

## **Help! I Need Oil. What do I Do? A New Users Guide to Heating Oil**

For many of us who have grown up using oil, we are used to checking the tank, evaluating the weather and how that will affect our oil usage. We also understand the buying process and its options. For others who have just moved into properties for the first time that run on oil, learning the ins and outs of oil can be a little confusing. Moorland Fuels has put together this [New Users Guide to Heating Oil](#) to remove some of the confusion and make life a little easier.

### **I Have To Buy Oil and I Don't Know How Much I Need**

First, get to know your oil tank. Take a look at its size. Do you know what its capacity is? If you know how much it holds, then it is easier to place an accurate fuel order. If you have a plastic tank, the capacity should be embossed on it in a prominent place. You can find out your tank's capacity if it is a steel tank by measuring the length, width and depth. If you can tell us these details we can work out the capacity for you. Also, assess your tank's position; is there easy access to it? What about your drive or road, can a tanker fit? Our smallest tanker is 8ft wide, 22 ft 9 inch long and has a 150 ft pipe.

The minimum volume that any supplier will deliver is 500 litres, but a usual volume is between 750 and 1,000 litres.

### **How Do I Avoid Running Out of Oil?**

First check to see if your tank has a sight gauge. If you know your tank holds 1,200 litres and the sight gauge is at halfway, you know you have approximately 600 litres left in your tank. Sight gauges usually have a valve which, when opened, allows the level in the sight gauge to reflect the level of oil in the tank. The valve should always be left in the off position. If the gauge has not been checked (valve opened) then the tube may have oil in it but the tank may have run out.

Many of our customers have an Apollo or Watchman Tank Gauge. This simple gauge plugs into an electrical socket in your house and monitors the level of oil in your tank. The digital display changes from F when full to 0 when nearly empty. When the level is low, a red warning light flashes. We recommend ordering when the display is on 3, as this allows time for delivery before the oil is used up. Moorland Fuels can supply you an Apollo gauge, if you do not already have one and feel this is the best method for you to monitor your level of fuel.

If you don't have an Apollo Gauge or a sight gauge and need to check your oil level, then you can dip your tank. Find a thin length of wood slightly longer than the depth of your tank. Make a notch at the top where the fuel level is when the tank is full, and then make notches at  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the stick. Clean your dipstick thoroughly before inserting it into the tank to avoid contamination. Dip it into your tank and then inspect it to see the oil level. If you know the volume of your tank you can work out approximately how much is left in your tank.

We recommend ordering your fuel when you have at least a quarter of a tank left. This will help you avoid running out while you wait for a delivery. It will also help you avoid using the fuel at the bottom of your tank where sludge and water can build up which is not good for your heating system.

### **Ok, I Know How Much I Need to Order, Now What Do I Do?**

Call us on 01837 55700. Our friendly staff will ask you a few questions before giving you a price quote this first time. These will include:

- Name, address, phone number and email address
- Approximate distance to the tank from where the tanker needs to park
- Is there a restriction on the size of tanker that can access the site?
- Location of the tank within your property – next to a wall etc.
- Could your tank be confused with anyone else's?
- Can the driver access the tank without you being there, or are there special conditions i.e. the hose needs to go through the garage, tank is locked etc.
- Would you like a call the night before?

Once our staff have established these details, then we will give you a price for your oil. Oil prices are given in pence per litre and typically do not include the 5% VAT for orders up to 2,300 litres or a signed disclaimer if this is for domestic use.

For example, if you would like to order 1,000 litres of fuel, and the price quoted is £.609 pence per litre, you can work out your total cost by:

$$1000 \times .609 = 609 + 5\% \text{ VAT}$$

$$=£639.45$$

Our staff are always happy to give you the total amount if you ask us.

### **What is the Difference Between Premium Kerosene and Regular Kerosene?**

Moorheat Plus Premium Kerosene offers improved efficiency and actually cares for your boiler. It ensures the highest reliability, protects your fuel pump and it not only smells sweeter but helps protect against corrosion. Its age stabilising formula means it doesn't degrade in the tank, preventing the build-up of deposits in the oil.

