

ENSURING ACCURATE  
OIL DELIVERIES

The first steps to maintaining accurate oil deliveries this winter has already started with the ISD, Weights and Measures Division "sealing" the meters on oil trucks operating in Boston.

Sealing meters ensures that the each truck is accurately measuring the volume of oil delivered. This will allow inspectors to ensure everyone is treated fairly by creating a standard way of measuring oil deliveries.



Each time home heating fuel is delivered the oil company will issue a receipt from the dealer's truck at the time of delivery. This receipt will provide key information including: the price per gallon, the name of the dealer, your name and a meter stamp of the volume of oil delivered.

Under state law, these elements must be listed. They are key to ensuring a fair and honest transaction between you and your dealer.

In order to ensure oil dealers are adhering to these regulations, inspectors conduct night and weekend spot inspections of oil delivery trucks, in addition to their daily patrols.

During these spot checks, inspectors will be looking to make sure that the sealed meters are intact and the above information is included on receipts.

Inspectors will also make sure the tickets run in sequential order to prevent the substitution of a delivery ticket with pre-printed ticket that lists more fuel than actually delivered to a household.

RESOURCE ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAMS

**Rental Housing Resource Center:** Provides advice, information, and assistance to Boston landlords and tenants who have problems or questions about rental housing issues. (617) 635-RENT (7368)

**ABCD Fuel Assistance Program:** Helps low-income households pay fuel bills during the heating season. For more information call 617-357-6012. or <http://www.bostonabcd.org/fuel-assistance-2011-2012.aspx>.

**LIHEAP Fuel Assistance Program:** Homeowners and tenants can apply for fuel assistance based on income eligibility. For more information call (800) 632-8175 or visit <http://www.liheap.ncat.org/Utility/MA/boston.htm>

**Salvation Army Good Neighbor Fund:** To apply or learn about eligibility, call (617) 542-5420 or visit [www.magoodneighbor.org](http://www.magoodneighbor.org).

**Oil Co-ops:** These are buying groups formed to help consumers purchase energy at lower costs. A list of oil co-ops is available at [www.mass.gov/doer](http://www.mass.gov/doer) and you may contact DOER at (800) 351-0077.

*If the owner/manager is unresponsive, occupants should call the Inspectional Services Department, Housing Inspection Division at **617-635-5322** or Mayor Menino's 24-hour Hotline at **617-635-4500**.*

Boston  
Inspectional  
Services

**Housing Division**

1010 Mass Avenue  
Boston, Ma 02118  
Phone: 617-635-5322  
Fax: 617-635-5383  
[www.cityofboston.gov/isd](http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd)



*Home Heating  
Guideline*

*A Landlord and Tenant Resource*



Boston Inspectional Services



City of Boston  
MAYOR THOMAS M. MENINO

## Heat Requirements

Chapter II of the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code (105 CMR 410), often referred to as the “housing code”, requires that residential property owners provide functioning heating systems that are capable of heating habitable spaces to minimum temperatures of 68° degrees Fahrenheit during the daytime (7:00 am to 11:00 pm), and 64° degrees Fahrenheit during the night (11:01 pm to 6:59 am).

These heating requirements must be met during the “heating season” established by housing code, (105 CMR 410.201). The “heating season” begins on September 15<sup>th</sup> and ends on June 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

### *Tips for Staying Warm*

#### MAKE YOUR HOME WEATHER TIGHT

*WEATHER TIGHT HOMES HELP REDUCE THE STRAIN ON HEATING SYSTEMS AND INCREASES THEIR LIFE EXPECTANCY.*

- Weather tight windows and doors are required under the State Sanitary Code, and help to conserve energy and money. All exterior doors and windows must be weather tight. This can be accomplished by the following:
  - installing weather stripping
  - Install storm doors & windows
- Caulk or putty windows, doors, foundation and molding cracks.
- Outfit fireplaces with a tight-sealing damper and keep it closed when not in use. If a fireplace is used infrequently, use a chimney block to eliminate heat loss.
- Make sure kitchen and bathroom vent dampers close properly.
- Property owners should have a list of contractors such as:
  - electrician
  - plumber
  - general contractor

## Protecting Your Heating Systems

### **Keeping Your Heating System Fueled**

If your system is fueled by oil, it is recommended that you fill your tank early. Oil customers should also avoid running the heating system on less than a ¼ tank of oil, as this will most likely result in the need to have your system serviced. Landlords with tenants who are responsible for their own oil should inform their tenants of the need to maintain sufficient oil in their tanks.

### **Protect Your Pipes**

Frozen and broken pipes are a common problem during extreme cold weather. Broken pipes and the associated damage can be quite costly to repair. You can prevent this problem by properly insulating pipes that are exposed to extreme cold. Also, on those extremely cold days try letting the faucet in a lower portion of the dwelling drip slightly.



*This should be done only during periods when your local meteorologist issues frozen pipe alerts.*

### **Alternative Heaters**

Portable heaters do NOT meet the requirements of the housing code and should only be used temporarily during extreme emergencies. Ovens/stoves should **NEVER** be used as heating source.

### Carbon and Smoke Alarms

Smoke detectors are required in all dwellings. Carbon monoxide detectors must also be installed within 10 feet of sleeping areas when fossil fuels (gas or oil) are used in the dwelling.

## What to do When You Have No Heat

- Check the thermostat to verify that it is turned high enough to turn the system on.
- Determine who is responsible for fueling the heating system and ensure that the system has fuel to operate.
  - o In cases where there is gas or electric heat, there must be a written agreement and exclusive use for the occupant to be responsible for providing the gas or electricity for heat.
  - o In cases where the heating system is fueled by oil a written agreement is not required, however, the heating system must exclusively serve the occupant providing the oil.
- Heating systems must be maintained by the owner of the property, this includes “priming” heating systems that may have run out of oil, although the owner may not have been responsible for providing the oil.
- Occupants who are having difficulty in getting property owners to respond in a reasonable manner should contact the City of Boston’s Inspectional Services Department for assistance at 617-635-5322.

*For questions regarding rent withholding, repair and deduction, or other legal remedies, please contact the City of Boston’s Rental Housing Resource Office (see resource program listing).*

### Posting of Ownership

Property owners who do not reside in a residential property must provide a posting for viewing by the occupants and inspectors. The posting must contain: the name, title, address and telephone number of the person in charge of the property. P.O. Box address are not acceptable, and the postings must be at least 20 square inches in size, and printed on durable material.