standards.

Holding MCS certification also means customers can claim payments through the government's Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme. For further details visit www.ofgem.gov.uk



"As a progressive business, I wanted to be involved in the early stages of renewables rather than playing catch up. Oil is, and will continue to be, a major part of my business but MCS accreditation means I can fully advise customers on the best heating solutions for their specific needs." – David Ewins, Davanna Heating Ltd in Truro, Cornwall (a former winner of OFTEC's Oil Boiler Installer of the Year award)
(See also page 33)



“For me, the decision to add renewable installations to my business was an easy one. I’ve already had a lot of enquiries on the renewable side, particularly for biomass which I believe will be much bigger than heat pumps. I will definitely become biomass registered when OFTEC offers this later in the year.” – Neale Waters, ND Waters Oil Heating & Plumbing Ltd, Romney Marsh, Kent.

To hold MCS registration, installers dealing with domestic customers must also comply with a consumer code of practice. Renewable installers will have to join the Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC) or an equivalent scheme.

Scopes of renewable registrations available:

- OFT 501: Solar thermal systems – requirements for contractors undertaking the supply, design, installation, set to work, commissioning and handover of solar heating microgeneration systems
- OFT 504: Heat pump systems – requirements for contractors undertaking the supply, design, installation, set to work, commissioning and handover of microgeneration heat pump systems

Applicants should hold qualifications from the following units provided by the Qualifications and Credit Framework:

Heat pumps: QCF units D/602/3072, F/602/3078, L/602/3083 and Y/602/3054.

Solar thermal: QCF units F/602/3100, L/602/3102, Y/602/3104 and K/602/3107

Alternatively, for those with demonstrable experience and manufacturers’ training, applications can be made via the experienced worker route. For further information visit the MCS website at www.microgenerationcertification.org or contact OFTEC’s registrations team.

Part P registration

Fixed electrical installation work in homes is covered by Approved Document Part P and BS 7671.

Technicians who wish to install and self-certify fixed low or extra-low voltage electrical installations in dwellings can register with OFTEC. They can use the scheme logo as a badge of competence and will automatically be listed on the Registered Competent Person Electrical website where consumers can search for qualified installers.

Scopes of Part P registration available:

- OFT 103: Full scope electrical Part P – for technicians carrying out domestic electrical work

A range of City and Guilds qualifications to suit different types of electrical installation work are required to register.

PAS 2030 registration

OFTEC is an accredited PAS 2030 certification body for the following measures:

- installation of condensing boilers;
- heating controls;
- heating system installation;
- underfloor heating;
- hot water cylinders;
- warm air units;
- taps and showers.

To add PAS 2030 to its scope of registration, a business must employ a technician with the CPS OFT10-105E & OFT10-101 or OFT10-201 scope of registration and demonstrate how it subcontracts out this work.

For taps and showers a Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (i.e. WRAS) qualification is required.

Once registered, technicians are issued with a PAS 2030 Registration Certificate and ID badge and listed on the GDORB National Register as an accredited installer.

By expanding its scopes of registration, OFTEC can offer additional, specialised support for installers working across the heating sector, whilst continuing to provide the same high quality service for oil technicians.

For further information on any aspect of OFTEC registration, please contact the registrations team at registration@oftec.org or call 01473 636 536 from the UK or 01-8645771 from RoI.

Solid fuel registration now available

OFTEC registration services has been granted an extension to its competent person scheme licence. The news came in a recent revision to the building regulations announced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which came into effect during April.

As a result, OFTEC registered technicians can now extend their scope of registration to include solid fuel installations and can self-certify this type of work as well as oil heating, oil storage, unvented hot water, Part P and renewables. Solid fuel registration is also available in Scotland and Ireland with an opportunity for installation technicians in these regions to expand their businesses.

OFTEC offers the two scopes of solid fuel registration: OFT15-108(D) – installation, commissioning and servicing of solid fuel burning appliances (dry space heating); and OFT15-108(W) – installation, commissioning and servicing of solid fuel burning appliances with space heating and hot water heating.

www.oftec.org/technicians/apply-for-solid-fuel-registration

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Renewed call for a competent person's scheme in Ireland



The devastating result of the recent oil tank blaze in Dunmurry, Belfast

Most people in the heating trade will know that OFTEC runs a not-for-profit trade association for the manufacturers of oil fired equipment and a licensed, competent person's scheme for technicians who install oil-fired equipment in England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

In addition, the registration scheme has now expanded into solid fuel and renewables as it responds to market and installer demand for recognition in these sectors.

In Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic (ROI) currently there is no competent person's scheme operating for oil or solid fuel and OFTEC is renewing its call for the local administration in NI and the government in the ROI to introduce a scheme similar to that already operating in other regions.

OFTEC believes the lack of a competent person's scheme has led to a lower level of install quality in Northern Ireland and

the Republic. Addition of energy efficient controls when replacing an oil boiler is unusual (unless grant aided) and separate zones in a replacement situation are very rare. Whilst building regulations are very similar to those in Great Britain, there is no requirement to notify the replacement of an oil boiler in the Republic and notification in NI is only required "if there is a structural alteration".

Needless to say, notification in Northern Ireland is done reluctantly and building control intervention is usually only when a house is being sold and it turns out the replacement boiler install has not been notified and there is a panic to get a rectification certificate issued for the conveyancer.

In the Republic, there is no rectification notice and intervention by the local council or building control officer is rare as there appears to be no route for enforcement or rectification.

Oil tank fire causes extensive damage

The situation is perhaps worse for oil tanks. There is guidance in both the NI and ROI building regulations for the placement of tanks, risk assessment and the separation distances that should be observed. But without notification when these items are replaced, who is ensuring that they are placed correctly and the separation distances and fire walls are complied with?

This was demonstrated recently with an oil tank fire that caused extensive damage to three houses in Dunmurry, Belfast. The circumstances are under investigation by the NI Fire & Rescue Service but it is believed that the fire started in a shed before spreading to an oil tank which ruptured, setting fire to other oil tanks in the near vicinity.

Although it is not yet known whether these tanks were properly installed or protected, this fire highlights the very

real threat of unprotected oil tanks and OFTEC believes the mandatory registration of oil installers in Ireland would give consumers more confidence in their oil heating installation.

Not only would it improve the standard and safety of new and replacement installations, it would advance the use of energy efficient controls, improve efficiency levels and should reduce the need for rectification notices.

OFTEC believes it is time that oil users had similar rights to the regulated fuels – we need a consumer protection strategy, and proper installations that meet building control regulations is the first step to getting a competent person's scheme in Ireland – *watch this space!*

Advice issued to householders following oil tank fire – see page 20

OFTEC presents a united front in Ireland...

With more than one million oil users in Ireland this is a very important market for OFTEC's manufacturing members, many of whom have established and developed substantial businesses on the island.

The OFTEC office is manned in Ireland by David Blevings who has worked for the oil sector for over fifteen years. He is ably supported in the north by regional inspector, Norman Armstrong, and, in the Republic, by Ireland representative and regional inspector Sean McBride. Norman and Sean are very helpful and knowledgeable and regularly take calls from technicians looking for advice and support – without them, the Ireland office would not be able to function.

The workload in Ireland is varied. The team does not have the benefit of the

competent persons scheme that England and Wales enjoy and encounters a varying degree of enforcement of local building regulations – from very good in some areas to not at all in others!

This makes life more difficult as local consumers tend to opt for a “cheap and cheerful” job rather than an energy efficient, compliant one.

Benefits, savings and consumer protection

“A lot of our time locally is spent with politicians and local councils advising on the benefits of using registered technicians and the savings and consumer protection working with a recognised trade association brings,” says David Blevings.

