

ULTRA-LOW SULFUR HEATING OIL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: What is ultra-low sulfur heating oil?

A: Ultra-low sulfur heating oil (ULS) is heating oil with 15 parts per million (ppm) sulfur content.

Q: What is sulfur content?

A: Sulfur content is the amount of sulfur in heating oil. This is measured by parts per million (ppm).

Q: What are the differences between ULS and traditional heating oil?

A: ULS heating oil and traditional heating oil are petroleum products distilled from crude oil. ULS heating oil only has 15 ppm sulfur content. Traditional heating oil in Massachusetts has up to 4,000 ppm sulfur content.

ULTRA-LOW SULFUR HEATING OIL	TRADITIONAL HEATING OIL
✓ Sulfur content: 15 ppm	✓ Sulfur content: 3,000–4,000 ppm
✓ Non-flammable	✓ Non-flammable
✓ Reliable delivery from local dealers	✓ Reliable delivery from local dealers
✓ Warm, efficient burn	✓ Warm, efficient burn
✓ Extended equipment lifespan	
✓ Greater operating efficiency	
✓ Reduced emissions	

Q: How is ULS heating oil made?

A: Refiners use the process of hydrodesulfurization (HDS) to remove the sulfur component of diesel/heating oil fuels.

Q: Will I be able to purchase traditional heating oil instead of ULS heating oil?

A: No. The state of Massachusetts has regulations that will transition all heating oil sold in the state to ULS, effective July 1, 2018.

Q: How will oil consumers in MA benefit from ULS?

A: Ultra-low sulfur heating oil is very beneficial for oil consumers. These benefits include:

- ULS heating oil burns cleaner than traditional heating oil. It produces less pollution into the air we breathe.
- Your heating system will run more efficiently on ULS heating oil. This will lower buildup in your equipment, which will reduce the number of cleanings needed. Increased efficiency and a cleaner burn will translate to fewer service visits and less money spent on service work.
- The transition will not cause any added costs, because ULS heating oil is compatible with current oil heating equipment.

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Q: What are the environmental benefits of ULS heating oil?

A: Researchers have found that lower sulfur content in heating oil significantly reduces the amount of nitrogen oxide, sulfur oxide, and particulate matter emissions. These emissions are linked to many environmental and public health issues. Fewer emissions in our air is better for the environment and our public health. And when blended with renewable Bioheat, ULS heating oil is one of the cleanest energy choices.

Q: How does ULS heating oil improve efficiency?

A: ULS heating oil's lower sulfur content produces a cleaner burn, which can slightly increase thermal heat output. Sulfur, which naturally occurs in fuel, does not burn. As fuel burns, sulfur will build up on the heat exchanger, which insulates the heating system from the flame. Lowering the sulfur content of heating oil reduces the amount of sulfur buildup and minimizes the need for heat exchanger cleanings. A cleaner heat exchanger will help your system run more efficiently and help you save money on service work.

Q: Is ULS heating oil compatible with my oil heat system?

A: Yes. Ultra-low sulfur heating oil is compatible with current oil heating equipment.

Q: Does ULS heating oil cost more?

A: ULS heating oil prices are susceptible to change, like any other fuel on the market. In the long run, ULS heating oil provides customers with greater annual savings than traditional oil heat.

Q: How does ULS heating oil help me save money?

A: Because ULS heating oil burns cleaner, your heating system will run more efficiently. This means it takes less heating fuel for your equipment to produce the same amount of heat, and your fuel supply will last longer. ULS heating oil also lowers the frequency of necessary services, like professional cleaning. All of these factors add up to savings.

Q: What do I have to do to prepare for the change?

A: ULS heating oil is compatible with current oil heating equipment. This means no upgrades, no additional inspections, and no additional spending. You will continue to enjoy the convenience and reliability of heating with oil.

Q: When will I start receiving ULS heating oil?

A: Massachusetts heating oil companies began transitioning to ULS heating oil on July 1, 2018.

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