

Heating Regulation Changes Are Coming - Be Prepared

Submitted by: Shelan Communications

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From April 2005 a change to the Building Regulations will affect the 800,000 homes who need to change their gas boiler every year.

What the new regulation will require is that any new boiler fitted after the April 1 watershed is of the high efficiency 'condensing type'. Condensing boilers operate at efficiencies of 96% so that they make significant energy savings over conventional boilers; typically 20% or more.

For each homeowner this will mean that their boiler is more economical to run, which given the steadily rising price of gas is welcome news. What it will also mean is that each home equipped with the new type of boiler will make a significant contribution towards the reduction of greenhouse gases and the rise of global warming. In each home around 80% of the energy consumed goes through the boiler, so that higher efficiency makes a clear difference.

What are the differences in the new boilers? They work very much like existing boilers, in either conventional or combis, but they take the extra 15% of efficiency normally lost up the flue and use it within the boiler. This causes water vapour to condense within the boiler and a small drain, looking like an overflow from your plumbing, is fitted to run this away.

What are the points to look out for? Two issues are important. Changing a boiler is a sizeable investment so that it is worth making sure you have a boiler that will provide a long, reliable service. In particular look for boilers, like the new Viessmann Vitodens 200, that have stainless steel heat exchangers. Viessmann's track record with this is unbeatable – in twenty years no boiler has failed because its heat exchanger has corroded.

The other point, which will ensure that your savings are maximised, is to fit controls that suit condensing boilers. By using controls that measure both inside and outside temperatures, called weather sensitive controls, the boiler will automatically work at the most economical and efficient setting for each day's demand. This could add up to 10% extra savings.

Other information available

Photography

Case studies

Industry expert available for interview

Top questions to ask your installer

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