“We work closely with the Health and Safety Executive and have assisted them on several carbon monoxide investigations. We have strong links with the various departments responsible for formulating energy and building regulation policy in both jurisdictions and we are frequently asked for our comments and advice on proposed legislation that affects the oil sector.”

OFTEC adopted the “OFTEC Ireland” designation several years ago which allows technicians to choose which title they prefer. This has proved very welcome in the Republic.

“We continue to push the benefits of using a registered technician to oil customers through consumer press and radio interviews,” continues David. “This has proved very effective over the last couple of years with more enquiries coming to the office asking for local registered technicians.

“Our main goal currently is to get mandatory registration of oil and solid fuel technicians in Ireland. We are pushing both governments on this issue and firmly believe that to install or service an oil-fired or solid fuelled appliance, a technician must be registered to a competent persons scheme.

“This gives consumers the protection that the installation is building control compliant, safe and efficient – why would you not want that?”



OFTEC's Irish team – David Blevings, Sean McBride and Norman Armstrong

Advice issued to householders following oil tank fire

With nearly 70% of households in Northern Ireland using oil as their main heating source, OFTEC is warning householders to ensure fire safety is given due consideration when it comes to installing and protecting oil tanks. This follows an oil tank fire which caused extensive damage to three houses in Dunmurry, Belfast, recently.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service is currently investigating the fire that is believed to have started in a shed before spreading to an oil tank which ruptured, setting fire to other oil tanks in the near vicinity.

Immediately after the

fire, David Blevings, of OFTEC in Ireland, issued an urgent warning to householders: “Oil tank fires have the potential to be extremely dangerous and, as sadly highlighted in this case, to substantially damage properties. Oil is a very safe fuel if stored correctly and the best way to protect yourself and others is to make sure your oil tank and any fuel burning appliances are inspected and serviced by an OFTEC registered technician at least once a year.

“During a service, an OFTEC technician will look at your tank to ensure it has been installed to meet local building regulation standards. If the recommended

separation distances cannot be met, building control will require the placement of a fire safety panel to provide a minimum 30 minute fire-resistant wall which extends at least 300mm above and beyond the ends of an oil tank. Should fire occur, the fitting of a fire panel can be instrumental in halting its spread to your property and beyond.

“The Dunmurry fire highlights the very real threat of unprotected oil tanks and we are strongly urging householders to review the positioning of their oil tank and, if necessary, to take action.”

David Blevings added

that an unprotected oil tank can cause substantial damage to property if set alight. “Government statistics estimate the average cost of damage caused by a house fire is £25,000. To avoid the risks, OFTEC advises that householders should have their oil tank and fittings inspected by a suitably-qualified competent person at least once a year to check for leaks, damage or defects.”

OFTEC renews call for a competent person's scheme in Ireland
– see *Irish News*, page 19

Conference celebrates 20 years of Oil Care Campaign – *pollution incidents fall by 60%*



Speakers at a conference to mark 20 years of the Oil Care Campaign hailed its success as “an example of what can be achieved when industry and regulators work together.”

Robert Light, deputy chairman of the Environment Agency since 2012, praised the “huge record of success” of the campaign, saying that the industry “should be very proud of that achievement”. “It is very, very powerful when the drive for change happens from within the industry,” he added.

Phil Chatfield, who now works for the water policy team for the Welsh government, also spoke about his role in helping to start the Oil Care Campaign and highlighted the challenges of developing a logo that was “eye-catching and non-threatening”, and of launching the Oil Bank phone line in 1995.

He described persuading oil companies to carry the oil care logo and information on their products as “a really challenging job”.

Mr Chatfield said that establishing oil storage regulations in England in 2001 to underpin the campaign was a key step forward. He told the conference that he has been working on similar regulations in Wales that have now been drafted and sent to the relevant minister seeking approval to consult.

“Oil remains the second most common pollutant”

Although the conference was aimed at celebrating the success of previous years, the presentations also looked ahead to see what could be next. Robert Light finished his opening address by focusing on the future. “What is the target for the next 10 years?” he asked, suggesting that aiming for a further 50 % drop in oil incidents would “keep pressing the message”.

Liz Hobday, Oil Care Campaign manager, commented: “For 20 years the Oil Care Campaign has championed safe oil storage and use. In this time oil pollution incidents reported across England and Wales have fallen by around 60 %; from a high of over 6,900 in 1994 to below 2,450 last year. Despite this oil remains the second most common pollutant reported to environmental regulators, so there’s still more we can all do.

“Oil businesses need to help make sure their customers understand their part in protecting our local environment and keeping new and used oil safe. Our new website is a great place to direct people for good practice information.”

Oil Care works with businesses and industry to provide guidance for all oil users on safe handling and storage and to promote used oil recovery.

www.oilcare.org.uk

Carbery appoints Davant

Carbery Plastics has appointed Davant as its fuel tank distributor for Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man with effect from August 2015.

Carbery’s managing director, Michael McCarthy, says: “The appointment of Davant as our fuel tank distributor follows a period of sustained growth for Carbery in Britain. It ensures Carbery oil tank customers in Great Britain will continue to receive best-in-class product, with the added benefit of local, on-the-ground customer service, distribution and product support.”

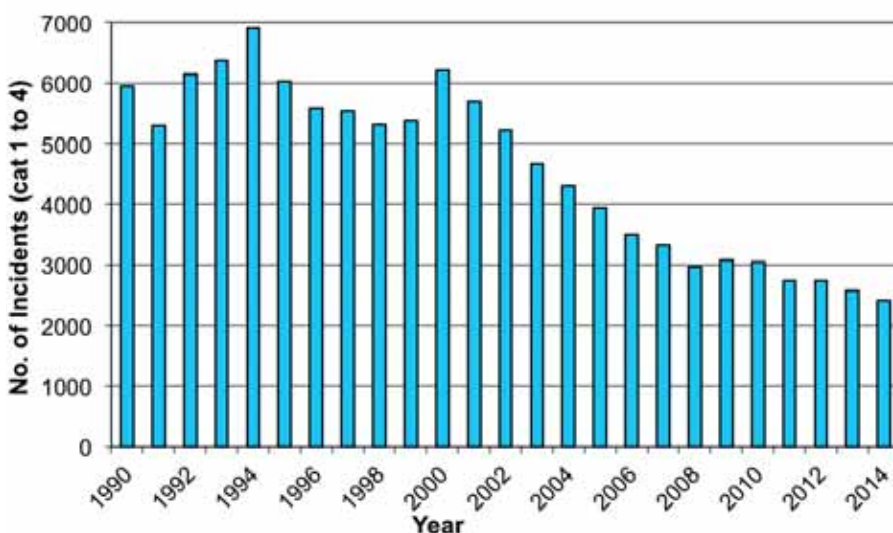
Davant is a specialist plumbing and insulation material supplier. The Herefordshire-based company focuses on supplying independent merchants and distributors across Great Britain. The company’s product range includes all above and below ground drainage products, plastic plumbing systems and water cisterns and accessories.

Davant managing director, David Merrick, says: “We look forward to working with new and existing Carbery customers as we continue to strengthen our position within the off-grid sector.”

All Carbery products are produced at the company’s Clonakilty, West Cork manufacturing centre. Carbery storage tanks already enjoy strong positions with the British and Irish markets, together with a growing number of international markets, including Belgium, Finland, France, Hungary, The Netherlands and the Middle East.

www.carberyplastics.com

Oil Pollution Incidents 1990 to 2014 (England and Wales)





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ASK OLLIE!



I am installing a floor standing oil-fired boiler with a base temperature that will not exceed 100°C during operation. What sort of hearth do I need beneath it?

Special measures are unnecessary beyond the provision of a rigid, impermeable, and non-absorbent sheet of non-combustible material, such as a steel tray. This may be provided as an integrated part of the boiler.

For further information, reference should be made to the boiler manufacturer's installation instructions.

