

Constant Comfort

A Tradition of Service Since 1912



news

FALL 2003

Combustion Testing

In performing your annual tune-up, our technicians do a combustion test with instruments that tell the men how your oil heating system is running. While this test neglects certain factors, such as off-cycle losses and combustion air source, it's needed to properly set up your burner for efficiency and to reduce the chance of problems. The combustion testing is comprised of four tests:

- 1) Carbon dioxide percentage in the flue gas.
- 2) Cleanliness of the flue gases.
- 3) Temperature of the flue gas.
- 4) Draft (how much force is pushing the flue gases up the chimney).

From these, a chart tells us how efficient the system is. For all steam, almost all hot water and over 90% of the warm air systems, the maximum efficiency for fuel oil is 87% and for natural gas is 84% (due to its higher water vapor output). In order to have a margin of safety, we generally set up systems for no more than 84%, as operating on the edge can lead to other problems.



Projects We've Done

Last winter, just after New Year's, we had one of the problems that we dread the most. A customer's boiler, which heated and made hot water for numerous apartments, failed and had to be replaced. There was no room to install a second boiler, as we've been able to do sometimes, so early one Friday morning, a removal crew took out the boiler. Then, working from 7 am to 10 pm in a confined space, Manny and Jay got the boiler in and running by Saturday night. A special thanks to Manny and Jay from all of us and from the apartment owner and residents.



You Are Important To Us!

A friend of ours recently asked us why we go to the trouble and expense of writing, printing and mailing the *Constant Comfort* newsletters. The answer is very simple: you, our customers, are important to us, and unlike some utilities (go fight City Hall), we know and appreciate that *fact*. We value the fact that you have chosen us to supply your comfort needs with fuel oil service and equipment installations, and to maintain that choice we do our utmost to be a quality supplier. We invest heavily in the best equipment, people and techniques so that your home is a comfortable castle for you.

We believe that these investments continue to serve you not only on those cool days when servicing you isn't too difficult, but also on those frigid, snowy days when it may be a real challenge.

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We Assume Their Integrity

We recently heard a *New York Times* editor, speaking with a writer about their recent scandal, say that, “We assume their integrity.” We thought that we often do that too, as well as assuming competency and attitude. As we go to various homes as a troubleshooter or an insurance inspector, we see that that assumption is sometimes made in error and that people who make their judgments based solely on price often are sorely disappointed.

As a case in point, in June we went to a home in Peabody and found that the owner, who we were told bought on a “low price” basis, had air conditioning installed a couple of years ago. In a nutshell, here’s what we found:

- The unit was undersized by 25-50%, so in hot weather the house wouldn’t get cooler than 80°.
- The flexible duct work was far too long for good air flow and was not stretched as tight as the manufacturer said to do in their instructions.
- A secondary drain pan under the unit was not piped to the outside, so a clog in the primary drain would ruin the ceiling.

We were reminded of a quote, the author and exact phrasing we’ve forgotten but which went something like this: “There is always someone who will do the job cheaper and people who decide solely on price are these people’s lawful prey.”

We Check Your Oil Consumption

Every year, we check your oil consumption with respect to both the weather and your past delivery history. We do this for two reasons:

- First, and most important, to make sure that you don’t run out of oil, so that your heat is always running.
- Second, to make sure that *we* operate efficiently. Driving an oil truck and pulling the hose can be hard work in severe weather and no one likes to deliver to tanks that are more than half full.

In this way, we have corrected our deliveries to homes that have added large additions or small children. We have also found problems with equipment that the customer was unaware of and that we have been able to correct.

Don’t Like the Looks Of It

The other day, as we were listening to the radio, we heard a woman commenting that she didn’t like the looks of an auto transmission place so she went to a different shop.

We started to think: Was this a valid way to judge anything? We decided that it was a start, but not the end. Few of us would feel comfortable eating in a restaurant that was obviously dirty, but fancy decor does not necessarily mean great food.

Our aim in operating NSF/MBO is to balance our operation with safe, clean, reliable equipment and well experienced people and without going overboard, to maintain offices that are functional, but not out of sight. To this end, we have started a program of mailing evaluation cards with our invoices, asking “How do we measure up?”

We hope that your comments will help us achieve our goal of serving you, our customer, better in every way...because we do care.

Words of Wisdom...

“One’s philosophy is not best expressed in words; it’s expressed in the choices one makes. In the long run we shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our responsibility.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt

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