

# Oil Installer

Topical issues affecting the industry today

in association with



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## And the winner is... Grant Vortex\*.

The only choice for  
high efficiency oil-fired  
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Winter 2013 Volume 7 No 4

[www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com)

\*The Grant Vortex range currently holds the top 20 places on the Government SEDBUK database and is recommended by the Energy Saving Trust.





# WISE UP TO WATER TREATMENT BEST PRACTICE

Boost your bottom line every time you install a new boiler, radiator, pump or valve. Water treatment isn't only a legal requirement it's best practice. A new heating system can become less efficient within weeks without it. So whether you're recommending cleaning and flushing, chemical water treatment, filtering or scale reduction, wise up to water treatment. For the full range of water treatment products and advice, head to your local Plumb Center.

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for Best Practice step by step and "how to" videos.

**WISE UP**  
TO...  
**WATER TREATMENT**



# The market looks good for oil

# 2

2013 has been an amazing year for oil boiler sales. After a very slender time in 2011 and 2012, we have seen a resurgence of installations with the average monthly sales up 20% in the first 8 months of 2013 compared to the same months in 2012. I



believe the reason for this is that consumers want the reliability of oil heating and know that the running costs are reasonable and mostly less expensive than other off-gas fuels. Also they are frustrated with the seemingly ever moving Renewable Heat Incentive situation and have reached the point where they must replace their existing heat source.

That said, we face strong competition in 2014 when the domestic RHI is scheduled to start in England and Wales, offering Government grants for 7 years if you install heat pumps, biomass boilers or solar thermal panels. At OFTEC we are looking at the option of oil condensing boilers running in bivalent systems with heat pumps; this will enable the RHI to be claimed for the renewable element of the heat. But the best way and cheapest way for your customers to reduce their CO2 emissions is to switch from an ageing non-condensing boiler to a modern oil condensing boiler.

OFTEC and the FPS continue to work hard to promote oil heating through the Oilsave campaign. The new website [www.oilsave.org.uk](http://www.oilsave.org.uk) gives your customers lots of helpful hints about using oil heating and why renewable heat may not be right for their homes. Also we have stepped up the PR and now have Oilsave technician spokesmen in most oil counties.

Thank you to the many OFTEC registrants who responded to our survey in the summer. The results of this are shown on page 7; we were pleased by how highly you rated our registration services. It was pleasing that Oil Installer was liked and we will make changes to include more technical problem solving content – as requested.

Finally I would like to encourage all readers to apply to be a winner at the 2014 OFTEC Awards for Excellence – see page 5. The awards will be presented at a lunchtime event in June before which there will be a morning of seminars and a trade show, making this event really worthwhile for every single registered installer.

Meantime I hope your work in oil heating goes well over this heating season; there are plenty of excellent products made by OFTEC members. We need your help to ensure they are sold and that we keep lots of oil customers long into the future.

Martyn Bridges

OFTEC chairman

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# Turning up the heat for oil heating customers

“Work on the Oilsave campaign has really intensified this autumn,” reports Malcolm Farrow, OFTEC’s marketing and communications manager. Below he describes the latest developments in the Oilsave campaign which began in October with a major marketing campaign in local and regional consumer media.

Launched to coincide with the start of the heating season, the campaign promotes the benefits of oil heating to existing customers and highlights the things they can do to be more energy efficient and save money. The campaign, which covers Great Britain, has already been successful with coverage in a wide range of publications, including glossy county magazines, local and regional newspapers and on BBC local radio.

The regional media campaign will continue throughout the winter and will support and reinforce the messages in the Oilsave flyers that technicians and FPS fuel distributors are handing out. Watson Petroleum is the latest fuel distributor to get actively involved in the campaign and their support will help many more oil customers to get the



Rix Petroleum is promoting the Oilsave campaign on its website and via social media

Oilsave message.

Alongside the consumer campaign, the Oilsave website is being relaunched with a refreshed design, easier navigation and additional content. The updated site makes it much easier for home owners to find the information

they need. It also emphasises the benefits of using OFTEC registered technicians – one of the key goals of Oilsave – a find a technician search facility is also a feature of the site.

We’re very pleased that so many technicians have already ordered flyers and got

involved in the campaign; the more registered technicians behind the campaign, the more effective it will be. If you haven’t already done so, please take the opportunity to order flyers. After all, it’s effectively free advertising, so what have you got to lose?

*the more registered technicians behind the campaign, the more effective it will be*



## SumUp – your very special introductory offer

OFTEC has a new payment partner SumUp. SumUp enables you to take credit and debit card payments anytime anywhere simply using your smartphone along with a pocket size card reader and a free app!

It’s ready to roll out in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and OFTEC has negotiated a strong introductory offer unique to registered technicians. The offer allows you two months of unlimited free payment processing and a full refund of £19.95 on the cost of the card reader! In addition to this, there are no monthly fees, no contract, no penalties and a super low processing fee of only 1.95% per transaction after the initial two months! To register simply email [OFTEC@sumup.com](mailto:OFTEC@sumup.com)

# On to a winner in 2014

OFTEC's Awards for Excellence return next year on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June with a refreshed format.

The award presentations will follow a morning trade show and seminar programme featuring some of the biggest industry names including Worcester Bosch, AGA and Riello; \*a buffet lunch will also be available for a nominal charge.

These biannual awards celebrate the achievements of OFTEC's finest registered technicians. Even if you aren't up for an award, we hope you'll want to attend this event, which is exclusively for OFTEC registered technicians.

The awards cover a number of categories, including oil boiler installer of the year, servicing and commissioning technician of the year, trainee of the year and oil tank installer of the year. There are also awards that celebrate the work of training centres and manufactures and, for the first time, a new lifetime achievement award.

## It's time to blow your own trumpet

If you have recently carried out work to a high standard why not get recognition for your skill and expertise by nominating yourself for an award?

Download the nomination form from the OFTEC website, complete and return. Once your entry is received, we will arrange to visit and carry out the judging process. Many technicians are reluctant to blow their own trumpet, but it's a great way to get recognition for the quality of your work. It's also likely to benefit your business and previous award winners have gained significant publicity as a result of their nomination. Sure to impress potential customers, next year's winners will have the right to use the awards logo on their van and stationery.



Past winners  
(clockwise from top left)  
Stuart Haill,  
Dave Ewins,  
Sam Fice,  
Richard Thwaites  
and Andrew Eden

You can self-nominate for work carried out between the 1st January 2013 and 28th February 2014, which is the closing date for entries.

OFTEC's team of inspectors will also be nominating technicians whose work they believe has achieved the necessary standard. The awards have always been keenly contested over the years, and this year is likely to be no different.

## Raising our game

Showcasing the very best in oil heating and cooking helps to raise standards right across the industry and encourages everyone to raise their game. If you're doing outstanding work, this is your chance to get the recognition you deserve!

Look out for more details in the spring 2014 issue of Oil Installer and check out the event updates in the OFTEC e-news.



**2014 DIARY DATE – TUESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

Join registered technicians for a trade show, seminars, an awards presentation and a buffet lunch\* at the Nailcote Hotel, Nailcote Lane, Berkswell, Coventry. CV7 7DE  
For more information contact [marketing@oftec.org](mailto:marketing@oftec.org).

## Four new inspectors join the team

Two new inspectors have recently been inducted at OFTEC. Joseph Bath will be covering South Wales while Warren Bellinger will be doing inspections across central southern England.

Both are experienced former oil heating technicians who ran successful oil heating businesses before deciding to come off the tools and operate as contracted inspectors for OFTEC. Joseph joined his family's heating business in 1990 and did a full apprenticeship before starting his own business in 1996. He has been a member of OFTEC's competent person scheme since it started and has always specialised in oil heating. Warren is based in Berkshire and has run his own business for over five years, specialising in range cookers. Both are highly experienced which will stand them in good stead in their new roles.

And, as Oil Installer goes to press OFTEC is pleased to announce that it has appointed Niall Plevin-Kelly as regional inspector for north west England, while Chris Spencer will be covering north east England.



Four new inspectors – Joseph Bath, Warren Bellinger, Chris Spencer and Niall Plevin-Kelly – have recently joined the OFTEC team

## Keeping tabs on OFTEC logo misuse

OFTEC often receives enquiries from Trading Standards Authorities and from members of the public, regarding the unauthorised use and misuse of the OFTEC Trademark (the OFTEC logo) and false claims of association to OFTEC. If such a case is upheld, OFTEC will always pursue the matter with the company concerned, and if required, with local Trading Standards Authorities to address the issue.

Often the misuse will be a deliberate attempt at deception by a company that does not have a relationship with OFTEC. However, some cases are genuine oversights by businesses in that their registration may have lapsed for a short period prior to re-registration. While these mistakes are often cleared up quickly, to continue to display the trademark and any claims of OFTEC registration when your business or individual registration has lapsed or been suspended for any reason is deemed a criminal offence under The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (UK), The Consumer Protection Bill 2007 (Eire) and The Fraud Act 2006.

If the case is escalated to Trading Standards, they may choose to take the matter further by

legal means and, if found guilty by a Court of Law of being in breach of these regulations, the consequences are that the sentence can often carry a heavy fine and in rare cases, even a custodial sentence.

Should a registered business elect to leave the OFTEC scheme for any reason, OFTEC would encourage the immediate removal of all such claims of association from advertising materials, business documentation, business vehicles and website pages.

The OFTEC R100 Rules for Registration document can be downloaded at <http://www.oftec.org/Media/Default/DocGalleries/Registration%20forms/OFTEC%20R100%20Rules%20of%20Registration.pdf>

Clauses 6.1 and 6.2 describe OFTEC's requirements regarding authorised use of our Registered Trademark. Should you require further clarification of any of the points raised, please contact Adrian Wink, OFTEC's compliance manager.



## Make a great escape from Christmas TV



If the prospect of yet another re-run of The Great Escape does not take your fancy this Christmas, why not take a look at the new edition of the OFTEC Direct catalogue instead.

OFTEC has been working hard to improve the design of the catalogue to make it easier to find your favourite items, and once again the range of products stocked has been expanded. This year, among other things, a great range of power tools has been introduced for the first time, and there are more money-saving Ollie offers too.

The OFTEC Direct website [www.oftecdirect.com](http://www.oftecdirect.com) will be updated to coincide with the publication of the new catalogue.



# The 2013 registered technician survey – what you told OFTEC

*Understanding your customers is important for any organisation if it is to thrive and grow. OFTEC is no exception so to get to know its registered technicians a little better, a questionnaire was sent out last summer.*

“I’d like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the trouble to respond – the response was very encouraging and we received a very high number of replies,” said OFTEC’s marketing manager Malcolm Farrow. “It gave us proof that OFTEC is important to technicians and that our services are valuable. We’ve looked very closely at all the replies and comments received and are now using them to review and improve the services we provide.