I have been asked to service a single stage oil-fired boiler with an output of 70kW at a commercial property. Will this work fall into the scope of my OFT10-101 qualification?

Yes. The scope OFT10-101 covers the servicing and commissioning of oil-fired appliances with single stage pressure burners and does not impose a restriction on the appliance output or type of building it serves.

I am installing an oil supply pipe below ground. How far does it need to be separated from other services running in the same direction?

Oil supply pipes should be kept at least 300mm clear of other services run in the same direction and should not normally share a common trench. For further guidance on this subject and what measures are to be taken where services cross over one another, reference should be made to OFTEC Technical Book 3, section 2.1.6.

I am replacing an oil-fired boiler and will need to leave the oil supply pipe disconnected for a period of time. What

course of action should I take to prevent oil leaking from the open end?

OFTEC has published a technical notice (no. 012) on the importance of capping open-ended oil supply pipes, which includes a five-step procedure that should be followed when pipes are disconnected and left unattended. To download your copy, visit www.oftec.org and log into the registered technicians' area.

I am servicing an oil-fired boiler in a utility room and have noticed the flexible oil line has been installed outside the appliance casing. Is this allowable?

No. Pipes with an inferior degree of fire resistance to those constructed of copper or steel, such as braided flexible oil lines, must be contained within the boiler casing and be protected by a fire valve.

I am checking an oil storage tank as part of a routine service and have noticed some combustible materials have been stored nearby. What should I do?

In this situation, you should advise the owner that plants used for screening and any other combustible materials should be kept at least 600mm from the tank. This should also be recorded on your OFTEC CD/11 service and commissioning report form.

Advice on the use of copper tube and inserts

Do you use "Type A" compression fittings with your oil supply pipework? Having trouble finding inserts that properly fit soft copper 10mm tubing? Here, OFTEC explains when inserts should be used and sheds light on why some inserts are not always a snug fit.

BS EN 1254 Part 2 defines two types of compression fittings for use with copper tubes that conform to BS EN 1057. Type A consists of a nut and olive, whilst Type B includes flared fittings. Type A fittings are designed for use on hard copper (R290) and half hard copper (R250) when the nut can be tightened on to the olive to form a seal on to the rigid pipe. If used on soft copper (R220) tube, Type A fittings can distort small bore pipe causing weeping, sweating or leaks, which is unacceptable for environmental reasons. BS EN 1254 highlights this concern and states that an internal support, such as a brass insert, should be used to allow compression of the olive on to the pipe without distortion.

In recent months, OFTEC has received several enquiries from technicians who have purchased Type A compression fittings and inserts, only to find that the inserts "loosely" fit the 10mm copper tube they are using. The copper tube standard, BS EN 1057, permits 10mm (outside diameter) tubes to be manufactured with varying wall thicknesses of 0.6mm, 0.7mm and 0.8mm. This means that the internal diameter of the tube can range between 8.4mm and 8.8mm. Thus, a tube with a reduced wall thickness is likely to result in some inserts being a looser fit.

To prevent this, OFTEC suggests technicians check the compatibility of tube and inserts with their merchant. Inserts available from OFTEC Direct are suitable for copper tubes having a wall thickness of 0.8mm. For further information or to place an order, visit www.oftecdirect.com.

As an alternative, OFTEC suggests using flared type fittings, which are also available from OFTEC Direct. Flared fittings can be used on soft copper tube without the need for an internal support, therefore avoiding the issue of varying wall thickness altogether. For further details on forming flared joints, reference should be made OFTEC Technical Book 3, section 2.1.14.

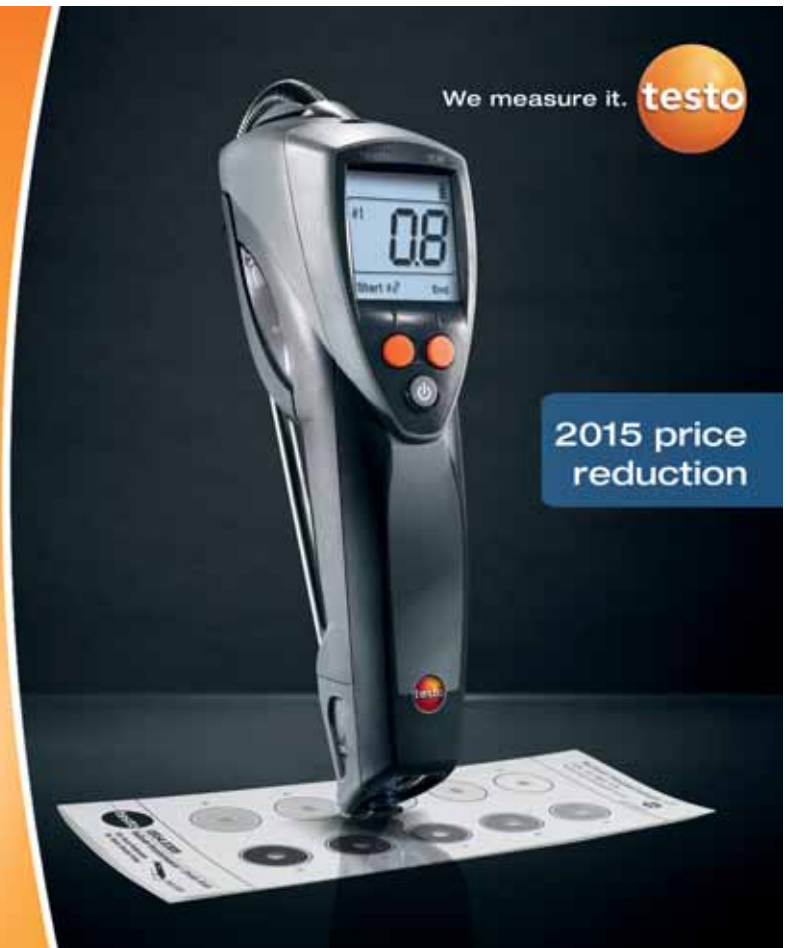
Looking to the future, a normative annex cited at the rear of BS 1057 suggests that a standardised nominal wall thickness of 0.5mm for 10mm tube will be considered at a future revision of the standard. However, there is no indication of when this is likely to happen.

Pumping and estimating was yesterday

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The ins and outs of the Energy Related Products Directive – what YOU need to know

Resulting from many years of negotiation between European member states and the EU Commission, new Ecodesign and energy labelling regulations officially come into force on 26th September 2015.

In a bid to improve energy efficiency, the regulations are set to drive change for the entire heating products supply chain – from equipment manufacturers, to suppliers and installers. Products must be manufactured and tested to strict performance standards; energy efficiency information must be made available to aid the selection of products; and installers will be required to calculate and produce energy efficiency labels when selling product ‘packages’, such as a boiler with a temperature control and/or solar device.

The scope of Ecodesign regulations covers oil boilers and water heaters with a rated output of up to 400 kW. Energy labelling regulations cover oil boilers and water heaters with a rated output of up to 70kW.

