

EMERGENCY SUPPLY OF HEATING OIL - DECEMBER 2010

In many parts of the country, oil distributors are experiencing difficulties in making deliveries of heating oil to all their customers due to the weather and the abnormally high number of orders they are receiving. The Federation of Petroleum Suppliers Ltd is therefore issuing the following advice to consumers to try to ease the situation:

- You may find have far more oil left that you thought and don't need a refill until after the Christmas period. Don't rely on tank gauge readings for your tank contents – dip the oil level in your tank through the inspection hatch, using a clean wooden stick or similar, just as you do to check the oil levels in your car.
- It is the weather conditions that are affecting your distributor's ability to make as many deliveries as normal, rather than a lack of product in the UK.
- If your distributor cannot get a delivery to you, can you go and collect some heating oil to tide you over? Many distributors are making heating oil available in 25 litre containers for collection. If your regular supplier does not have this facility, check the other distributors in your area by looking on the FPS website www.fpsonline.co.uk where a red tanker links to a 'Find your local distributor' function.

Please be honest about your circumstances: it is of concern that a number of people are claiming to have run out of oil or have vulnerable people in their households in order to get a priority delivery when this is not the case. This makes the situation worse for other households who have genuinely run out.

Local authorities have been asked by central Government to assist vulnerable households without heating. You can find the telephone number for the local authority in your area at:

<http://local.direct.gov.uk:80/LDGRRedirect/index.jsp?LGSL=1307&LGIL=8&ServiceName=Get%20local%20information%20on%20services%20disrupted%20by%20severe%20weather>

The effect of extremely low temperatures on heating oil

Almost all domestic central heating boilers in the UK run on kerosene (BS2869 Class C fuel). This fuel remains fluid in temperatures well below those we are experiencing in the UK.

Recent reports of problems with flow in the fuel system may be as a result of water in the storage tank that has built up through condensation over the years. If this gets into the fuel line, it may form an icy slush that could block the feed line or filter, restricting flow of oil to the burner.

If you have problems with your fuel supply line to your boiler, contact your boiler engineer. You can find a local boiler technician at www.oftec.org.

A statement released by the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers.

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