## “OFTEC is 100% committed to providing you with value for money”

“It’s a fact that the people who respond to questionnaires tend to fall into two main groups, those that are very happy with the service they receive, and those that are aren’t getting what they want. I’m pleased to say that the answers we received were generally very positive and reveal a high level of satisfaction with the services OFTEC provides.”

## Main services – a high level of satisfaction

Registration, inspection, technical support, training and publications – were all rated as excellent or good by over 80% of respondents. Less than 6% felt they were poor or needed to improve.

### Retail and online services – room for improvement

Ratings for OFTEC Direct and the OFTEC website were also very positive, with excellent or good ratings of 71% and 75% respectively. However, with 20% saying these services were only adequate, careful consideration will be given to what can be done to improve retail and online services.

### Positivity about the future

More detailed questions yielded some very interesting answers, not least how positive technicians feel about the future of their businesses. Most expect their business to have grown in five years time and that oil heating will still be a core part of their daily work – all of which bodes well for the future of the industry.

### Renewables – modest growth with new scopes for registration

The only significant change in activity was a modest growth in the number of registered technicians expecting to add renewables to their business. This was echoed in the support for OFTEC to develop renewable scopes of registration – which we are looking at closely. It suggests that technicians expect their industry to evolve slowly in the next five years, rather than change dramatically.

### Inspection – a satisfactory experience

It was also very satisfying to see that almost all respondents feel positive about their experience of the inspection process, with most feeling well prepared and finding the interaction with inspectors straightforward and satisfactory.

### Keeping in touch – do we have your email address?

Providing good information and keeping in touch with technicians is an important feature of OFTEC’s work. Again most found Oil Installer and the monthly E-news either very useful or fairly useful; very few technicians did not bother to read either publication. The feedback received as to what articles you wanted to read was also very useful and will be acted upon.

A significant number reported that they did not receive the E-news – to rectify this please give your email address to OFTEC’s registration team on 0845 6585080.

To advise Oil Installer of your email address, please complete and return the postcard enclosed with this issue.

## Working hard on your behalf

OFTEC is dedicated to improving the services it provides to technicians and is 100% committed to providing you with value for money, which is clearly a key concern. Although we’re very happy with the positive response to this questionnaire, we will not be complacent and you can rest assured that we will be working very hard on your behalf in the years to come.

OFTEC welcomes your opinion about its services at any time. Please send your comments to Malcolm Farrow [MFarrow@oftec.org](mailto:MFarrow@oftec.org).



# New rules for registration schemes

In June 2012 the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), which licences competent persons' schemes, released new conditions of authorisation and gave each scheme a two-year transition period for them and its members.

### Deadline – June 2014

OFTEC has been complying with these requirements and our registration scheme, rules for registration and inspection regime have slowly but surely been moving over to the new requirements. The deadline for full transition is June 2014 and this may have some implications for registrants who install controlled service work and self-certify to Building Regulations in England and Wales.

### Workmanship warranty

One feature of the new conditions is for an installation business to hold a workmanship warranty. This warranty provides cover to the end user against a contravention of Building Regulations for six years from the date of installation (and work being notified) should the installer cease to trade and therefore be unable to rectify.

### Three-year inspection regime

OFTEC will be reverting to an inspection regime of every three years for those with a good track record. A good track record is defined by such things as a previous satisfactory inspection history and no consumer complaints. New businesses joining after June 2014 will have to be inspected annually for the first two or three years before going to three yearly intervals if a good record is shown.

### Sharing information with other competent person schemes

OFTEC will also be adopting a communication mechanism with other competent person schemes, LABC and relevant government departments. This is so that information can be shared about any business or technician expelled from a scheme for non-compliance with Building Regulations who could be looking to scheme hop.

### Complying with 21 new conditions

In all there are 21 new conditions that OFTEC must comply with and the registration department, technical department and regional inspectors have been working hard with registrants to understand these changes.

A full list of DCLG conditions can be downloaded from the government website [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/34846/2156713\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/34846/2156713_1_.pdf)

A set of the OFTEC rules for registration can be downloaded from the OFTEC website [/www.oftec.org/Media/Default/DocGalleries/Registration%20forms/OFTEC%20R100%20Rules%20of%20Registration.pdf](http://www.oftec.org/Media/Default/DocGalleries/Registration%20forms/OFTEC%20R100%20Rules%20of%20Registration.pdf)

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## The benefits of non-operative registration

As their businesses grow and mature, many technicians find that they spend less time working on the tools, and instead supervise the day-to-day work of the company or concentrate on pricing jobs and specifying. Previously, this would have prevented them from holding individual registration because OFTEC needs to be able to inspect examples of work for all scopes of registration that technicians hold. However, it is vitally important for anyone carrying out this kind of work to keep up to date with the latest regulations and changes to legislation and receive the latest industry news. For this reason, OFTEC has improved the scope of its non-operative registration to include the full range of benefits that are available to all registered technicians.

The cost of non-operative registration is £99 per annum. To qualify, you must hold appropriate oil assessments and can apply by simply completing form R252 which can be downloaded from the OFTEC website. For more information, please contact our registration team on **0845 65 85 080** and choose option one.

## Be sure to certify

In the regions where self certification for building regulations is a requirement (England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Isle of Man), failure to certify installation work is actually a criminal offence. From a householder's perspective, having an un-notified installation can become a real headache when they decide to sell their home, and the installer may receive an angry phone call if this happens.

For OFTEC registered technicians it is very quick, cheap and easy to notify your work. You can do it via the OFTEC website at [ofteconline.com](http://ofteconline.com), using your company number and 'Unique Works Notification Password' which would have been supplied to you via email when you first joined OFTEC. If you have misplaced the password, please contact us and we can send you a reminder. The online form is easy to complete and only takes a few minutes.

Alternatively, if you have set up a direct debit, you can now notify over the phone. You can download the direct debit form from our website at [www.oftec.org/technicians/about-works-notification](http://www.oftec.org/technicians/about-works-notification). Online notification costs just £2.50 while the new telephone service costs £5.00. For more information or to notify by phone, please ring **0845 65 85 080** and choose option one.



## B30K – a possibility for Northern Ireland?

The Northern Ireland Assembly is currently consulting on proposals for a Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) and has indicated that bioliquids such as B30K could have a role to play in the Province. With around 68% of all homes in Northern Ireland currently heated by kerosene, the potential to convert a substantial number of these to run on biofuels has to be an attractive option.

The good news for oil users was that the proposed tariff has been increased from 1.5p/kWh to 2.7p/kWh for a domestic appliance running on bioliquids, together with a £500 upfront grant towards the installation cost. OFTEC is currently in discussions with local fuel distributors to produce the blended B30K fuel at a price that will make the RHI viable in Northern Ireland.

## Lobbying for mandatory registration

Following meetings between OFTEC Ireland and Pat Rabbitte, the minister for communications, energy and natural resource, the campaign for mandatory OFTEC registration in the Republic of Ireland continues.

At the moment the scheme is voluntary but, with oil the most popular heating option, the need to improve industry standards and safeguard consumers is clear. OFTEC is pressing for mandatory registration to ensure that oil firing appliances are installed according to current building regulations.

The minister has acknowledged that a mandatory scheme could help to identify any faulty products and aid their recall through an additional *oil passport* initiative. For consumers, there are potential fuel savings due to energy efficiency improvements as a result of better installation practice and more regular servicing. Although it is early days, OFTEC has now appointed a lobbyist to help campaign for a mandatory scheme in the Republic of Ireland.

## Supporting Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week

OFTEC threw its weight behind Carbon Monoxide (CO) Awareness Week which took place in the Republic of Ireland at the end of September.

Run by the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) the key message of the campaign was *remember, remember, remember* – the causes of CO poisoning, to get appliances serviced regularly, and to fit an alarm. The campaign featured on TV shows such as TVAM, radio interviews and other media.

David Blevings, OFTEC's Ireland manager said: "Carbon monoxide is traditionally associated with gas appliances but research by the CER shows there is very limited awareness in Ireland of the risks posed by other fuels. Only 31% of consumers were aware of the potential risk with oil heating with an even lower awareness for coal at just 27%. It's very important that householders take the necessary precautions across all fuel appliances and that's why we fully supported Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week."

"Carbon monoxide poisoning currently causes the death of up to six people in Ireland every year. We want to do everything we can to prevent these tragedies. An audible carbon monoxide alarm is one preventative measure but it can give a false sense of security; our advice is to have appliances serviced regularly by a qualified OFTEC technician. Unfortunately householders face a greater risk if they have old and or poorly maintained boilers."

For more advice on Carbon Monoxide Awareness, please visit [www.carbonmonoxide.ie](http://www.carbonmonoxide.ie).

Last month OFTEC also worked with the Health and Safety Executive in Northern Ireland on their carbon monoxide awareness campaign.



Be oil safe this winter



If your tank is 20 years or older, it needs replacing



## Promoting tank safety

OFTEC has teamed up with several tank manufacturers to promote safe storage of heating oil for consumers. For a limited time, participating OFTEC registered technicians are offering free tank safety checks in both Northern Ireland and the Republic. The campaign is backed up by consumer information leaflets outlining tips on staying *tank safe* this winter.

One of the key messages to consumers is that if their tank is 20 years or older then it probably needs replacing. The leaflet also states that tanks should be serviced annually in conjunction with an oil boiler service. Consumers are advised that OFTEC registered technicians can check for spills, helping to avoid expensive clean up costs which are often excluded from home insurance policies.

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\*Boilers must be purchased from 22nd July to 31st December 2013.  
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Greenstar Danesmoor regular,  
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(12/18kW, 18/25kW, 25/32kW)



Greenstar Heatslave II combi and  
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We have also been voted Which? 2013 best oil-fired boiler brand for customer satisfaction, while no other manufacturer scored higher for reliability.

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[www.worcester-bosch.co.uk](http://www.worcester-bosch.co.uk)



# Heating controls – singing the praises of these unsung heroes

*Heating controls play a vital and often overlooked role in system efficiency, ease of operation and overall comfort for a building's occupants*

While the attention of most consumers focuses on the performance of the heating appliance itself, to achieve minimum system efficiency obligations set out in regional Building Regulations, the Building Services Compliance Guide calls for heating controls to be upgraded whenever a new boiler is installed, including replacement works.

To save your customer money and reduce their carbon footprint, full boiler electrical interlock with independent time and temperature control of heating/hot water should be provided, together with thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) with primary circuits being fully pumped. A programmable thermostat combining both a time switch and thermostat is commonly used to provide time and temperature control for heating from a single device. Collectively, these measures provide comfort and prevent the boiler from short cycling and firing or producing more heat unnecessarily.

### Save up to 17% on fuel when upgrading an older system

Where older systems are concerned, upgrading heating controls is a simple, low cost option to offer your customer significant savings on their annual fuel bill. The benefits of these straightforward and affordable upgrades should not be underestimated. For example, take an old, fully pumped system with no controls in place – according to CE29 published by the Energy Saving Trust, installing full heating controls as per a new installation can bring about a staggering 17% fuel saving.