Terms used within the regulations

Dealer – the retailer or other person who sells, hires, offers for hire-purchase or displays products to end users. In the UK and Republic of Ireland, this is likely to be the installer;

Heat generator – a space heater, combination heater, or water heater;

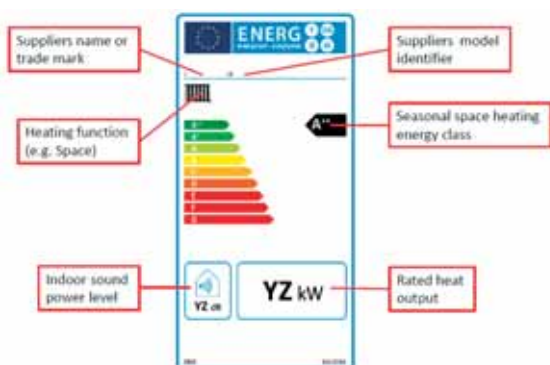
Solar device – a system made up of solar collector, a solar hot water storage tank or a pump in the collector loop;

Temperature control – equipment that permits the end user to select values to regulate the on/off operation of the heat generator in order to control the indoor temperature(s). There are eight classes of temperature control within the regulations - ‘Class I’ being a basic on/off control, ‘Class VIII’ being the most sophisticated and considered to give the greatest benefit in terms of energy efficiency;

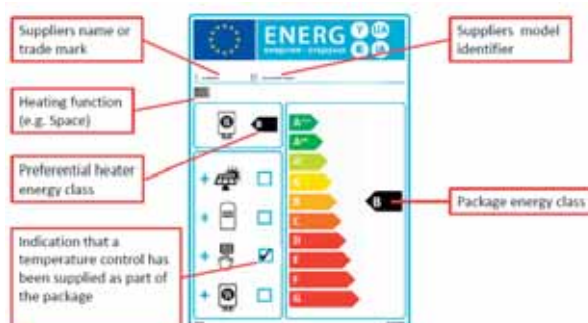
Energy class – an indication of the energy efficiency performance of a product or package. The format for heat generators and packages will be ‘A++ to G’ and for controls it will be ‘I -VIII’;

Product Fiche – supplied by the product manufacture, the ‘fiche’ is a table of technical data relating to the performance of the product;

Product label – supplied by the product manufacturer, the label indicates the energy class of the heat generator, together with additional information as required for the technology. The following label shows a simple space heater product label:



Package label – supplied by the ‘dealer’ to the end user, the package label indicates the energy class of the package as a result of combining the individual products. The following label shows a package of a boiler and temperature control:



Key responsibilities for oil boiler manufacturers

As well as designing and testing boilers, manufacturers of oil boilers will have to produce information relating to the performance of the boiler. This will be provided in the form of a ‘product label’ and a ‘product fiche’. The purpose of the documents is to help the person selecting products for an installation to consider the environmental impact of the products they choose. In all technical and promotional material, the energy class must be identified.

Key responsibilities for dealers

Traditionally, in the heating sector it is the ‘dealer’, or installer, who selects the products to be used for a particular installation. These choices can be based upon cost, efficiency, warranty, ease of installation, manufacturer’s support, and many other factors. From September, if an installer selects products to be installed, under energy labelling regulations he/she is obliged to provide the end user with information relating to the performance of the products. When just supplying a single product, this can be achieved by simply passing on the manufacturer’s product label and fiche.

When supplied as a package (heater, temperature control, and/or solar device) because the combination of these products can influence the way that the system operates and the energy it uses, the energy class of the package has to be calculated and a package label produced for the end user.

To support the labelling regulations, the European Commission has produced a package labelling tool, which can be accessed from the registered technicians’ area of the OFTEC website. Notes on how to use the labelling tool and a number of FAQs have been provided to deal with the most common scenarios that installers will find themselves in.

OFTEC suggests that installers should practise with the package labelling tool and read the FAQs. For further advice, please contact the OFTEC technical department by emailing technical@oftec.org or call 01473 626298.

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Young apprentice shines at Grant Training Academy

Apprentice Tia Allen, one of the youngest women working in the oil industry, recently took her OFTEC 101/ 105E/ 600A qualifications at the Grant Training Academy in Devizes, Wiltshire. Since leaving school, 17-year-old Tia has worked full time for Dan North Ltd, having achieved NVQ Level Two in plumbing and is now diagnosing and servicing Grant boilers.

“She has proven to be very talented and knowledgeable with a real flair for this industry and as such Dan decided she is already capable of sitting her OFTEC qualification,” explains Anna Wakefield, marketing manager for Grant UK. “She has already attended all of our oil courses and has done extremely well.”

Says Tia: “I really enjoy servicing and attending break downs on oil boilers as I get to meet a variety of people and I like the challenge of seeing how fast I can get the boiler back up and running.

“The job is also really rewarding as it’s always nice to put a smile back onto the customer’s face. I have found that customers are surprised

at first to see a lady coming to look at the boiler but, after the standard questions have been asked, they are happy and, if anything, more comfortable to let me get on and fix their boiler!”

Dan North Ltd is a G-One Installer, meaning the company has trained specifically to fit Grant products. The company specialises in oil and LPG boilers, covering an area from Cirencester to the New Forest.

Grant UK’s purpose built training facilities feature an extensive oil boiler workshop and a renewables training and

assessment area, complete with a full size training roof, working solar thermal, Vecta and Spira biomass boilers, air source heat pump, solar thermal system and unvented hot water training and assessment rigs.

www.grantuk.com



Studying hard...apprentice Tia Allen is one of the youngest women working in the oil industry

Solid fuel training from METAC

A solid fuel awareness training course, together with dry and wet solid fuel stove installers’ courses have been launched by METAC Training.

The solid fuel awareness course is a one day training programme aimed at providing participants with the knowledge to enable them to assist customers in choosing the correct solid fuel appliance and to recognise installation and fuel requirements.

The dry solid fuel stove installer course is a five day training course for construction professionals and aims to provide participants with the knowledge and understanding to enable them to install dry stoves to meet the requirements of customers, building regulations and standards. On successful completion, candidates receive an OFTEC 18-108-IRL (Dry) certificate.

The wet solid fuel stove installer course is a further three days for plumbers with an OFT15-108 IRL certificate. This course includes opening and interlinking heating systems.

METAC’s training rooms feature the most up to date equipment and materials on the Irish market, and include various styles of stoves, air ventilation requirements, fixed and mobile flues constructed to allow the participant full examination of correct installations. www.metac.ie



Grant joins the BPEC team

Grant Davies has joined training group BPEC as operations manager.

With more than 40 years experience in the plumbing and heating industry, Grant joins BPEC from UK Certification Ltd where he spent six years as scheme manager involved in external verification, quality systems and formatting assessment modules for approval.

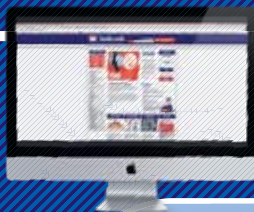
He has also held the posts of centre manager and internal verifier.

BPEC is an approved provider of accreditation, certification, assessments and training materials covering the plumbing, gas, oil, renewables and electrical sectors.

<http://bpec.org.uk>



Grant Davies, new operations manager at BPEC



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VTXECO2126	Eco 21-26 Utility	£965.00
VTXECO2635	Eco 26-35 Utility	£1149.00
VTXOMECO1521	Eco 15-21 External	£1015.00
VTXOMECO2126	Eco 21-26 External	£1159.00
VTXOMECO2635	Eco 26-35 External	£1319.00
VTXWH1216	Eco 12-16 Internal Wall Hung	£999.00
VTXWH1621	Eco 16-21 Internal Wall Hung	£1045.00

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The next steps for oil boilers...

As many readers will be aware, the next few years will see some changes for the heating industry. Brett Hale, residential product manager at Riello Ltd, looks into his crystal ball and predicts the next steps for oil boilers, starting with the imminent implementation of the Ecodesign regulations...

From September all boiler manufacturers will have to comply with the requirements of the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Regulations. The energy label will show that the appliance can meet the minimum requirements for seasonal space heating energy efficiency and useful efficiency for space heating. This gives

greater visibility to anyone looking to purchase or specify an appliance with the ability to easily make comparisons when considering energy efficient products.

The next stage will see the reduction of NOx emissions. For oil boilers the level required is 120mg/kWh and this regulation will come into force in September 2018. This level is not achievable with the current technology in the market today. 2018 may seem like a long way off but will be here far too quickly when you consider the process of introducing any new boiler to the market.

