

- **Emergency Oil Drums** – These are 20 litre drums of kerosene purchased at petrol stations etc. They are not recommended as a normal method of purchasing oil. They should only be used as an emergency measure. Purchasing oil by this method can be up to 40% more expensive.

Get the best from your system

Make sure the dwelling is well insulated and draught proofed.

- Turning your wall thermostat down from 22°C to 21°C could cut your heating bill by 14%.
- Turn thermostatic radiator valves in bedrooms down to keep the room aired while saving fuel and keep bedroom doors closed.



- Keep radiators free of obstructions.
- Check the times on your heating programmer to see if they suit you.
- Leave any thermostat on your hot water cylinder at 60-65°C.

Oil Heating Systems



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Keep your boiler in good shape

It is now a Building Control requirement that new central heating boilers should be high efficient A or B rated. That means that a new oil boiler is likely to be a condensing boiler.

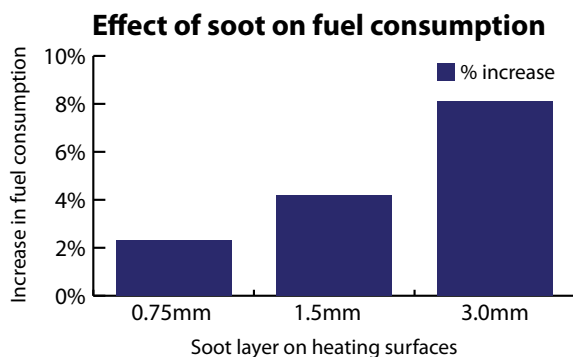
In order to maintain its efficiency it should be serviced regularly every one to two years.

The efficiency of a boiler can be reduced by;

- A build up of soot on the heat exchanger
- A worn jet passing too much fuel into the burner
- Worn electrodes affecting the spark which lights the fuel.

Dark or even black smoke from the flue is an indication that your boiler requires immediate attention.

The graph below shows how efficiency decreases with a build up of soot in the boiler's heat exchanger.



The service should also include inspecting the oil tank and oil supply pipes. The filter should be cleaned or replaced and fittings checked for oil leaks.

Make sure to get a suitably qualified person to carry out your service. The association which represents the oil heating industry is OFTEC. Look out for their symbol if you are looking for someone to service your boiler or install a new oil heating system.



For further information;

NI Oil Federation T: 08456002105

W: www.nioil.com

Oil tanks should never be tipped to increase the flow of oil to the heating system. This can not only damage the tank itself, and the pipes, but dirt disturbed from the bottom of the tank can block the pipes which can in turn affect the oil burner.

A damaged oil pipe can result in a huge environmental clean-up bill.

Paying for your oil

Oil has become very expensive over the past few years so it is important to make sure you choose the right payment option to suit your own circumstances and are not paying more than you should.

You should always purchase oil from established, reputable suppliers. Although some products are sold as home heating oil, they may well contain contaminants that can cause considerable damage.

Always order a specified amount of oil. Never ask for the tank to be topped up.

The different payment options are:

- **Cash** – All distributors accept cash. Some will accept monthly/weekly cash payments. Check with your supplier.

- **Cheque** – Some will accept a cheque but many will insist on it clearing before delivering oil.
- **Debit Card/Credit Card** – Most will accept credit or debit cards. There may be an additional cost of between 1.5 – 2.5% for using a credit card. Check with your distributor before ordering.
- **Paypoint** – Some distributors participate in a paypoint scheme to help householders budget for oil. They issue a personal swipe card so that householders can top up the card and spread the cost of the delivery over a period of time. The scheme is pre-payment and the card should have the required amount pre-paid before delivery. A list of distributors offering PayPoint can be found at www.nioil.com/distributor_members.asp
- **Direct Debit** – Many distributors operate their own direct debit scheme where householders can arrange an agreed monthly debit from their bank to the distributor's account thus spreading the cost throughout the year.
- **Oil Stamp Saving Scheme** – Some distributors operate this scheme where £5 stamps can be purchased and put on an oil stamp saving card. The card can then be used as payment for oil.
- **Online** – Many distributors now offer an online service. This will require a debit/credit card at the time of order. There are usually different tariffs depending on how soon you require a delivery. There are also web sites where you can check on the cheapest oil in your area;

www.consumercouncil.org.uk