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*the benefits of these straightforward and affordable upgrades should not be underestimated*

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Just adding TRVs alone to a system which otherwise has full controls in place can give a 4% fuel saving. When you consider that the annual cost of heating a three bedroom property using an older boiler is currently around £1582.00 pa, according to Sutherland Tables July 2013, it certainly should not take long for the financial investment to be recovered.

### The latest controls are easier to use

Despite the well documented benefits of heating controls, there is a reluctance to upgrade with the anticipated disruption to a property's fabric often cited. Having to channel out walls and rip up flooring can be off-putting but this is overcome by many of the



The Danfoss ECI thermostatic radiator valve

The importance of system controls is only likely to increase in the future

heating control packages on today's market which are wireless.

By borrowing solutions from computer and mobile phone technologies, the latest controls are easier to use; some can even be controlled remotely using a smartphone app. From a technician's perspective, while offering compliance, convenience and energy savings to homeowners, wireless controls can also present time saving benefits to the installer.

### Help your customers get the most out of their heating system

On handover, the Building Services Compliance Guide is clear that the installer should give a full explanation of the system and its operation to the user. Whilst manufacturers make a good job of creating advance controls that are simple to use, explaining how they work after you have installed them is key to helping your customers get the most out of their system.

Looking to the future, the importance of system controls is only likely to increase. Some oil users are already beginning to integrate renewable technologies with their existing systems, and this approach is likely to become more common as the benefits of hybrid systems become better understood. We can expect system controls to become ever more sophisticated and user-friendly as they develop to support these new system requirements and, indeed, higher consumer expectations. Manufacturers of equipment will have sophisticated control packages in place to ensure their systems work in harmony, enabling properties to be heated appropriately, and managing the output of the different appliances to maximise system efficiency and cost effective use. Furthermore, the increased up-take of smart energy metering is providing homeowners with a tangible means of monitoring their energy use, allowing them to make conscious decisions about the way they heat their homes.

# Worcester completes oil revamp

The Greenstar oil-fired boiler range has been further enhanced by the addition of a system variant of Worcester's new Danesmoor boiler.

Available in variants of 12/18, 18/25, and 25/32kW, with built-in circulating pump, pressure relief valve, pressure gauge, and expansion vessel, it meets a wide range of property requirements.

"Our latest generation of Greenstar oil-fired boilers has been designed as a direct result of installer feedback," said Martyn Bridges, Worcester's director of marketing and technical support. "This includes numerous product appraisal workshops used to improve our product range."

A brand new primary heat exchanger gives installers the chance to offer vastly improved efficiency levels and because the

heat exchanger is smaller in size than its predecessor, access to the boiler's internal components is easier than ever before.

## Maintaining a strong commitment to the off mains gas sector

"The introduction of three new boilers this year underlines the faith we have in the oil-fired heating and hot water market, both now and for the years to come," added Martyn. "Although the sector may not be as large as the market for gas-fired boilers, there are still well over a million users in the UK, which represents a huge business opportunity for installers."

"This new series also future proofs the product's efficiency levels in anticipation of the forthcoming Energy Related Products Directive, underlining our commitment to



Upgrading the UK's existing oil-fired boiler stock to the new Greenstar range

acting on installer feedback.

"We're now looking to encourage installers to rise to the challenge of upgrading the UK's existing boiler stock to high-efficiency models on a large scale."

[www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/oil](http://www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/oil)



The Keyless Filling Link – an innovative solution to a common challenge

## Making life easier

An innovative Keyless Filling Link has been designed to help installers make the maintenance of a home heating system easier. It removes the need to temporarily join the water mains and the heating circuit with a key or braided hose pipe arrangement. An optional extra, it is compatible with all wall mounting jigs used across the Greenstar range. See also page 20.

## On call for winter

Worcester has added 10 new recruits to its technical support team. Now undergoing an intensive 12 week training programme, they will work on a shift rotation to ensure enough capacity to cover demand in the peak winter period.

Chris Arkless, technical support manager explains: "It is imperative to offer the best service possible to all installers – particularly when busy – we now have over 40 technical advisors answering over 400,000 technical enquiries annually."

Open 6 days a week, including bank holidays call 0844 892 3366 or e-mail [technical.enquiries@uk.bosch.com](mailto:technical.enquiries@uk.bosch.com).



The technical support team has 10 new recruits enabling Worcester to answer any query as quickly as possible

## Award success

Having claimed top spot in the Which? boiler report for the third successive year, Worcester also saw success in the 2013 Best Factory Awards. The company took the top prize in the Best Engineering Plant and Health and Safety categories and was also highly commended in the awards for Innovation and Energy and Environment.



Manufacturing director, Bob Murdoch receives an award from Ashley Maile, managing director PEME Process Control

### Additives at Anglo Nordic

Anglo Nordic has added Exocet fuel additives to its range. Exocet Premium Heating Oil and Exocet Cooker are proven upgrades for kerosene. Extensively tested out in the field, the former prevents corrosion of storage tanks and pipework, deposit build-up, and fuel degradation.

For use in vaporising burners and range-style cookers, the Exocet Cooker additive improves the burn quality of kerosene and helps counter the recent increase in vaporising boiler problems, minimising char value and inhibiting carbon and sooty deposits.

Both products are available in volumes ranging from 50ml to 1000 litres. 200ml of either of these additives treats 1000 litres. See also page 18. [www.anglonordic.co.uk](http://www.anglonordic.co.uk)



### Boiler servicing essentials

Teddington Appliance Controls has been supporting the oil boiler market for over 40 years. The company provides essential supplies for oil boiler servicing such as the KBB – the only OFTEC approved fire valve with a three-year warranty. Other key products include the OFV1 oil tank shut-off valve with a filter and the KBT 1000 universal test unit for all standard fire valves from 65 to 120oC. [www.tedcon.com](http://www.tedcon.com)



The KBB fire valve – the only OFTEC approved fire valve with a three-year warranty

### Heating advances with Tigerloop

A perfect solution for both indoor installations and those using liquid biofuels is the Tigerloop Bio model from Swedish company SBX Flow Technology.

Assisting other recent advancements in the heating industry – liquid biofuel, low sulphur heating oil, burners with blue flame technology and condensing oil boilers – modern technology is helping ensure optimal combustion to make oil heating a reliable, cost effective and environmentally friendly alternative.

These technological developments have created an even higher demand for clean, air-free oil, which can be reliably and continuously supplied by a Tigerloop.

[www.tigerholm.com](http://www.tigerholm.com)



Clean, air-free oil with the Tigerloop Bio model

MAKING MODERN LIVING POSSIBLE

### 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.

Please go to [www.burner.danfoss.com](http://www.burner.danfoss.com) to download the videos.

When in doubt – see how it's done!

18

new training videos

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# Top marks for energy upgrade

In an energy upgrade to replace an old 180kW cast iron boiler, Firebird Heating Solutions has recently completed the installation of three 100kW Enviromax Popular Boilerhouse condensing oil boilers.



These three Firebird 100kW boilers in a cascade system are now reliably and consistently meeting the increased heating needs of a school

Installed in a school originally built in 1961, it heats the existing extended premises and provides additional capacity for an anticipated two extra classrooms in due course.

Featuring Firebird's new cascade control technology, the SEDBUK A rated boilers obtain an efficiency of over 95%, providing a highly efficient integrated heating system.

With a payback period of just two and a half years predicted, the school is understandably delighted at both the cost savings and the much improved performance of the heating, which reliably and consistently achieves the required room temperatures in even the most distant rooms.

The Enviromax Popular range has seven boilers with outputs from 15kW to 100kW. The high output 100kW model offers installers a high efficiency boiler for larger commercial installations such as schools. Quality engineered from premium quality steels with multiple tapping points, it features a sturdy, well insulated case for longer life and minimal heat loss.

## The new cascade controller

The Firebird cascade controller is capable of sequencing up to eight boilers. It can be programmed to use each boiler for a similar time to equalise boiler usage, to prioritise specific boilers if preferred and, more critically, to call on the required output on demand. When a top-up of heat is required only the necessary kW demand will fire – unlike one large singular boiler. It can also control boilers of different outputs to precisely meet the demands of the system and automatically configures the optimum boiler sequencing.

The controller is also designed to integrate alternative energy systems such as solar, heat pumps or biomass and can be programmed to meet the specific needs of the individual system, with simple code numbers for pre-set programme options. Suitable for wall mounting, it comes complete with case and clamps and has a backlit display with an easy to use clear menu structure. A key feature for installers is the simplified wiring connections. See also page 20.

## 15,000 products available next day

BES has launched its new specialist catalogue for the plumbing, heating and gas supply industry.

Marketing manager John Quigley said: "BES always pays close attention to customer feedback and has added even more quality branded products to what was already a specialised range."

BES prides itself on rapid selection and dispatch, with 15,000 product lines available next day to plumbing and heating engineers from its 77,000 square foot warehouse in Birmingham.

"Our collection service has also been improved as customers in the Birmingham area had requested Saturday morning collections in addition to midweek," added John. "Emergencies happen and specialist products are now available for collection within one hour of placing the order. Our dedicated team fully understands how important this service is to our customers." See also page 36 [www.bes.co.uk](http://www.bes.co.uk)



An extended range of quality, branded products can be found in the new BES catalogue

## An essential resource + extras

Anglo Nordic's new catalogue is an essential resource for anyone specifying, installing or supplying heating & ventilation components.

Following the purchase of A R Ellis in March 2013, in its new Ellis section, Anglo Nordic now offers Suntec oil pumps (see page 42), oil transfer pump sets, cast electrodes, Steinen nozzles, Teddington valves and pressure regulators, flexible oil lines, draft stabilisers and Wallflame burner spares.

Other new products include the DB oil suction pump. Compatible with most fuels, it can be used to prime oil lines and purge all types of de-aeration devices and oil lifters. It can remove air locks from fuel pipes, debris, contamination and pipe blockages, and comes complete with tubing to commission GOK de-aerators. Call 0208 979 0988 or email [sales@anglonordic.co.uk](mailto:sales@anglonordic.co.uk)

Over 90 new products and featuring a new Ellis section, Anglo Nordic's latest catalogue has 36 extra pages



# Oiling the wheels of East Anglian heating

Aaron Services was founded in 1985 by Dawn Wright. Dawn and husband Allan are still the owners of the company and its driving force with Allan having brought over 35 years engineering experience to the company. Despite a recent restructuring, Aaron Services remains very much a family business with a professional but comfortable feeling when you contact them.

The company has headquarters in Ipswich, an operational base in Boston and offices in Dereham, Lincoln and Corby. All its work is for social housing providers in the east of the UK with nearly all work retrofit and replacement; there is very little new build work.

*still on the books – nearly 6,000 homes reliant on oil-fired technology*

Having grown steadily over time, Aaron Services currently installs around 2000 new heating systems every year, whilst servicing and maintaining around 84,000 individual

homes throughout the East Midlands, Lincolnshire and East Anglia.