For this reason Riello has been working towards an

effective solution for these lower NOx levels. The RDB BX burner is the answer for kerosene applications. It shares a large part of its design with the industry proven yellow flame version, so for the engineer the changes are not too daunting. The only real difference is the combustion head itself.

In conjunction with the development of the RDB BX burner Riello has looked further to the future and designed a 'blue flame' solution for ultra-low NOx and high-end applications. Although still based around the RDB frame it will feature components that are new to some residential oil engineers. The RDB BG model incorporates the very latest design of digital control box with such features as



Riello's RDB BX burner

post-purge operation, pre-heater function and UV flame detection.

The unique design of the combustion head results in NOx levels far below the ErP requirements. With the low noise levels of the RDB fan structure, simple set up and maintenance and the renowned reliability of a Riello product, this burner gives a perfect solution for any blue flame requirement.

www.rielloburners.co.uk

Use HARP to avoid misleading data, says OFTEC

OFTEC Ireland is reminding boiler manufacturers to use only seasonal efficiency data, available on the Home-heating Appliance Register of Performance (HARP) database, when quoting boiler efficiencies in trade and general advertising.

The HARP database was developed by the UK Building Research Establishment in partnership with Kiwa Gastec at CRE, Kovara, and Heating & Plumbing Markets International and is based on the equivalent UK SEDBUK database. It is a product efficiency database for home-heating appliances used in Ireland and one of its main functions is to help homeowners identify efficient heating systems for their homes.

David Blevings of OFTEC Ireland,

commented: "We believe it's in the best interests of consumers and the industry that all manufacturers and energy companies behave responsibly. It is vital that all manufacturers in particular use the agreed seasonal efficiency data when quoting their boiler efficiencies. This ensures the householder is getting the correct information, allowing them to make comparisons and informed decisions.

"Most manufacturers take their obligations very seriously and that's why we feel it is important to closely monitor activity in this area. Marketing installers and householders with efficiency claims that are contrary to the independent data available is not good practice and could be viewed as misleading by the Advertising

Standards Authority of Ireland."

Paul Martin, programme manager of technical standards development for the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland, added: "Consumers rely on accurate and transparent information and like-for-like comparisons to help inform their purchases. We would therefore prefer to see manufacturers only using efficiency levels quoted on the HARP or SEDBUK databases to maintain consistency across the industry. This will avoid consumers being unduly misled and make for more open competition within the industry, in turn driving higher efficiency standards."

www.seai.ie/Your_Building/BER/BER_Assessors/Technical/HARP_Database/



The Vortex Pro Combi XS, the slimmest 26kW oil-fired condensing combi boiler on the market

Grant launches the Vortex Pro Combi XS

Grant UK has launched the Vortex Pro Combi XS, the slimmest 26kW oil-fired condensing combi boiler on the market. At only 515mm wide, the XS is designed as a replacement for older inefficient standard efficiency oil-fired combis, which tend to be smaller in physical size.

The Grant Vortex Pro Combi XS has almost identical characteristics on both combustion efficiency and domestic hot water performance as its larger version and utilises all of the existing components so will be immediately familiar to installers of Grant products. To save on space however, the 24 litre expansion vessel, normally located behind the front door of the boiler, is supplied as an 'externally fitted vessel kit'.

"As a result of feedback from our G-One approved installer network, we developed this more compact Pro Combi XS to ensure our combi boilers can directly replace older inefficient models," explains Anna Wakefield, marketing manager for Grant UK.

The Vortex range now features 46 different model variations, with outputs from 12 to 70kW. www.grantuk.com



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Worcester rewards environmental excellence

Worcester, Bosch Group has unveiled the winners of its annual Environmental 2020 awards, held in recognition of those who have made an outstanding commitment to tackling climate change through the use of high-efficiency heating technologies.

The awards, now in their 15th year, highlight best practice from installers who are making strides to conserve the environment by embracing the environmental potential of domestic properties.

Six installers and three specifiers from across the UK received their prizes from the event's special guest, Andy Bradley, director at Delta – Energy & Environment, at a prestigious ceremony held at Worcester, Bosch Group headquarters in Worcester.

The winners for each of nine categories, selected from more than 100 entries, are as follows:

- Greenstar gas-fired boiler installation: Simon Smart – Boilercare (UK) Ltd, Norfolk
- Greenstar oil-fired boiler installation: Neil Pleasants – The Heating Company, Suffolk
- Greenstore and Greensource heat pump installation: Darren King – K Lewington Heating & Gas Specialists Ltd, Leicestershire
- Total system solution installation: Paul Lammond – Streetly Gas & Plumbing Ltd
- Greenspring instantaneous water heater installation: Doug Hawkins – Town & Country Plumbing & Heating Ltd
- Housing Association specification: Broadacres Housing Association, North Yorkshire
- Housebuilder Specification: Grace Homes Ltd, Northamptonshire
- Local Authority Specification: London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council

Carl Arntzen, Worcester's managing director, commented: "The



The winners of Worcester's annual Environmental 2020 awards

Environment 2020 awards are our chance to celebrate the industry's champions of efficient and renewable technologies. The fact that so many are committed to protecting our planet for future generations is inspiring, and year on year I am impressed by the calibre of the entries we receive.

"Our Environment 2020 Awards have been a huge success since their introduction back in 1999 and we look forward already to seeing more examples of excellent installation and specification work when we begin judging entries next year."

Andy Bradley, director at Delta – Energy & Environment, added: "It is my hope that, in celebrating these wonderful examples of pairing traditional heating and hot water sources with renewable technologies, we can encourage others to do the same and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels in ever-more efficient and cost-effective ways. www.worcester-bosch.co.uk

Firebird launches baby Enviromax

Firebird has introduced a new 'baby' Enviromax to its range. The Enviromax C12-18kW is available in three models – kitchen, boiler house and external heatpac.

A particular advantage of the Enviromax C12-18kW, says the company, is its compact size with a width of just 345mm (kitchen model) and 24 litre water content. "This makes it perfect for tight spaces, allowing better access and easier handling for the installer and – in common with all standard Enviromax boilers – comes with four BSP tappings, allowing the installer to retrofit a new Enviromax replacement boiler without the need for a major pipework alteration."

The Enviromax C12-18kW boiler has a 92.3% seasonal efficiency and features the Riello RDB burner with advanced digital control box technology providing fault diagnostics and performance monitoring facilities for the service engineer.

The C12-18kW (kitchen model) also features the recently added digital control panel available on all Enviromax kitchen and system boilers up to 35kW output. This advanced control has allowed Firebird to add anti-cycling, frost protection, pump overrun and recorded hours of operation facilities which are displayed on an illuminated LCD panel.

www.firebirduk.co.uk

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Customers can now have their local Plumb and Parts Center branch open around the clock on all their desktop, tablet and mobile devices.

Plumb and Parts Center websites have been fully optimised for use on mobile devices to help installers save time by checking real-time stock availability at their local branch, order on the move, at home or in the office and save money by accessing their own personalised trade prices, manage their account and get the latest deals.

Head of eCommerce, Don Marshall said: "We want to make it easy for people to trade with us, so we're working hard to improve their experience all the time. We've talked to our customers and these improvements are a direct result of what they're telling us. We can always enhance the site features and supporting tools and will always embrace new ways of working to help our customers."

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Diversification is the key to Davanna's success

Recognising the business benefits of expanding into the renewables sector, David Ewins, owner of Davanna Heating Ltd in Truro, Cornwall, became MCS accredited for heat pumps and solar thermal technologies four years ago. He has been OFTEC registered since starting out in the trade 24 years ago.

Since MCS accreditation, David has carried out several high quality renewable heating installations across his local area, including a hybrid oil and solar thermal heating system in a four bedroom, new-build home on the Padstow coast.