Moorheat Regular Kerosene sets the standards for home heating oil, providing reliable, cost-effective heating backed up by our customer service, for maximum peace of mind.

### **Do You Offer a Price Break?**

Yes, our price break is at 750 litres.

### **I got a Quote Two Days Ago and Now the Price is Different. Why is That?**

Heating oil prices fluctuate daily. The price of heating oil is directly related to the price of crude oil. When demand is high, prices are high; as demand falls so too does the price of heating oil. However, it is not just demand that impacts the price, global conditions do as well including terror attacks, trade wars and changes in the value of sterling. We receive our fuel prices from our supplier 48 hours before it is delivered to us, so we know 48 hours in advance whether prices are going up or down. You will always be charged the price on the day you placed the order.

### **I have my Quote and Want to Place the Order, How Do I Pay?**

Payment for first-time customers is required in advance. The next time you place an order we recommend you provide card details when you place the order, this ring-fences the money against your card, but the payment is not debited until the fuel has been delivered. You can also pay by bacs, (these details are on our meter ticket) or a cheque/cash to the driver. Payment is required within five days.

We also offer a direct debit program that enables you to pay a monthly amount to avoid paying a lump sum. We do ask that you start a direct debit from a zero balance so that you can work up a little credit before placing your next fuel order. If you would like to set up a direct debit, please call us 01837 55700 and we will send you the forms.

### **When Can I Expect My Fuel?**

During the majority of the year, Moorland Fuels delivers within 5 business days. However, in times of peak demand or inclement weather, this can stretch out to as much as 10 days. We

do endeavour to help existing customers who have run out or have an emergency as soon as possible.

### **Do You Invoice Me?**

When we deliver your fuel our driver will leave you a metered ticket which shows you the amount of fuel delivered and the total price of your fuel. This ticket is your invoice. You will also receive a copy invoice via email.

### **Can I Book in Today's Price for a Delivery in Two Weeks?**

No. If you need to schedule a delivery for two weeks time, we can schedule the delivery but the price you pay will be whatever the market price is on that delivery day.

When you place an order within our normally delivery times, then you pay the agreed upon price. So if it is 60.9 pence per litre today and we deliver it in three days time you still pay 60.9 pence per litre, even if the market price on the day your fuel is delivered is actually 61.9.

### **Can I Just Get a Top Up?**

We do offer a top up service call Never Run Out. We install a gauge that talks remotely to our computer system. It automatically scheduled a delivery for you when your tank is 30 % full. So you can just sit back and relax. We make sure our Never Run Out customers receive the most advantageous price available at the time of delivery. If you are interested in joining Never Run Our, please call us on 01837 55700 and we will send you more information on the programme.

### **How Long Will My Fuel Last Me?**

This is a tricky one to answer as it depends on the size of house, energy efficiency of the house and how you are using the heating oil. Are you using it for cooking and central heating or just central heating? In our experience, most 3/4 bedroom houses have on average two to three fills a year and use between 10 and 15 litres of fuel a day in winter. However, guessing how much you have used is no substitute for checking your tank level.

### **What About My Tank? Do I Need to Do Anything With That Between Fills?**

You should check your tank regularly to avoid costly leaks. When you have your boiler serviced, your boiler engineer should check your tank for water / sludge build up. We can clean and de-sludge tanks. If you think you need a new oil tank, then we can provide you with a free estimate to replace and install a new tank.

### **Help! I Have Still Run Out of Oil**

Don't panic. We will try to be with you as quickly as we can. However, this might not be same day or next day service depending on weather conditions. However, we do offer 20-litre cans to our existing customers which can be collected from our depot in Okehampton. Remember, if your tank is empty, you may need a boiler engineer to remove any air locks in the pipes once new oil has been added.

### **We Also Sell Coal**

We offer a variety of different coal options including both smoke-producing and smokeless. We offer free deliver on orders of 10 bags or more and offer a cash and carry service from our depot on North Road, Okehampton. You can view our prices on our Coal page.

Being new to oil can be very daunting. Hopefully this guide has been helpfully in dispelling some myths or confusion about buying oil. If you need any additional information, please call us at 01837 55700.