A workforce of 280 direct employees comprises installation, maintenance and service engineers qualified in all fuel types, complemented by a team of electricians and multi-skilled trades people, together with a large administrative support team including an ever growing call centre team that has friendliness and customer care at its heart.

### Working closely with equipment suppliers

Supplier relationships are very important with selected manufacturers of gas boilers, oil boilers and controls having worked closely with Aaron Services for many years. Whilst there is a perception that oil-fired heating will gradually lose its customer base to renewable technologies, that does not seem to be the case currently; still a

*renewable systems are being selected occasionally – but it is a trickle rather than a whoosh*

very important part of Aaron Services work, nearly 6,000 homes reliant on oil-fired technology are on its books.

The company replaces between 100 and 150 oil boilers a year, nearly all with replacement Grant condensing Vortex boilers and increasingly combi versions. It is seeing renewable systems being selected occasionally by some housing associations – usually air source heat pumps – but it is a trickle rather than a whoosh!

[www.aaronservices.co.uk](http://www.aaronservices.co.uk)



Happy customer Tony Bean – ‘using significantly less oil than we were with the old boiler’

## In good company, new boiler is performing well

Whilst with Aaron Services, we had the opportunity to visit a customer. Tony Bean and his wife live in the Lincolnshire countryside and have recently had their elderly and unreliable oil boiler replaced with a new Grant Vortex floor standing condensing combi. As financial consultants who work from home much of the time, reliable heating – and importantly cost effective heating – is important to them, at any time of the day:

“We’ve only had the new boiler in place for a few months so it’s too early to talk in specific terms about the oil saving we’re seeing but already we are aware that we’re using significantly less oil than we were with the old boiler, and we’ve not had a single problem with it since it was installed. It’s a real relief to have total faith that heating or hot water will be there when needed. Like most people, we don’t want to know we have a boiler. You take them for granted, or you do when they work well! It’s only when they breakdown you become aware of them – we got to know our old boiler rather too well! Aaron recommended a Grant and it’s been a sound move in every way!”

The new boiler now sits quietly at the back of the garage, keeping Tony’s Yamaha 1300 motorbike company.



### Why Grant boilers?

Commercial director Jon Posey explains: "Performance first and foremost, along with reliability and ease of installation. Finally it's because its training is second to none. They come to our training centre in Boston and give the training here which is really helpful and all our installers have been through the necessary training with them."

"The performance level of Grant boilers is incredible – we get 14-15 litres of hot water a minute from them – we get 11 litres a minute from the gas combis we use – so you can see why we're impressed! The Grant Vortex combi comes with a small heat store which allows for this performance level. Reliability wise – we don't want any service issues and partly because they are quality units and partly because they are simple to install, we simply don't get call backs. They're ideal for us in every respect."

[www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com)



Grant training is second to none says Jon Posey, commercial director, Aaron Services

## THE PLASTIC TANK MANUFACTURER, FOR TODAY'S FUEL INDUSTRY

20 YEAR LIFE EXPECTANCY ON BUNDED TANKS - DOES YOUR PLASTIC TANK SUPPLIER GIVE YOU THIS?

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the tank specialists

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Contrary to popular belief, great ideas don't simply appear out of thin air. The great ideas which appear at Envirostore are born from years of experience manufacturing tanks, utilising traditional skills and blending them with challenging thinking and innovative use of materials and technology. The result is the Envirostore range of fuel tanks – designed for the future to deal with today's storage problems.

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email: [envirostore@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:envirostore@yahoo.co.uk)



# Problems in the pipeline

Ryan Kaempfe of Fife-based Steve K Plumbing, Heating and Electrical Services was recently called out to a boiler in a nearby village which was smoking excessively.

“Looking at the newly installed bunded oil tank, we were shocked to see that it had been connected with Speedfit PEX barrier pipe and push fittings which are not suitable for use with fuel oil. Asking for the name of the installer we were given the name of an unknown local plumber. Having explained the dangers of the installation to the property’s owner, he was happy for us to isolate the oil supply at the tank so a trench could be dug enabling us to return at a later date to lay a suitable pipe, reposition the fire valve to its correct orientation and properly commission the boiler. The boiler’s smoking and sooting was due to being fitted with the wrong nozzle and the oil pressure being set too high.”

Installation dangers – the need to rectify the mistakes of an unknown local plumber



Dodgy tanks such as this one can now be reported at [www.oilsave.org.uk](http://www.oilsave.org.uk)

# Reporting unsafe oil tanks

Liaising with the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS) the Heating Engineers and Allied Trades Federation (HEATFed) has facilitated an online unsafe oil tank reporting system on the Oilsave website at [www.oilsave.org.uk](http://www.oilsave.org.uk). This will enable engineers to notify oil tank installations which are either immediately *at risk* or *potentially at risk* of collapse, fire or leakage. Fuel distributors will then be notified so that caution can be exercised when fuelling the reported tank. In some circumstances, the report will lead to a refusal to deliver, thereby supporting the engineer’s advice and bringing home to the end user the seriousness of the tank’s condition.

[www.heatfed.co.uk](http://www.heatfed.co.uk)



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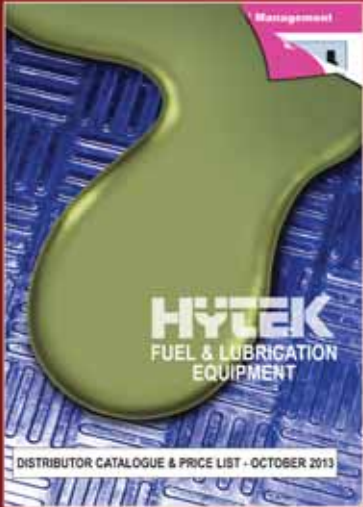
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# Producing tanks to a standard, not a price

*So confident in the quality of its products – in line with British Standard BS5410-2, and the Control of Pollution Regulations – Envirostore UK says it is more than happy to state that an Envirostore bunded tank has a 20-year life expectancy*

“Using only quality materials, our bunded tanks are manufactured to the very best possible standard,” explains sales director, Richard Marsh. “Provided the tank is installed correctly, and inspected annually in accordance with our warranty, customers can have every confidence that the bunded tank they purchase from Envirostore will have a 20-year life expectancy.”

## **Taking an innovative approach**

The only plastic tank manufacturer to exhibit at this year’s FPS Expo in Harrogate, Envirostore took the opportunity to launch a new 1300 litre vertical bunded tank and its 2500 litre vertical fuel dispenser. “We had much interest from tank installers and fuel distributors across the UK – many find our approach to doing business and our product innovation a breath of fresh air,” said Richard. With more new products being released this year, the company has had a busy few months.

---

*customers can have every confidence that the bunded tank they purchase from Envirostore will have a 20-year life expectancy*

---

Envirostore is working closely with contacts in the steel tank industry – look out for announcements on new product joint ventures in the coming months. “Over the last few years, we’ve taken and acted upon advice from individuals with long standing in the tank industry – Bruce Woodall from Oil Tank Supplies (OTS), Trevor Seed of J.Seed & Co, and M. Brittain (York). This advice has led us to set the high standards in our plastic tank construction and importantly to be innovative.

“We will continue to work closely with customers and industry contacts to ensure the quality and standard of our existing products and to advance those new products being launched over the next 12 months.”

## **A point of difference**

Envirostore UK has been quietly and steadily making inroads into the plastic tank market place since its 2010 launch. With its inner spill tray, an Envirostore tank offered a point of difference from the outset. “The inner spill tray was an innovation,” said sales director Richard Marsh. “It offers users a real advance in overfill prevention at the point of filling – even on a single skin tank. Plus, every Envirostore tank is individually wrapped and delivered on our stacking system vehicle, reducing the risk of tanks being damaged in transit.

“If your existing plastic tank supplier does not offer you and your customer a 20-year life expectancy, it could be a good time to take a look at Envirostore.”

**enviro**  
**STORE**  
the tank specialists



Expect more new products from Envirostore in the near future



A point of difference – the inner spill tray

can help lower costs...



...and raise profits.

The Firebird product range:

- ✓ is designed for installers  
with features to give easier and quicker installation - time is money
- ✓ comes with great after-sales service  
so you won't spend hours on the phone or waiting for action.  
Fast efficient service is security for your customers and helps uphold your reputation.
- ✓ has excellent build quality  
which means less repairs and replacement parts - happier customers
- ✓ is the largest range of oil boilers  
of the main brands in the UK market

all of which can mean more profit for you

Biomass/Wood Pellet Boilers



Solar Panel Systems



Oil Boilers





# New Firecheck tank with built-in fire resistance

*An innovative product to overcome the problem of installing tanks next to buildings and structures has been developed by two well-known oil tank manufacturers*

The new Firecheck tank is the result of a joint partnership between plastic tank manufacturer, Envirostore and steel tank manufacturer, J Seed.

Designed to have an anticipated 20-year life span, it consists of a steel outer tank which encloses an integrally bunded plastic tank, which is clad with 30-minute fire resistant material, uniquely providing fire protection to both the inner tank and its bund. The Firecheck tank is an LABC registered system and can be installed next to non-fire resistant buildings and boundaries to satisfy Building Regulations.

“We’ve been working with Envirostore for almost two years to develop something which brings together the security and flexibility



Trevor Seed (l) with Envirostore’s managing director, Richard Marsh by the new Firecheck tank

steel with the convenience of plastic,” said J Seed sales manager, Wendi Whittle.

“The Firecheck tank combines our experience in steel tanks with Envirostore’s expertise and range of plastic oil storage tanks. The outer steel bund, which gives a unique additional level of environmental protection and fire resistant insulation, can be factory fitted to any horizontal Envirostore plastic bunded tank from 1,000 to 2,500 litres, giving a secure fire-rated oil storage solution for the domestic market.”

*a secure fire-rated oil storage solution for the domestic market combines the security and flexibility of steel with the convenience of plastic*

## Meeting requirements

To meet the requirements of Part J of the Building Regulations in England and Wales, conventional oil storage tanks should be sited at least 1800mm away from non-fire rated buildings or structures, and 760mm away from non-fire rated boundaries such as wooden fences. The regulations state that if these requirements cannot be met, then a fire-rated barrier with at least 30 minutes protection should be provided. The Firecheck tank meets these requirements, and can therefore be sited next to buildings, sheds and boundaries with just 100mm separation distance recommended for inspection purposes.

Because the fire resistant material in the Firecheck is completely enclosed and separate from the integral bund of the plastic tank, there is no risk of it becoming saturated with oil during a delivery. For additional security, all fittings are protected by a steel lockable lid, and the Firecheck comes with an overflow prevention valve, bottom outlet fitting kit, contents gauge and manufacturer’s 10-year warranty.

## CE marking – a legal requirement

*Following new legislation which took effect on 1st July, OFTEC is advising installers and consumers to only buy oil storage tanks that are CE marked*

Under the new Construction Products Regulation (CPR), any oil products covered by the CPR which are produced to a Harmonised European Standard must be CE marked in order to be legally sold in a European member state.