David explains: "Property owner Roger Mason approached me to advise on the best high efficiency heating system to install in his new home which, due to its rural location, is off the gas grid.

"Mr Mason is a retired civil engineer and had taken on the major project of demolishing his previous home and building an entirely new property on the site, with the help of his two sons who run a local building company.

Heat efficiency

"They were keen to ensure the house was well insulated to give the best heat efficiency and this, coupled with the fact that Cornwall is a prime area for solar gain, made an oil and solar thermal hybrid system a viable option.

"After discussing all the options available, I suggested that installing three solar panels on the south facing roof would be more than sufficient given the two person occupancy. These would work in tandem with a Warmflow high efficiency oil condensing boiler to power the downstairs underfloor heating and radiators on the second floor.

"On good days, the boiler doesn't even come on"

"At the time of installation, oil prices were higher so the aim was to keep oil use to a minimum. Prices have since fallen to even lower than mains gas but still, on good days, the boiler doesn't even come on, providing Mr Mason with considerable savings."

Roger Mason echoes these thoughts and says the new heating system has significantly reduced his annual heating bill – as well as cutting carbon emissions.

"As our new home is open plan, we expected it to be quite cool but have found that the new heating system works incredibly well. We're spending far less per year on our heating oil than we did in our old property which had a much older boiler and wasn't so well insulated.

"The solar panels on the roof boost our hot water cylinder and we also recycle rain water to run the washing machine, flush the toilets and water the garden to make the house as green as possible.

Renewable options

"When we started the new build we looked into other renewable options, such as ground and air source heat pumps, but the technology didn't seem as reliable and unfortunately the up-front costs involved were far too high. Our hybrid oil and solar thermal



The Warmflow high efficiency oil condensing boiler powers the downstairs underfloor heating and the upstairs radiators

system is proving to be a highly efficient and eco-friendly solution."

David Ewins adds: "My decision to expand into renewables was made because, as a progressive business, I wanted to be involved in the early stages rather than playing catch up.

"Oil is, and will continue to be, a major part of my business, but MCS accreditation means I can fully advise customers on the best heating solutions for their specific needs.

"We have more than enough business to warrant the move into renewables, but we are finding that, even with news that the economy is picking up, most people simply can't afford the high costs of installing renewable heating systems.

"I would like to see the new government take realistic steps towards making it easier for people to move towards low carbon heat. Also to slim down the current crazy levels of bureaucracy which make it difficult for small businesses like mine to grow."



The Viessmann solar system comprises three solar panels on the south facing roof, working in tandem with the oil boiler



SPECFLUE

**COMFORT AIR PELLET STOVES:
A BREATH OF FRESH AIR
FOR STOVE RETAILERS**

How to become qualified to install biomass boilers – *the facts*

“There are numerous pathways, approvals and accreditations necessary before becoming a competent renewables installer, so is it any wonder that those who want to expand into this sector feel they have had to jump through hoops to get there?” asks Martin Freeman, technical training manager at Specflue. Here, Martin shares his top tips about the qualifications and competency requirements for a professional renewables installer.

Establish what you already have and what further qualifications you may need:

You may already be able to demonstrate competency and meet the course pre-requisites through the “experienced worker” route now available with QCF courses. Most renewable courses ask for a minimum of an NVQ level 2 in plumbing and you will be asked to bring or submit a copy of your qualifications or evidence of your work experience before your place is confirmed on any course. It’s worth noting that any person wanting to attend a biomass installer course, or any other QCF level course, should know how to carry out heating and ventilation calculations, appliance sizing, etc., as you will have to undertake exercises on given scenarios. Therefore previous knowledge is essential.

Select an accredited training centre:

Choose a training centre that meets your specific needs and caters for all learning styles, offering training which balances theory and assessment with the practical.

Do your homework:

Be prepared to do some self-study to supplement the course learning and in preparation for your assessments.

Be patient:

Once you have successfully completed the course, you can expect to wait around 4-6 weeks for your certificate. Once received, you can look at joining one of the Competent Person Schemes and the MCS scheme. However, to join, you will also need to have the correct assurance and insurance schemes in place to protect your business and your customers.

Don’t forget other competencies:

MCS and CPS will be expecting you to have the following competencies: for gas (CCN1 and CEN1) or oil (101,102 or 105e) competence, general qualifications such as Part G3, (vented and unvented systems), water regulations and a health and safety certificate which may include manual handling, working in confined spaces, etc. For electrical competency you will also need to hold the relevant electrical qualifications and the IET wiring regulations.

Specflue has a dedicated training centre where installers can undertake renewables courses



Ready to go:

Once you have joined the CPS scheme and received all your membership details, you are ready to start your renewable installation and solid fuel installation services. You can register work as self-certified and offer your renewable customers access to the RHI Scheme, which will provide them with some return on the capital invested.

Go the 'extra mile' to become a complete renewable installer:

Other qualifications which are worth looking at to expand your portfolio of renewable skills include: The Domestic Energy Assessor course which enables you to survey buildings and produce accurate energy performance certificates for domestic dwellings; The Solar Thermal Certificate and Air Source/Ground Source Heat Pumps courses which are aimed at engineers wishing to broaden their skills and knowledge in the renewables sector and offer the full range of renewable technologies.

It's all in the planning:

The renewables market is still evolving and the question that everyone should be asking is not if it will be big, but "when will it finally hit big and how can I maximise the impact on my business?" If you set out a plan that is structured with stages and timings, then the impact on your activities can be minimised. Also, the cost can be spread over a period of time and your marketing activity can be planned to peak at the end of the journey.

www.specflue.com

Martin Freeman has worked at Specflue for just over 12 years. He started in the sales and technical department before becoming a trainer and then being promoted to technical training manager. His responsibilities include overseeing the training department (including internal and external training) and the Advanced Technical Team.



Martin Freeman, technical training manager, Specflue



COMFORT AIR PELLET STOVES: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR STOVE RETAILERS

With an average energy efficiency of 91%, Specflue's range of MCZ Comfort Air pellet stoves are not only kind to the environment, but cost effective. Important to those with busy lives, the stoves can be operated and controlled remotely via a dedicated app, where they can be programmed to come on automatically as and when required.

To accompany the range of air pellet stoves and completely new to the UK market for 2015, are MCZ's design diffusers, which can be integrated into any air-vented system providing exclusive light and aromatherapy functions. To find out more about how air stoves are the new must-have for the stylish environmentally conscious consumer visit www.specflue.com/comfort4



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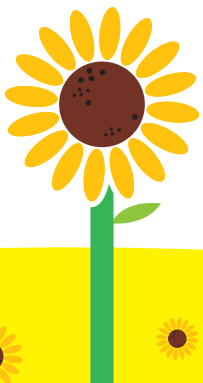
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Branching out to biomass...

The renewable energy industry in the UK is booming, with biomass heating technology in particular experiencing a record amount of growth. As a result, an increasing number of oil installers are looking to up-skill to take advantage of the demand. Here Paul Clark, managing director at Rural Energy, explains the profitable opportunities available to those entering the biomass world.

One of the main drivers that has encouraged thousands of homes and businesses to switch to biomass heating systems has been the launch of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). Offering significant potential income for end-users, as well as generating cleaner energy, the RHI provides tangible benefits from both a financial and environmental perspective.

Even without the RHI, biomass heating still offers significant savings as the cost of heat generated by wood pellets, wood chips or logs is significantly lower than that of fossil fuel heating. What's more, there are a number of finance models available that make installing biomass very affordable – some installations can have no upfront cost at all.

With such a solid business case, it's easy to see why many installers are keen to cash-in

on the increasing popularity of biomass, but this has led to a growing concern about standards and the level of education throughout the industry.

Impressive results...

