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Oil Heat Safety



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OIL HEAT SAFETY

Home heating safety is important for all homeowners. Maintenance and understanding is integral to the protection of your home and family.

In Massachusetts, home heating oil spills and leaks are an all too common problem. The culprit in most cases is the delivery or supply line that carries home heating oil from the storage tank to the furnace. Oil-fired boilers and furnaces were especially popular in the Northeast.

Depending on the age of your heater, you may consider the following options to increase safety and efficiency:

Vent Dampers

The most common retrofit is the addition of a vent (or flue) damper. A vent damper prevents chimney losses by closing off a boiler's vent when the boiler is not firing. Steam boilers and big boilers benefit from vent dampers more than hot water or smaller boilers.

Barometric Flue Damper

During your annual service checkup, have a draft test. If too much heat is going up the chimney, install a barometric flue damper. The cost is minimal and can save up to 5% of your fuel cost.

Modulating Aquastats Controller and Time-Delay Relay:

Retrofits for hot water boilers can save fuel costs. The modulating aquastat, also called an outdoor reset, controls and adjusts the temperature of the hot water. The time-delay relay causes the boiler to circulate hot water through the system without turning on the boiler.

Fuel Supply Lines with Non-Metallic Sleeve and Safety Valve

A protective sleeve protects the delivery line from corrosion and physical damage. Since older delivery lines are neither visible nor encased, leaks can continue to go undetected.

Maintenance & Prevention

- Have annual maintenance for both your heating furnace and oil tank to prevent future problems
- Install an automatic shutoff valve
- Replace the fuel supply line with one encased in a non-metallic protective sleeve
- Keep the area around the heating system clear of debris and flammable materials
- Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in your home and change the batteries (if applicable) each year



Review your homeowners policy with your insurance agent to make sure you have sufficient coverage in the event of an oil heat related loss.

IN THE EVENT OF EMERGENCY

- Immediately call 911
- Call your state's Department of Environmental Protection or Department of Environmental Services emergency response line
- Make sure to call your oil company for assistance