**Oil products currently listed on the Harmonised Standards Database include plastic oil tanks to EN 13341, steel tanks**

**to EN 12285-2, vaporising oil stoves to EN 1, and oil tank overflow prevention devices to EN 13616.**

Oil tanks manufactured prior to the deadline can still be installed without a CE mark, providing they were in stock with a merchant before 1st July or had been bought by the installer or customer before that date. However, this should be verified

by the retailer or merchant in writing.

“From now on if you’re installing a new oil storage tank it makes sense to check that it’s CE marked,” OFTEC’s technical director Paul Rose told Oil Installer. “If there’s any doubt about whether a tank was manufactured before or after the 1st July deadline, reputable manufacturers should be able to provide supporting evidence.”

# Joining in the fight against oil theft

*With oil theft on the rise, Colin McGregor, Parts Center's category director for pump, parts and controls, suggests how installers can help customers better protect their tanks*

"Heating oil has become an easy target for criminals," says Colin. "The rising price of crude oil is to blame, and thieves are now targeting fuel tanks at farms, transport depots and domestic properties. Fortunately there are measures people can take to stop these criminals, and oil installers can help by passing on key advice.

"The position of the oil tank is extremely important. If it's near a road, or out of sight, it's a much easier target. Installers should recommend that customers plant thorny bushes around the tank, but it's important to remember that BS 5410 requires any foliage be separated by at least 600mm from an oil storage tank because it represents a fire hazard.

"There are also a number of products that installers can recommend, like lockable caps, which make it harder for thieves to access the oil inside. Oil level gauges can also be installed, which sit on top of the tank and ensure there's no unusual drop. The



Colin McGregor recommends that installers help to protect customers' investments by advising customers to take steps to prevent theft from their oil tank

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*an installer's job doesn't finish when the oil heating system is installed*

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Kingspan Watchman Anywhere collects the data via a built in SIM, and transmits it to the Kingspan Sensor data centre, so users can monitor oil levels through any web-enabled device.

"An installer's job doesn't finish when the oil heating system is installed. Those who take the time to help their customers protect their investments will have a better relationship, and could secure themselves business in the future; so let's protect our oil tanks and stop these criminals in their tracks."

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## Remote oil monitoring – anywhere

*As mentioned in the article above, Kingspan Environmental has launched a new remote oil level monitoring kit as part of its Sensor telemetry range.*

The Watchman Anywhere is a neat device with a built-in transmitter which sits on top of the tank and uses ultrasonic level techniques to continually measure oil levels. The data is collected via a built in SIM and transmitted to the Sensor data centre. After registering the unit, the device allows users to monitor oil levels, through any web enabled device, such as a computer, tablet or smartphone.

Users can access the free iPhone and Android app that displays tank information and oil levels. First-time users will benefit from a 12-month free subscription. See also page 24. [www.watchmananywhere.com](http://www.watchmananywhere.com)



Find out what's in your oil tank – anytime, anywhere – with the new Watchman Anywhere



Bob Hayes (r) receives a delivery of oil from driver Paul Leadbeater of West Yorkshire-based Tate Oil

# Running a heating oil syndicate

*As the number of heating oil syndicates continues to rise across the UK, Oil Installer spoke to Bob Hayes, a founder member of the Lower Swale syndicate and the coordinator for the Alne Heating Oil Co-operative*

Around 1.75 million litres of kerosene are currently ordered by the Lower Swale heating oil syndicate each year. Made up of 9 local heating oil co-operatives scattered around Easingwold, North Yorkshire, the syndicate has a membership of 1,000 off grid households and numbers continue to climb.

### Syndicate operations

“The syndicate operates a simple model with the whole process managed by e-mail, except for a few OAPs who are contacted personally,” explained Bob. “Individual requirements – either a fixed quantity or an accurate estimate to fill the tank – are collected from members every other month by a volunteer co-ordinator. Each co-operative’s total quantity and number of drops is then submitted to the syndicate coordinator. The combined requirement is offered to a dozen or so local suppliers, with a request for best price; the supplier with the most competitive price gets the business.

### Savings and reducing fuel consumption

“It’s always a bit tricky to be precise about savings as it’s difficult to identify the local price of a litre of heating oil. As a benchmark, we use the published national average price on the BoilerJuice website; we’re generally between 5% and 10% cheaper. And, speaking to new members and those not in the scheme, our price is usually between three and five pence per litre lower; sometimes it’s been considerably more.”

Members benefit from fixed order dates during the year, enabling them to plan deliveries to suit consumption and finances. The syndicate has also negotiated discounted deals with local trades people for boiler servicing, cooker and carpet cleaning and firewood.

To help members reduce fuel consumption, the syndicate has also been working closely with the Yorkshire Energy Partnership, the Energy Saving Trust and others and has held a couple of open meetings to discuss energy usage. These meetings have initiated projects to

investigate and install renewable energies such as solar and hybrid, and to reduce fuel consumption through improved insulation. This winter it is hoped that a thermal imaging camera will be used to help members identify where heat is escaping from their homes; many of which date back to the Victorian era or much earlier.

### Exceeding expectations

“The success of the local co-operatives and the syndicate has certainly exceeded our expectations,” said Bob. “We’re extremely pleased with the contribution that group purchasing has made to the community – thus far an estimated saving of around £170,000.

“We’ve been particularly enthused by the positive, supportive and proactive approach taken by oil suppliers. We look forward to continuing to work with them, the community and various local agencies to improve the efficiency by which we buy and use domestic heating oil.”

[www.facebook.com/AlneOilCooperative](http://www.facebook.com/AlneOilCooperative)



Introducing the next generation  
in oil tank monitoring systems...



The all new Watchman Anywhere from Kingspan Sensor measures how much oil is in the tank and transmits this information to our data centre. The current oil level can be viewed online, anywhere in the world.



Any web  
enabled devices



iPhone and  
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Easy to install. 12 months free subscription.  
Peace of mind for your customers. Anywhere in the world.

Available at all leading plumbing merchants.

[watchmananywhere.com](http://watchmananywhere.com)

# Do you have the right insurance?

## What options are available?

## What are the main requirements to ensure you are properly covered?

*“Anyone running a business and dealing with the public needs to have the right level of insurance,” says Adrian Lightwood, OFTEC registration director. Below Adrian looks at the insurance essentials and the options.*



### OFTEC registration requires a minimum of £2m public liability cover

- This covers you for any damages or compensation payments a member of the public or a customer may be awarded as a result of injury or damage to them or their property caused by you or your employees whilst you work at their premises.
- It also includes cover for legal fees and expenses. Public liability insurance protects you and your business against negligence claims. In today’s compensation culture, many customers insist on cover being in place before work starts.

### OFTEC Insurance Services

OFTEC registered technicians can take advantage of competitive quotes from OFTEC Insurance Services, a joint venture with established insurance specialists Trade Direct. Its public liability policy is specifically designed to meet the needs of sole traders and businesses with up to 15 employees.

It offers the option to choose £2m or £5m worth of public liability insurance and products liability insurance. Cover can be extended to include optional extensions with insurance available for the following:

- Tools
- Stock
- Own plant
- Hire-in plant
- Contract works
- Personal accident
- Jury service
- All policies include £1,000 of tools insurance absolutely free.

### Employer’s liability insurance

If you have employees then it is a legal requirement to have employer’s liability insurance.

This covers the costs and legal fees your business may be liable for in the event an employee dies, is injured, or made ill at work.



Including OFTEC Insurance Services employer’s liability to your policy will cover you up to a limit of £10m for the bodily injury of your employees.

### Workmanship warranty – cover from just £1 per week

For businesses in England and Wales it will soon be mandatory to offer a workmanship warranty. From June 2014 anyone registered with a competent persons’ scheme such as OFTEC will be legally obliged to offer their customers a 6-year workmanship warranty. The warranty policy can be arranged through OFTEC Insurance Services with cover from just £1 per week. The policy also includes deposit protection insurance for added customer security.

To get a quote on any OFTEC Insurance Services product, just ring 0845 520 1360 or visit [www.oftecinsuranceservices.co.uk](http://www.oftecinsuranceservices.co.uk)

### Insurance for OFTEC registered technicians in Ireland

In Ireland OFTEC has teamed up with Arachas Corporate Brokers Ltd, which offers OFTEC registered technicians a class leading policy with €6.5m worth of public liability insurance cover. Like Trade Direct, the Arachas product can be extended to include optional extensions such as cover for tools, stock, own and hired-in plant and machinery as well as contractors’ all risks insurance. Furthermore, Arachas can provide contractors with personal accident cover.

The good news is that recent discussions with insurers have established that the claims experience with registered technicians has been very much superior to the plumbing and heating industry as a whole. This fact is currently reflected in the competitive pricing; while other insurers are raising their rates (due to claims experience), Arachas will be holding current rates for registrants.

For further information or a quotation please contact Gearoid Fitzgerald on **0818 307030**.

# Exclusive Insurance Policies for OFTEC Registered Technicians

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### ASK OLLIE!



#### **I have been asked to install an external appliance up to 45kW output, how close can I install this to an oil storage tank?**

British Standard 5410-1:1997 does not specify a distance between the appliance outer casing and an oil storage tank. However, the standard does require the flue terminal to be a minimum of 1.8 metres from the oil storage tank; unless a 30-minute fire protection barrier extending 300mm higher and wider than both ends of the tank is erected between the two. The appliance manufacturer's literature should be consulted to ensure a more onerous requirement is not specified, and where provided, a fire protection barrier should

not contravene any other flue separation requirement (e.g. 600mm from an opposite facing surface).

#### **Can I install a fire valve on its side or does it always need to have the reset button facing downwards?**

Fire valves should be installed to manufacturer's instructions; typically with the *reset button* facing downwards. This is to prevent water ingress which could corrode and damage the fire valve body; preventing it from operating safely.

#### **I have to fit a fire valve to an external appliance, are there any restrictions as to where it can be sited?**

British Standard 5410 (Parts 1 and 2) stipulates that for external appliances, the oil supply should be cut of at least one metre away from the appliance outer casing.

#### **Will kerosene freeze inside oil supply pipes in winter?**

The cloud point of Class C2 Kerosene to BS 2869 is minus 39°C. Therefore, unless the location of an oil pipe is extremely exposed to wind chill, the oil pipe is more likely to become blocked by beads of water that have frozen and expanded. For this reason, the checking of oil tanks and removal of water is very important.

#### **I have been approached by a customer to install a 1,000 litre single skinned tank to serve a domestic property, is this permissible?**

British Standard 5410-1:1997 does allow single skinned tanks up to 2,500 litre capacity to be installed, subject to an environmental risk assessment being undertaken. A suitable form to assess these risks is the OFTEC TI/133D form (Domestic oil storage tank spillage and fire risk assessment).

#### **I have been approached to relocate an existing oil storage tank to a different location, what requirements should I be working to?**

The relocation of an existing oil storage tank to a new location is deemed a *new* installation, and therefore, would need to comply with current environmental and fire protection requirements for the region.