As with any technology there can be problems if it's not installed properly – while accurately specified, a well-designed biomass system can deliver impressive results; a poorly installed or carelessly commissioned system can lead to enormous headaches that quickly outweigh the advantages. It is crucial, therefore, that installers are well trained to protect the long-term success and profitability of the sector.

Some of the key areas of understanding needed include system and plant room design, site constraints, fuel storage and

transportation methods and boiler safety features.

Engineers coming from a plumbing and heating, gas, oil or mechanical engineering background will already be familiar with much of the pre-requisite knowledge needed to become a biomass installer. The transition then can be quite straightforward, but it will be important to partner with an experienced training provider that can go over the more technical aspects of the technology.

For those looking to up-skill, I would recommend attending an introductory biomass course before advancing to manufacturer-based training. Rural Energy has recently opened a dedicated biomass training and skills centre in Leicestershire to help engineers from across the heating and renewables sector take their



Paul Clark, managing director of Rural Energy

first steps into biomass, arming them with the knowledge and hands-on experience needed to deliver high quality biomass installations. With over 1,800 square feet of training space, featuring a range of Herz boilers, Rural Energy is able to offer training on all aspects of biomass design, installation and commissioning.

www.ruralenergy.co.uk

Specflue to launch new range of stoves

Specflue, a supplier of flue systems, wood burning stoves and renewable heat products, is about to introduce a new collection of Scandinavian-inspired stoves to the UK market.

The new pellet stoves by MCZ, a market leader of pellet products, will be available from September. Each stove features a minimalistic design and is equipped with new functionality and advanced performance, says the company. New features include the removal of front ventilation grilles and the use of high quality materials, such as glass, stone and high thickness metal for a streamlined design.

Phil Lowe, head of sales at Specflue, comments: "MCZ has selected materials of the best quality to develop a range of highly aesthetic pellet stoves. The removal of front ventilation grilles has become a signature look for MCZ stoves and this is a style choice that requires an accurate level of technical analysis. Complete with a new range of innovative features, this has resulted in many new models that offer effective heat distribution with a sleek design."

The range includes some of MCZ's iconic models such as the Klin, Aike, Tilda, Stream, Toba and Vivo 85 Hydro pellet stoves. They will be distributed exclusively by Specflue. www.specflue.com

Biomass flues from SFL

If you're already installing conventional oil appliances, you will be familiar with the relevant provisions and regulations concerning flue systems in line with Document J of the building regulations (Part F for Scotland), says Devon-based **SFL Flues & Chimneys**. Biomass, however, is identified as a solid fuel and as such is subject to some different requirements within the building regulations.

SFL, formerly known as Selkirk Manufacturing, has been manufacturing prefabricated chimney products in the UK for over 40 years with its exhaust product brands established throughout Europe covering a wide range of specialist applications.

In addition to the basic regulations, the construction and design of the biomass chimney system must provide adequate drainage for condensates and a path offering the least possible resistance for the flue gases.

The company's Nova twin-wall chimney system, for example, offers a corrosion resistant 0.5mm 316L inner liner and is designated for wet operation without seals. The system features fully welded seams and twist-lock assembly and has a 15 year warranty.

SFL can provide advice on chimney sizing in accordance with EN 13384 (parts 1 & 2) using its iSize software package.

www.sflchimneys.com



Heating & Renewables Roadshow 2015

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- Exeter - 15th Sep (Westpoint)
- Farnborough - 17th Sep (FIVE)
- Edinburgh - 22nd Sep (RHC)
- Manchester - 24th Sep (Event City)

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CASE STUDY:

Biomass installation – the economics behind the choice

Somerset-based Eco Angus Ltd is a supplier of wood burning boilers with its product range reaching throughout the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

The company claims that its biomass products can provide all central heating and domestic hot water requirements at around 50% to 80% of the price of fossil fuels, depending on access to wood. Eco Angus's complete range of wood gasification log boilers and wood pellet boilers have full MCS accreditation, ensuring the eligibility of Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) grants, with a typical payback period at around five to seven years.

Here, the company provides a case study to support its sales message...

Richard and Tracy and their children live in a five bedroom house with an office above their garage for their business. The house is very exposed, single glazed and has solid walls with no space for insulation. The fuel used for heating, hot water and cooking was oil and due to their location gas is not available.

They double glazed the windows, swapped the Aga for an electric cooker, installed solar thermal to heat water and had a wood-burning stove installed. However, even with all these improvements the buildings were still very difficult and expensive to heat.

They researched an alternative way to heat and provide hot water. It was hugely important to them that the end result would be eco-friendly and cost effective so, after careful consideration, they chose to have an Angus Orligno 200 40kW log boiler installed.

In comparison to other suppliers' boilers, they were impressed with the simplicity of Eco Angus boilers, making them more straight forward, cheaper and easier to maintain.

Value for money...

The system was installed three years ago and the couple receive payments through the non-domestic RHI. Asked about whether they were happy with the efficiency, cost and performance of the

system, they responded: "The boiler is very efficient, there's plenty of hot water and the house is now nice and warm. It has definitely been value for money, especially with the Renewable Heat Incentive payments."

The total cost, including the installation of the system was £15,000. Since having it installed their annual fuel cost has halved and they receive an average of £1,848 in RHI payments for the 21,000 kW hours used each year.

Based on these figures their Eco Angus boiler will have paid for itself within just over five years with them still receiving RHI payments for the whole 20 year term. If they used their full allowance of a maximum of 52,560 kW hours, the time taken for the boiler to pay for itself would be just under three years.

"In conclusion, the eco-friendly Eco Angus wood burning boiler is an effective way to produce hot water and heat, provides



The wood gasification log boiler installation by Eco Angus



value for money and even saves money in the long term," says the company. "It is straightforward and uncomplicated, meaning the system is unlikely to break down, and gives flexibility in obtaining the fuel from different, sometimes free, sources.

"It is important that, as a country, action is taken against global warming. The government is keen to replace some of the fossil fuel boilers being used at present with renewable heat technologies in order to reduce carbon emissions and concur with the Kyoto agreement. Based on this, and the possibility of increased oil prices in the future, the biomass industry is expected to expand in the short to medium term.

"Eco Angus are more than happy to provide product demonstrations for interested parties. For those installers who are used to supplying oil boilers it could be an opportunity to diversify business for customers where biomass could be a natural option. As a company we offer simple solutions for greener heating with free installer training."

www.ecoangus.co.uk

Biomass world meets in Vienna

The 23rd European Biomass Conference and Exhibition was held in Vienna at the beginning of June when 1,200 registered participants from 76 countries attended more than 800 presentations, three parallel events and seven workshops.

The annual conference and exhibition has become a world leading event to get the latest results from top research organisations, as well as to discover the most innovative bioenergy applications from industry and to hear from international subject experts about the state of play and latest policies that are shaping the biomass sector.

The 2016 European Biomass Conference and Exhibition will be held in the Netherlands next June. Further information: <http://www.eubce.com/information.html>



Visitors from 76 countries attended June's European Biomass Conference and Exhibition in Vienna

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Spotlight on Biomass

Specialist biomass training from BPEC

The solid biomass National Occupational Standard (NOS) training course from BPEC can be used towards registration on a range of schemes including CPS, HETAS, APHC, NAPIT, NICEIC and MCS.

The BPEC group of companies specialise in providing operatives working in building services with the skills and expertise necessary to meet the industry's high quality standards and are one of the leading providers of biomass assessment and qualifications for installers in the UK.

Biomass, says BPEC, is already widely available throughout the UK and that its production and use also "bring additional environmental and social benefits."

