

# Constant Comfort

*A Tradition of Service Since 1912*



# news

SUMMER 2002



## Projects We've Done

A couple of months ago, we received a referral from one of our suppliers through an electrician, R. I., to look at a job at St. Anthony's Rectory in Revere. The rectory, with over twenty rooms, had almost no zoning, roasting some areas while freezing others. (Is a man with one foot in a bucket of hot water and the other in a bucket of ice comfortable on the average?)

The solution of zone valves and thermostats for most of the rooms will cure that problem.

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## Why Do Some Houses Burn More Fuel?

*We are often asked why some homes burn more fuel than others. There are three main reasons: Construction, Equipment, and Lifestyle.*

### Construction

Many older homes were built with little or no insulation, single glazed windows, and often leaky walls. All of these increase the heat loss of the home and thus the fuel needed to keep you warm. A lot of glass—even double glazed—will also cause you to use more fuel. A double glazed window will let out ten times as much heat as an insulated wall of the same size.

You can tell if your windows are a problem by covering the suspected ones with a tight fitting sheet of plastic. If the room warms up, you have a window problem. By the way, make sure that your storm windows are down.

### Equipment

The heating equipment that was used years ago is far less efficient than that we're using today. For example, we now have equipment that will give you all the hot water that a normal household will use for about twenty gallons of oil per month during the summer. The newer equipment has other benefits that our customers enjoy. It's not your father's furnace.

### Lifestyle

If you keep your home at 75°, sleep with the windows wide open, and use lots of hot water, you'll use more fuel than the person who keeps his home at 68°, has a tight house and has minimal hot water use. We've seen both extremes, but this is your personal choice. As the old saying goes, "You pays yer nickel, you takes yer choice."

## Smaller Is Better

When we install heating boilers, the customer often asks for a bigger system based on the theory that bigger is better. With the exception of a tankless hot water system without storage, it's not—bigger is worse. The reason is that a heating system runs most efficiently if it runs steadily; frequent starts and stops (like an automobile) use more fuel (less miles per gallon) and cause more wear and tear on the machinery. Thus, we try to install the smallest boiler that will keep the home warm during the coldest day of the year and therefore reduce the number of starts and stops.

The only problem with this is that this system will reduce the domestic hot water output. A hot water storage tank will eliminate this situation and give you better hot water at less cost with a smaller boiler.

## Back Issues of *Constant Comfort News*

The last six issues of this newsletter (pages one and four only) are on our website—[www.northshorefuel.com](http://www.northshorefuel.com). There are also a limited number of printed back issues available from our office. Please call if you'd like us to send you some.



## Communications

We here at NSF/MBO strongly believe that one of our most important responsibilities is communications with both you, our customer, and our people performing the work in your home. To this end, we write and send out this newsletter and use both regular and radio phones to help service you in a timely and efficient way. Our radio phones, which the technicians and drivers carry on their belts, keep us in contact almost all the time (there are occasional dead areas) and lets our technicians talk among themselves to provide you the best possible service.

## Experience

**W**e recently overheard talk about a person who was described as having “one year’s experience twenty years ago.” We thought that was a good description of some people in the service business. The days of little change in almost everything we do and use are long since gone, and because of that, in most cases our lives are more comfortable.

Do any of us want to go back to the late ’40s when polio was a major scourge, pesticides were used extensively, and the environment was given little care? On a happier note, we haven’t seen anyone trading in a remote controlled big screen color TV for the 8-inch black and white displaying test patterns we remember from those days.

The heating and cooling industries have had similar advancements, all the way from new styles and types of oil tanks through the heating and cooling equipment and the chimney.

Just as in many other fields, our heating technicians go to school, both formally and informally, to keep up with both what’s new and the finer points about the older equipment. This education has helped us to improve the comfort of our customers through increased reliability, better heating and hot water. Our men’s experience and knowledge grows every year and we’re proud of their ability to serve you, our customer.

## Hot Water With Little Wait

The first person up in the morning in most homes often has to run the hot water for several minutes before it runs hot. This contrasts to the experience in hotels, where the water runs hot almost immediately. Why?

The reason is that the hotel has a system called “instant draw hot water.” The way it works is that there is a pump (bronze) that takes water from the furthest hot water use and brings it back to the hot water heater. Usually these require a pipe from the last hot water point back to the heater. Sometimes this can be done in an existing building. If not, a special pump can be installed on the first sink used in the morning, which accomplishes the same effect. The usual cost for a home is in the \$500 to \$1,000 range, and if you are interested, please give us a call.

If you are adding to your home, ask the plumber about making provisions for “instant draw hot water.”

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