#### **I have a room sealed appliance which requires a plume management kit to be installed; do the flue outlet siting requirements apply to both the air intake and the terminal of the plume kit?**

The separation distances for flue outlets are applied to the lip/rim of the flue where the products of combustion are emitted.

## Providing a written contract of works

*Before undertaking any oil-fired installation, commissioning or maintenance work, registered technicians are encouraged to provide their customers with a written contract of works. In the event that their work gets unjustifiably brought into question, this contract will help protect them.*

This recommendation comes after OFTEC received a number of enquiries from homeowners over the summer, questioning issues such as the length of time it takes to conduct a service; work that should or should not have been carried out; payment for additional labour and/or the fitment of parts not detailed on an initial quote.

By generating a contract of works for each job undertaken, you will be able to clearly stipulate what work/checks will be included during your visit, what work will require additional cost or the employment of another tradesman, and lastly, provide you with an opportunity to substantiate the time and effort spent on-site.

OFTEC recognises the stigma of cowboys in skilled trades, which has been brought to the forefront of homeowners' minds in recent years due to media coverage. Honest and reliable technicians, who sometimes get wrongly accused of *fishing for more work* when they are performing under their duty of care, can help distance themselves from an unjust tag by composing a simple contract of works for their future projects. Further information can be found by visiting the Federation of Master Builders website, where sample templates can be downloaded and used for inspiration.

With contracts in mind, technicians are reminded that when completing the OFTEC CD/10 installation completion report form, they should only complete the unshaded areas relevant to the contract of works undertaken – if your contract of work was to install an oil tank, you should only complete the oil storage details.

[www.fmb.org.uk/manage-your-project/free-contracts/building-contracts](http://www.fmb.org.uk/manage-your-project/free-contracts/building-contracts)

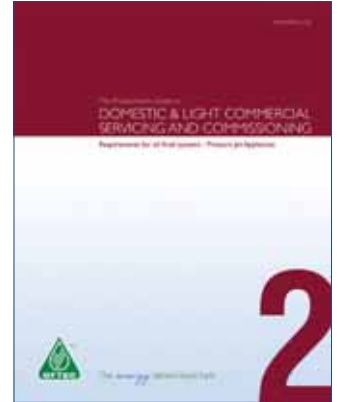
### April 2014 – update on changes to boiler commissioning

In the autumn edition of *Oil Installer*, OFTEC announced that appliance manufacturers had agreed on changes to boiler commissioning to include measurement of carbon monoxide (CO) on pressure jet fired appliances. This change comes into effect as recommendation on April 1st 2014.

Changes mean that where the concentration of CO measured within a flue system exceeds 100ppm, advice should be taken from the appliance manufacturer to improve combustion.

To ensure a smooth implementation and bring industry up to speed in advance, new guidance will be released for OFTEC Technical Book 2 in January 2014. Furthermore, OFTEC's OFT 10-101 (single stage pressure jet servicing and commissioning) training and assessment programme will contain updated material as of March 1st 2014 to reflect changes.

As many technicians already measure and record CO on commissioning, it is expected that this change will add little burden on a technician's daily work.



### Clarification on oil storage installation requirements

OFTEC wishes to further clarify requirements relating to the fire protection of non-fire rated eaves in close proximity to domestic oil storage tanks.

BS 5410-1 states "Protection measures are required for combustible exposed eaves forming part of a roof within 1.8m of the top of an oil storage tank."

- The requirement is to be applied where an oil tank is either sited directly below eaves or is off-set from the building line; measurement taken as a direct line from closest points.
- Where it is identified that eaves require fire protection, protection must extend the length of the eaves over the oil tank plus a further 300mm on each side.

To confirm this requirement, OFTEC has drafted an update for Technical Book 3, AMD 03-0913-16, which is available to download from [www.oftec.org/technicians/technical-book-updates](http://www.oftec.org/technicians/technical-book-updates).

### CE marked oil storage tanks

Following new legislation which took effect from 1st July, installers and consumers should only buy oil storage tanks that are CE marked.

Under the new Construction Products Regulation (CPR), any oil products produced to a Harmonised European Standard covered by the CPR must be CE marked in order to be legally sold in a European Member State.

Any oil tank manufactured prior to the deadline can still be installed without a CE mark providing it was in stock with a merchant before 1st July, or had been bought by the installer or customer before that date.

**For full details, please go to page 21.**

### Scotland – new technical guidance

The Scottish Government has published new guidance on how to comply with the *Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004* in the form of two technical handbooks – *Domestic Buildings* and *Non-Domestic Buildings*

From 1st October, the 2013 editions of these technical handbooks came into force, which include several changes affecting the oil heating industry. These relate to carbon monoxide detection and zoning of space heating systems. For further information visit [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

#### Download your FREE updates now

To align the OFTEC Technical Books, OFTEC released a series of updates in the weeks prior to the aforementioned enforcement date. OFTEC registered technicians should visit [www.oftec.org/technicians/technical-book-updates](http://www.oftec.org/technicians/technical-book-updates) to download their free updates now.



## Advancing the science of domestic heating

The Institute of Domestic Heating & Environmental Engineers (IDHEE) has appointed David Matthews to succeed Bill Bucknell as chief executive officer. Having held similar roles with the Solar Trade Association and the Ground Source Heat Pump Association with whom he still has connections, David brings vast experience of low carbon technologies.

"We're fortunate that someone of David's calibre is available to continue the work of promoting sound heating design, started in 1964 by the late founder, E. Eric Farrow," said Bill.



IDHEE directors welcome the new CEO, (l-r) Peter Thom, David Matthews, Bill Bucknell, and president John Martin, against the backdrop of the Houses of Parliament, a potential venue for the IDHEE Conference in its 50th year

David, who will specialise in renewable heat and solar, including the design & delivery of the training for the new MCS Heat Pump standard, MIS 3005 v 3.0, said: "I've always been a great admirer of the work done for the industry by members of the IDHEE council and I'm looking forward to working with them to advance the science of domestic heating in these times of new technologies and challenges."

## New director for registration services

Adrian Lightwood has been appointed as registration services director for OFTEC. He joined the organisation nine years ago as inspections manager, and became registration manager before progressing to his current role. He is now responsible for all aspects of OFTEC's competent persons' scheme, and also for ensuring the organisation maintains its UKAS accreditation. New initiatives for OFTEC include a Green Deal registration scheme, and also developing registration services into the growing renewables market.



Adrian Lightwood – developing registration services into the growing renewables market



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### BPEC – new courses and a milestone

In only its second year of operation, the BPEC awarding organisation has reached a milestone of 50 centres approved to deliver full QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework) qualifications.

The range of qualifications offered include plumbing level 2 and level 3, including the recently approved BPEC Plumbing Foundation, Green Deal advice, WaterSafe and smart metering, with a level 1 Plumbing Foundation also currently under development.

BPEC also has a one day training course for those needing to safely isolate single phase and three phase electrical supplies and equipment, and, with the cooperation of Turner Access, has launched a working at height access training course. Providing an overview of the process of assessing the risk associated with particular work at height tasks, the course ensures an understanding of the advantages and limitations of aluminium towers and that, if an aluminium tower is selected, that it is the correct choice of equipment. Email [info@bpec.org.uk](mailto:info@bpec.org.uk) [www.bpec.org.uk](http://www.bpec.org.uk)

### The big training questions

With many installers now upskilling to broaden their installation portfolio to customers, Oil Installer invites views on current training provision and future challenges from training companies and installers alike.



**Are you introducing more courses/training for a multi-energy future?**

**Do you offer or are you aware of any hybrid/bivalent heating courses?**

**Do you offer/have you undertaken Green Deal training?**

**Are payment terms for training sufficiently flexible?**

Please send your views or indeed a burning question of your own to [jane@oilinstaller.co.uk](mailto:jane@oilinstaller.co.uk) to arrive by **Tuesday 31st December**. A selection will be featured in the Spring 2014 issue of Oil Installer.

### More courses from Piper

Piper Assessment continues to widen its range of courses following a move to larger premises in Sittingbourne, Kent two years ago.

In addition to the suite of OFTEC oil, Piper offers domestic and commercial gas, electric, water and LPG, as well as popular courses such as asbestos awareness and legionella.

MCS accredited courses are also available in renewables, with a Green Deal installer course coming soon. [www.piperassessment.co.uk](http://www.piperassessment.co.uk)

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# A new approach to renewables integration

*Bivalent or hybrid heating systems are now trending as people seek to improve the energy efficiency of their current heating system by embracing renewable technology*

“Increasingly, installers working in the renewables arena are gaining the confidence to integrate differing heating technologies to provide the necessary heating and hot water generating equipment in a home, particularly in off-gas installations.” says David Hall, national sales manager at Grant UK

One of the most popular options is to install an air source heat pump (ASHP) as the primary provider of heat and hot water with an existing oil boiler as the back-up to support the ASHP when required, for example when outside temperatures drop significantly.

### **Oil boiler + ASHP + wood burning appliance + solar thermal**

A bivalent system can be achieved by coupling an existing Grant oil boiler to an ASHP, controlling the boiler operation by means of the built-in temperature sensors found within the Grant Aeronas ASHP, and

the addition of some simple controls.

Alternatively, it could also involve the use of a thermal store or buffer tank to allow the ASHP and boiler to be connected together. A system like this can also incorporate other heat sources such as solid fuel or wood burning appliances and solar thermal, all contributing to meet the heating and hot water requirement for the property and offering a truly integrated approach.

ASHPs should only be used with dedicated heat pump type indirect hot water cylinders. These cylinders are specifically designed for use with ASHPs and have a larger heating coil to compensate for the lower water flow temperature from the ASHP, enabling them to heat up more rapidly. The use of a conventional indirect cylinder with an ASHP is not recommended as this will result in significantly longer hot water heat up times and greater energy usage.

The recommended minimum temperature for hot water heated and stored in a hot water cylinder is 60°C. However, during colder weather it can be inefficient to use an ASHP to heat water in a cylinder all the way up to 60°C. This is due to the reduced efficiency of the ASHP at the higher water flow temperatures required to achieve this. A more efficient method is for the ASHP to heat the water to around 45°C and then use an electric immersion heater – fitted in the cylinder – to raise stored hot water temperature the last 15°C up to 60°C. In the case of the Grant Aeronas ASHP, it is recommended to utilise the Grant domestic hot water boost kit in combination with a Grant heat pump cylinder.

For further information on using bivalent systems, contact the team at Grant UK on 01380 736920 or visit [www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com).



Linking together an oil boiler, air source heat pump and solar – Grant reports that when it comes to integrating different technologies, installers are gaining in confidence



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\*Performance data from [www.sedbuk.com](http://www.sedbuk.com)

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# Oil & renewables – getting closer together

*The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), Green Deal and to some extent the Feed-in Tariff (FiT) all have one aim – to incentivise the general public into taking on more energy efficient measures. Below Babak Daemi, managing director, Everlasting Marketing & PR looks at how the oil installer can take advantage.*



With the most costly properties to heat often off-grid, oil installers are already helping to alleviate cost issues on a daily basis. It is because of the high heating costs off-grid, coupled with the aforementioned incentives, that renewable companies have targeted these areas first; with the exclusion of the minor gold rush for solar PV. However, until these incentives can be focused and proven to work, many property owners remain sceptical about the genuine benefits of renewable technology.