BPEC claims that the benefits of using biomass as a sustainable fuel are many fold, including:

- Biomass is a "carbon lean" fuel producing a fraction of the carbon emissions of fossil fuels;
- Biomass can be sourced locally, from within the UK, on an indefinite basis, contributing to security of supply;
- UK sourced biomass can offer local business opportunities and support the rural economy;
- The establishment of local networks of production and usage allows financial and environmental costs of transport to be minimised. There is no region in the UK that cannot be a producer of biomass;
- Many biomass fuels generate lower levels of atmospheric pollutants such as sulphur dioxide, which contributes to acid rain. Modern biomass combustion systems are highly sophisticated, offering combustion efficiency and emission level control.

Training centres and colleges wishing to offer the BPEC biomass training course should contact Mally Butters, email: mbutters@bpec.org.uk or tel: 01332 376000.

www.bpec.org.uk

Seeking biomass partners...

Rural Energy is actively seeking biomass installers to join its growing network of regional partners.

The Leicestershire-based company has already supplied biomass technology for more than 1300 installations and is targeting strong growth in the sector.

Established in 2002, Rural Energy offers dedicated sales, technical design, project management, servicing, commissioning and maintenance departments in addition to a large training suite. The company has three tiers of partnership, starting at bronze and progressing to gold with multiple benefits including technical support and training.

Managing director, Paul Clark, says: "Our track record in providing technical support across the whole spectrum gives installers confidence in tackling any biomass problem."

For further information about becoming a regional partner, contact: partners@ruralenergy.co.uk

See also p37.

Housing professionals told how to reduce winter deaths

Housing associations were given the cold, hard facts about excess winter deaths at a recent event hosted jointly by Trent & Dove Housing and Kensa Heat Pumps, where it was announced that every winter around 30,000 deaths occur in the UK due to tenants being too poor to heat their homes.

Softening the blow of the damning statistics, Trent & Dove Housing and Kensa provided step by step advice and evidence to help housing associations combat fuel poverty and alleviate the problem of excess winter deaths in rural and off gas grid housing stock through the installation of ground source heat pumps.

Taking the blueprint of Trent & Dove Housing's recent retrofit programme as the inspiration for change – a scheme which replaced electric heating with ground source heat pumps in 133 rural properties – the event presented the case for ground source in social housing.

Steve Grocock, director of property services for Trent and Dove Housing threw down the gauntlet to other social landlords, making an appeal to follow Trent & Dove's lead and try to eliminate fuel poverty and curb the growing number of excess winter deaths in rural housing. He said: "We have

calculated there are around 200,000 bungalows in the country that match the profile of those which we have just upgraded to ground source heat pumps; these are homes that are off the gas network, electrically heated, and in fuel poverty – or very close to it.

"We have seen an immediate saving on tenants' energy bills – many of whom are elderly and vulnerable – as a result of our upgrades programme, which we see as being key to reducing fuel poverty and excess winter deaths in our stock; the fact that 30,000 deaths nationwide every winter are deemed 'preventable' (according to the Office of National Statistics) is just unacceptable.

"Small measures such as replacing night storage heaters with more efficient and affordable ground source heat pump systems can make a big difference – in fact, in some cases, it is the difference. We should all be doing this – what are you waiting for?"

Chris Davis, commercial director at Kensa Heat Pumps, said: "Our recent ambitious retrofit project has been a terrific success and we are delighted that Trent & Dove Housing wanted to share this with other social housing providers as an example of best practice. The event aimed



More than 60 social housing professionals were told how to reduce the number of winter deaths at an event co-hosted by Kensa Heat Pumps

to give other social housing landlords a proven project blueprint enabling them to tackle fuel poverty in their off gas grid housing stock using sustainable ground source heat pump technology – and we are thrilled with the turnout and response."

Steve Grocock added: "With the support of Kensa and our contractors J Tomlinson and Encraft, Trent & Dove has achieved an outcome that many housing associations dream of: halved tenant energy bills, halved CO2 emissions in our stock, improved tenant health and wellbeing and generated £2.3m of income through the ECO and RHI to off-set our £1.8m investment – and all achieved in just four months."

www.kensaheatpumps.com

BSRIA "hugely disappointed" with new VAT ruling

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has ruled that the UK has failed to comply with the VAT directive as it has applied a reduced rate of VAT to the supply and installation of energy saving materials for housing.

The Building Services Research and Information Association (BSRIA) is "hugely disappointed" that the carbon reduction industry has been singled out to be charged the standard rate VAT.

Affecting the installation of energy saving measures including central heating and hot water system controls, insulation, heat pumps, solar photovoltaic and solar thermal panels, and wind and water turbines, the ruling means that such measures can no longer

benefit from a reduced rate of 5% VAT. Instead, the ECJ ruled they will have to be charged at the standard UK VAT rate of 20%.

BSRIA chief executive, Julia Evans, said: "Government should have the courage of their convictions; yet again the energy efficiency industry is to suffer at the hands of this decision. Installation of energy-saving materials is the only category within the 5% reduced rate VAT that will be increased to the standard rate; all other categories will remain at the reduced rate.

Incentive for industry...

"This decision, therefore, flies in the face of the industry trying to achieve its climate change

targets and build on energy-saving measures. If government could have exercised continued discretion for longer – this would have helped. Sticking at the reduced rate would have served as an incentive for the industry.

"More and more, BSRIA is getting the impression that energy and carbon reduction issues are being viewed as a burden to government which is inhibiting, not only the industry, but the economy at large. The recent government announcement of the end of the UK's zero carbon buildings policy is a further example of this. As a minimum, government is sending mixed messages on carbon reduction policies which are of great concern."

She added: "The undoubted

impact of these measures will be a significant rise in costs for consumers and others installing energy-saving materials – for example – in residential homes and home-owner-occupiers. Only social housing tenants will be provided with the supply and installation of energy-saving materials at a reduced rate. Government may also need to find a more efficient way of promoting energy efficient materials while remaining in line with EU VAT law, possibly through the use of direct subsidies."

There is no opportunity for government to appeal the decision of the ECJ. Changes will not take place until the 2016 Budget.

www.bsria.co.uk

The good, the bad and the ugly...

Although the vast majority of photographs we receive for our Gallery page show disturbing, dangerous or badly neglected installations, on occasion we are presented with more amusing, heart-warming shots. In this edition we feature a couple of each!

Whatever category your photographs fall into, keep them coming so that we can share them with our readers! Send them to: jane@oilinstaller.co.uk



It's good to be patriotic! This tank – complete with the Union Flag – was spotted by a member of our editorial team in a sleepy Cheshire village recently. God save the Queen!

Stuart Rumble spotted this sad and neglected tank below whilst working in Hampshire. He told Oil Installer: "The tank was of course decommissioned due to its poor condition." Stuart works for Berkshire-based Advanced Maintenance UK Ltd which specialises in all aspects of oil, LPG, natural gas, domestic, commercial and industrial heating and plumbing.



This photograph, showing an alkethene gas pipe being used as an oil line, was sent in by Newton Abbot-based Westcountry Tank Replacements. "The above ground pipe was copper but the underground pipe was a piece of yellow plastic gas pipe," says the company. "Needless to say, we have since replaced the pipe with copper pipe in conduit for extra protection, as per OFTEC guidelines. The job was in the Whimble area of Exeter and we were originally excavating to find the oil line, but all we found was the gas pipe, so we excavated each end of the line and discovered that it was indeed the gas pipe being used as an oil line, not as sleeving. As a result we replaced the entire oil line."



In celebration of the birth of Princess Charlotte on May 2nd, at St Mary's Hospital, London, engineers at Staffordshire-based Tuffa Tanks produced a special one-off, bright pink mini oil storage tank and made it comfortable in its very own wooden cot!
Her Royal Highness Princess Charlotte Elizabeth Diana of Cambridge – fourth in line to the throne and daughter of William and Kate, Duke and Duchess of Cambridge – weighed in at 8lbs 3oz. The pink oil tank of Uttoxeter, complete with golden crown, weighed in at slightly more...



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