It is beyond question that renewable technologies will lower the heating costs of properties all over the UK. However, a more strategic and unified approach between the oil and renewable industry is needed for homeowners and businesses to truly benefit and understand. It is because of this need to work together that we're now seeing a growing popularity in hybrid or bivalent systems, with Daikin and Glow-Worm being just two of the major manufacturers now developing and selling such products.

### Marketing bivalent heating systems

According to Hybrid Heating Systems there are 5 main reasons for using a bivalent system with the three key ones being:

- Inadequate electricity supply for larger heat pump
- Homeowner wishes to retain the existing boiler as a backup
- Insufficient space to locate a very large heat pump

When selling bivalent systems, renewable installers and manufacturers are using the three reasons above in their marketing messages.



Next year, off-grid homes like this one will be able to take advantage of the RHI. But will it be their existing oil installer or an unknown renewable installer who is first to sell the homeowner an energy efficiency measure, a renewable technology or a bivalent heating system?

With many off-grid properties suffering from a low electricity supply, it would be extremely inefficient to change the traditional source of energy from oil to electricity to power a heat pump. And, of course some properties don't have space for a heat pump big enough to power the building – especially true of a ground source heat pump which needs sufficient space for the installation of ground pipes. Additionally, many homeowners wish to keep an existing boiler as a safety precaution and to supplement a heat pump.

As oil is one of the most popular heating sources for off-grid properties, the oil heating and cooking industry is best placed to embrace bivalent technology. According to OFTEC, 'oil can also work well with an air source heat pump' with the heat pump working for the majority of the year and oil supplementing the heating on really harsh winter days. Bivalent systems can aid the long term future of the oil industry and help heat the UK's off-grid regions more efficiently.

### The impact of RHI and Green Deal

In the past, renewable installers have found that installation costs have been hard to justify to property owners, although the Renewable Heat Premium Payment has gone some way to combat this. With the introduction of the RHI next year, the initial installation costs will become far less of a barrier to selling.

Although RHI can be considered a threat to the oil heating industry, Green Deal could be considered as a supplement or even a driver to it. Using Green Deal, homeowners can improve their property's efficiency and help offset rising energy costs. Leading insulation company, Knauf Insulation is a great example of the type of product that can be used by oil installers to help support their business as they look to upskill or evolve into the renewable sector.

### Oil installers embracing renewable technologies

"Awhile ago, we decided to bring renewable energy technology to the oil installer," said Dan Caesar, managing director, Energise Events. "The four bitesize briefings events held in October signified the potential that a renewables/oil partnership can have. To open up the debate we're bringing together organisations like OFTEC and Gas Safe with leading manufacturers of renewable technology."

"Once the RHI is launched, off-grid properties will stand to make fantastic savings on their heating costs," added Babak. "Oil installers have the chance to embrace these technologies now, taking them to their customers' properties themselves. To ensure oil installers retain customers, they could be the ones installing these technologies. After all, it's the oil installer who already has the customer relationships which the renewable installer craves."

[www.everlastingmarketingandpr.co.uk](http://www.everlastingmarketingandpr.co.uk)

# Installing heat pumps in the UK

*Lots of UK homes are hard to treat with heat pumps, right? "Well, no not really," says John Felgate, head of technical at Stiebel Eltron UK and chairman of the Domestic Heat Pump Association's technical committee*

"Historically, the UK has really suffered from a lack of UK-specific products," says John who has worked in the heating, ventilation and hot water industry for more than 12 years, designing products and systems for commercial and domestic installations.

In the gap between growing demand and the delivery of new UK specific products, many UK properties – and particularly older homes – have been branded as hard to treat because they don't fit the profile of the market for which existing heat pumps had been designed.

I'm not keen on the label hard to treat because it sounds like the homes themselves were not good candidates for greener sources of heat. In fact, all they need is a different approach,

which combines both new technical solutions and cultural change in the way we operate our heating.

---

*fossil fuel heating in the UK is relatively much cheaper than elsewhere in Europe – until recently greener heating options were for those with an alternative outlook or for the techno-loving rich*

---

The European market for heat pumps has historically been driven principally by France, Germany and Sweden. In each country the housing stock, electricity supplies, average winter temperatures, longevity of a green heating agenda and the cost of fossil

fuels differ from our own. Fossil fuel heating in the UK is relatively much cheaper than elsewhere in Europe and greener

heating options were until recently considered for those with an alternative outlook on life or for the techno-loving rich. They were not, in short, taken seriously as an option for the mainstream consumer.

### Investing in products for the UK market

It is only in the last five years or so that the UK has really begun to push thinking and offer incentives on alternatives to fossil fuel heating, which have made them a viable option for most consumers. Until recently the heat pump products typically available were not always a good fit with the average UK home, because average homes were not heat pump customers and demand was low.

Incentive schemes, a growing green conscience, the recent rise in fossil fuel costs and increasingly stringent standards for lower carbon emissions in building regulations have meant that the UK market has nonetheless developed rapidly. Investment from heat pump manufacturers to create products that meet this demand has followed.

### Working with the UK's single phase electricity supply

Two key reasons why it has been hard to adapt to the UK market are that we have a single phase electricity supply as opposed to Europe's three phase and that we have a larger number of old houses.

Single phase supply limits the amount of power a heat pump can deliver for heating and hot water production. Traditional boilers have a dedicated supply of energy (a gas supply or oil tank running to your house), the primary use for which is always heating. They only use electricity for the control circuitry, which represents a tiny electrical load. The electric motors that run a heat pump have to compete on the circuit with the other large appliances that require electricity and we therefore have to ensure that demand by a heat pump is limited to ensure that it does not disrupt the supply to other appliances (or in other words, blow the main fuse), or indeed, other properties.

With a three phase supply every home has three lines of electrical energy linked up to their heat pump and the load is shared between the three lines. In single phase systems the three lines generated by the turbine at the power station are not run into each house. Instead different properties are supplied by just one of the lines. This, of course, means a lot less wiring and a cheaper system to install, but does mean that there is more risk of the supply being unbalanced by single, power-greedy users.



The Stiebel SG Anglesey Webster 2 – the company's WPL 15/25 air source heat pump was also a runner-up in the Green Innovation category at the same awards

This is why in the UK there are requirements for heat pump installers to notify a network operator before installing a heat pump, so that they can monitor demand on the network.

The difference between single phase and three phase supply means that products designed for the European market are very often not suitable for UK domestic supply. As a result, there has until recently been a dearth of products suitable for domestic use in the UK. Five or six years ago you would have struggled to find a single phase heat pump for the UK. But with the burgeoning interest and

government commitment to greener sources of heating, and the continuing rise in fossil fuel bills, manufacturers have begun to respond to demand.

Stiebel Eltron is committed to supplying products designed for the UK market and obviously offering a range of single phase products is the first and most obvious answer.

Another issue with older homes is that it can be prohibitively expensive to raise the insulation value of the building. This makes it harder to raise and maintain comfort temperatures compared to newer homes. This problem can really only be solved with power.

To have reasonable response times and reach a reasonable level of comfort the heat pump for an older home needs to have a higher kilowatt output for the size of project than a newer home of a similar size (which of course would also be true of a fossil fuel system).

This posed an engineering challenge on our single phase supply to reduce the start-up current of a more powerful electrical motor so that it didn't overload the system. These high power and single phase heat pumps were a little while in coming – but they are now available and the range of suitable pumps continues to grow.

In short, I would encourage any installer evaluating a property to think again about the possibility of a heat pump, as new products are constantly changing the boundaries of the possible and the viable.



Stiebel Eltron's technical director John Felgate was recently presented with the contribution to energy efficiency award at the Energy Efficiency & Renewables Awards 2013

*these high power and single phase heat pumps were a little while in coming – but they are now available*

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## Ecodan® – independent year-long trial

In August, Mitsubishi Electric released the results of independently audited data from year-long trials into the performance of its Ecodan® air source heat pump system at 23 sites around the UK.

The results show that Ecodan achieved an average seasonal performance of 2.9 when measured against the government's preferred boundary condition for calculating heat pump performance – known as the Seasonal Performance Factor (SPFH4). The EU defines the renewable threshold as an average seasonal performance of 2.5, when measured against reduced boundary conditions covering the performance of the heat pump in isolation (known as SPFH2).

SPFH4 conditions widen the monitoring by including all auxiliary power consumption and this gives a much clearer indication of overall system performance. Fifteen of the Ecodan sites also achieved an SPFH4 average of 2.98 across the winter of 2011-2012 – one of the coldest on record for decades, and seven of the sites achieved an average of 3.04.



Mitsubishi Electric is holding a series of free seminars to highlight the integral role that heat pump technology has to play in the commercial and residential heating sectors, with dates in December, January and March – [www.mitsubishielectricvents.co.uk/ecodanseminars](http://www.mitsubishielectricvents.co.uk/ecodanseminars)

As calculated by the Energy Saving Trust (EST), Ecodan demonstrated average estimated annual operating cost savings of 8% over a gas condensing boiler, 36% over an oil condensing boiler and 67% over a direct electric heating system.

“Many heat pumps on the market report high performance levels that are based on a static factory test condition and although

these are useful comparative tools, they are no substitute for real world performance data,” comments Tom Byrne, EST assistant technical manager and project manager for the field trials. “We would always suggest that anyone looking at installing a heat pump should request the SPFH4 data from the manufacturer to provide a real comparison on performance before making a decision.”

The SPF calculation takes into account not only the heat output from the heat pump, but also any auxiliary electrical booster including the immersion heater and divides this by the electrical input to all of the power consuming elements of the system.

The Ecodan trials took place in 23 homes across the country in places as far apart as North Wales, Cornwall, Cumbria, Yorkshire, Bedfordshire, Northumberland and the Isle of Wight. The results also show that the design and operation of any heat pump system will have an impact on its performance levels. See also page 35.

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# Working with hybrid heating systems

Oil Installer recently spoke to a selection of installers about hybrid heating systems. We asked whether the installer was already combining oil with renewable technologies, if their customers were receptive to such systems, and if they believed that next year's Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) would convince householders to invest in a more expensive heating system.

Add your comment to the debate by emailing [jane@oilinstaller.co.uk](mailto:jane@oilinstaller.co.uk)



## Numbers can be counted on one hand

Andy Holding of AJ Holding Oil Heating in Oxfordshire reported that most of his customers were not currently interested in hybrid heating systems.

"However, this could be due to many factors such as capital cost, return on investment, additional maintenance costs with some systems and the aesthetical appearance of external hybrid products.

"I do have a very small number of customers who have an oil heating system combined with renewable technologies, but sadly the numbers can be counted on one hand.

"It's hard to judge if customers will be willing to part with their hard earned money. Some might bite the bullet and make the long term investment in a renewable heating system; others might want to spend their hard earned money on a nice holiday."

**TRVs are very good at saving energy so why is there no government funding?**

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## Addressing customer concerns

Wirral-based Andy Townsend MScGradIE CIBSE, who won an OFTEC award for excellence three years running, has advised many clients on designing and building properties off grid and is an advocate of a hybrid heating system featuring oil.

"I would say that a client's biggest issue is always heating. They're concerned about what would happen if they got sick or when they're older and they can't bring in wood or cope with the fact that their PV panels aren't performing well enough to run their air or ground source heat pumps.

"I tell them the answer is simple – use an oil boiler, or possibly a range cooker, and combine the technologies. I'm usually asked if that's not rather un-green to which I reply that an oil condensing boiler runs at around 95% efficiency or better and responds very quickly to demand. Plus with better construction, a property can be well insulated, ensuring oil use is minimal.

"When asked about carbon footprint, I point out that burning wood releases carbon and it's less controllable. Whether pellets, logs or chip, wood has to be kept dry and storing winter fuel takes up a lot of space. With a modern storage tank, oil is a lot easier to manage."



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## Customers look for proven systems

Mark Viccars of Chestnut Plumbing in Sittingbourne says he has been talking to all his customers about integrating renewables. "But, most people won't spend their money until the new systems are proven to work."

"I would also like to point out two things – if you fit a new RHI approved renewable heat source you have to remove the old carbon boiler and cannot go back to it as the building regulations say you cannot step down in efficiency. All approved RHI boilers are three times the cost of a non RHI approved boiler showing that all persons and companies involved in the supply chain are cashing in on the government's scheme and in the end it's the customer who foots the bill.

"I've visited some installed systems where I've had to fault find as the installer hadn't taken into account the whole system; they'd just installed a new heat source and walked away. I've been left slightly miffed and wondering is it just me."



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## What The Installer Says

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### Very slow take up – even for the affluent

Mark Gibbs of Gibbs Plumbing & Heating Services in Norfolk says: “In this part of the country people have never liked spending money so it’s not a good indicator of the overall market.”

Having broken his leg earlier this year, it’s nearly two years since Mark did a new oil installation with a solar cylinder where the customer did not pursue the installation of collectors due to cost. Having linked up two separate oil boilers with wood burning appliances using an H2 panel from Heating Innovations, another customer has shown interest but Mark reports that the market is ‘very slow’ even for the seemingly affluent.

“I was called to a barn conversion with a Range Rover on the drive where there was a problem with the hot water supply. The property had an old boiler with a rotting flue, I proposed a replacement boiler and altering the cylinder; after deliberating for a year, the customer decided against the new boiler route.”

As to the RHI, Mark has no evidence to suggest that it will have any impact. Should he discover an upsurge in the Norfolk market, he’s promised to let us know!



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### Lacking enthusiasm but willing to be persuaded

Veteran oil installer and OFTEC inspector, Clive King, who speaks to many oil technicians in the course of his work, has come to the conclusion that ‘it’ll take 10 years at least before government and industry come together and produce a viable alternative to fossil fuels’. In his words, Clive is ‘not over enthusiastic about new technologies as yet, but is willing to be persuaded’.

“With science having proved that the burning of fossil fuels is detrimental to the earth’s atmosphere, we must find another economical way of keeping warm and producing hot water that’s not going to cost the earth, if you’ll pardon the pun.

“Still in a very tenuous economic situation worldwide, the general public just can’t afford to spend vast amounts of money taking out old oil heating systems and replacing them with even more expensive alternatives like heat pumps – even with an incentive. Plus, if a heat pump is not very carefully designed into a heating system, the homeowner’s electricity bill can soar each time

the immersion heater kicks in to assist the primary heating source.

“It’s a known fact that the government wishes to terminate oil-fired heating as soon as possible and is putting obstacles in the way of further oil equipment being installed in our homes. It’s a situation that I’ve always found slightly amusing as many MPs have oil-fired heating and cooking in their large country retreats. Some councils are already demanding that the main source of energy in new houses must be renewable, with oil or gas back up only as an alternative.

“OFTEC has said that a sensible way to progress oil-fired heating is to introduce biofuel. A good idea but in my opinion, it requires further longevity testing before being released to the public. Condensing boilers have now had a good 10 years to prove that they definitely do save fuel. To this combination, renewables such as solar thermal, which has proved its effectiveness in producing hot water for most of the year, should be added gradually as efficiency is proven.

My own desire would be the development of the hydrogen cell but I’ve got to accept that’s still a long way off.

As they seek to further develop the renewables industry, I don’t believe that the government is best helping. Technicians, heating engineers and plumbers have all mentioned to me that the government is requiring too much of them via the MCS and Green Deal schemes, turning their otherwise efficient companies into miniature government departments with horrendous paperwork and putting obstacles in the way of smaller companies wishing to offer Green Deal installations.

“Oil-fired heating has been my life – in my opinion, we should only install condensing boilers, we should only use bundled oil storage tanks and we should definitely improve the insulation and update the heating controls of all existing properties, only feeding in new technologies when proven.”





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# Great deals on essential pieces of kit

The latest OFTEC Direct catalogue has over 150 products specifically designed for those working on oil heating installations.

## ✓ 10 new items

Replacement filters, sight gauge level indicator balls, first aid kits and – with customer’s carpets in mind – disposable overshoes have been added to the range.

## ✓ Current offers

There’s 15% off an oil line pressure testing kit which now comes with a pipe connector – a great deal on an essential piece of equipment for checking oil pipe work before commissioning an installation.

## ✓ Monthly special offers

Each month brings more special offers and discounts for OFTEC registered technicians.

## ✓ Popular products

10mm soft copper support inserts used to support pipework where type A compression fittings are used in accordance with BS EN 1254-2.

## ✓ New products continually added

OFTEC Direct was set up in 2003 with just one product – oil line warning tape – The range has grown considerably since with new products being added all the time.



This first aid kit is just one of the new products in the latest OFTEC Direct catalogue

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## Ensuring a positive customer experience



In a bid to raise standards within the oil distribution industry, the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS) launched a Code of Practice and Customer Charter this September. The FPS has more than 180 members who distribute heating oil across the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Since the industry was investigated by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) in 2011, the FPS and its members have worked closely with the OFT, Citizens Advice Bureau, Consumer Focus, the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment and the Department of Energy and Climate Change to form the new Code of Practice and Customer Charter.

Mark Askew, FPS chief executive, said: “Having a Code of Practice in place for FPS members will give the public reassurance that they are dealing with companies who are adhering to best practice. Every FPS member should offer clear pricing and delivery guidance to customers at the time of ordering, and the new charter explains all this. We’re doing everything we can to ensure the customer experience is a positive one.”

To read a copy of the new Code of Practice and Customer Charter visit [www.fpsonline.co.uk/codeofpractice.asp](http://www.fpsonline.co.uk/codeofpractice.asp)

## £6m to fund local authority heat networks

Launched in September, ‘ambitious and innovative proposals to develop and deliver heat networks from renewable, sustainable or recoverable sources’ are being invited to win a share of a new £6 million grant funding programme.

The funding is aimed at Local Authorities (LAs) in England and Wales and can include any system in which heat is generated off-site by renewable or recovered sources such as waste heat from industry, energy from waste plants and biomass combined heat and power. Many university campuses, new mixed commercial and residential developments and high rise flats draw their heat from these systems.

“Many UK buildings have already made the switch from traditional fuels to low carbon heat sources,” said energy and climate change minister, Greg Barker. “This new grant funding programme builds on these successes by helping LAs develop more commercially viable low carbon heat networks.”

Details on how to apply can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/policies/increasing-the-use-of-low-carbon-technologies/supporting-pages/heat-networks](http://www.gov.uk/government/policies/increasing-the-use-of-low-carbon-technologies/supporting-pages/heat-networks)



### Tuffa UK – fire protected tanks

Tuffa UK would like to clarify the installation criteria of its fire protected oil storage tank range:

- The tanks do comply with Building Regulations and this is a legal requirement
- The product meets Section J 5.4 of Building Regulations, Table 5.1 for fire protection for oil storage tanks
- The fire protection products have LABC System Approval – registration numbers RD53A, RD53B & RD53C. These allow installation of the tanks without requiring BS 5410 part 1 separation distances.

#### Signing off the installation

Introduced by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), the Competent Persons Scheme enables certain types of building work -including oil & heating – to be self-certified by installers. This is instead of getting building regulation approval. Within the oil, heating & plumbing sector there are 8 schemes registered with CLG, who are only interested in compliance with the legal requirements of the Building Regulations.

- You do not have to use a local council or approved building inspector to check your work
- Your customers benefit from lower prices as there are no building control fees
- The installation needs to be signed off by a competent person to comply with LABC

CLG – The Building Regulations: Competent Person Self Certification Schemes – Conditions of Authorisation. Section 3 states: ‘Scheme operator, including assessors and inspectors that it employs, to have the technical ability to assess/inspect the competence of prospective and existing members to deliver compliance with the requirements of the Building Regulations.’

### New Suntec products from Anglo Nordic

As the authorised UK reseller of Suntec products, Anglo Nordic can now supply the new TAM & TAR pumps to supplement the well-established TA range, which are both suitable for marine boilers as defined in ISO 8217 standard.

The TAM pump is appropriate for industrial heating applications using marine distillate fuel from kerosene to medium oil applications. 1.25 cSt to 20 cSt.

The TAR pump is slightly different using marine residual fuel from marine distillates for marine residual fuel applications. 10 cSt to 75 cSt.

Both have a 1400 litre per hour capacity and are suitable for oil temperatures of up to 40° with a preheater port for easy cold starting with high viscosity fuels. High performance proven components such as carbon bushings, mechanical seal, gear set-material and viton O-rings improve the pumps life in abrasive fuel applications and make these new models ready to meet the requirements of marine boilers.

[www.anglonordic.co.uk](http://www.anglonordic.co.uk)



**Oil Storage Tanks with Integral Fire Protection – can be sited in any location!**

Tuffa Fire Protected oil storage tanks can be specified to obtain a satisfactory degree of safety in the advent of a spreading fire as required by Building Regulations.

**Key Benefits**

- \* No brickwork, barriers, firewalls or civil works required
- \* Wide range of colours to suit the application
- \* Suitable for domestic, Industrial and commercial applications
- \* Cost effective
- \* Can be sited inside a building with the benefit of additional security

**Achievements**

- \* Independently tested to BS476: Part 22: 1987
- \* Independently tested to BS476 (Warrington Fire Research Centre)
- \* LABC (Local Authority Building Control) System Approval

The FireStop protects the fuel contents using the methodology described in BS5410 in two ways; by providing an actual physical fire barrier, and the complete enclosure of the tank in a non-combustible fire resistance construction.

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