

# Safe and Comfortable with Propane and Oil Heat

Whether you use propane, heating oil or both, this information can help you make smart decisions – and stay safe and comfortable too!



## Leave the repairs to us

**Some do-it-yourselfers** think it's OK to tinker with their heating equipment, whether it's a water heater, a furnace, a stove or a dryer. **It's not!** This is a job that should always be left to the professionals.

That's why we invest a great deal of time and money on training our technicians—to be sure that they are prepared to diagnose and fix virtually any type of heating system in your home.

So if your heating equipment needs a repair, **the only tool you should pick up is the phone.** A certified, highly trained and friendly technician will come to your home, size up the situation and get your system safely repaired.

**NOTE:** *If you plan to add more propane appliances to your home, please call us so our experts can ensure that your new equipment is installed properly.*



Use this guide to help you decide whether it's best to repair your system or purchase a new one.

	REPAIR	REPLACE
AGE OF SYSTEM	Less than 15 years	More than 15 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Older systems are less efficient and cost more to repair.</li></ul>
COST AND FREQUENCY OF REPAIRS	Less than 50% cost of new unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Unit still under warranty.</li><li>Less than two repairs in last 10 years.</li></ul>	50% more than cost of new unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Any repairs after warranty expires.</li><li>Any repairs after 10 years and older.</li></ul>
EFFICIENCY OF UNIT	More than 80% AFUE <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If it's still efficient, it may be worth keeping.</li></ul>	Less than 80% AFUE <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New units have ratings that exceed 90%. You save money long-term because of higher efficiency.</li></ul>

Note: AFUE stands for annual fuel utilization efficiency.

## What should you do...

### if you smell propane?

After only the quickest glance at the on-off knobs on your stove (to see if they're the source of the problem), open some windows and leave the house. **Do not smoke or use lights, appliances, telephones or cell phones.** Go to a safe location where you can report the problem to us. You should also call 911 to report the leak.



### if you smell oil?

This indicates a **need for service** because an oil heating system that has been properly maintained should never emit an oil smell. In many cases, a technician can solve this problem by adjusting the oil burner.

## Something you can't smell

**One of the most serious** problems you can encounter is a buildup of carbon monoxide (CO) in your home. Because this is an **invisible gas that cannot be smelled**, it's what you **feel** more than anything else that can alert you to a problem. CO poisoning symptoms include fatigue, dizziness and nausea.

That's why it's so important to get your system checked and serviced on a regular basis. You should also have **carbon monoxide detectors** in your home—especially in your bedrooms. If the detector sounds an alarm, ventilate the home with fresh air right away. If you feel dizzy or drowsy, leave the house immediately.

### check your vents!

Unlike older heating equipment, which vents combustion gases through the chimney, newer high-efficiency systems are typically directly vented through a side wall. Since the venting is near the ground, it could get blocked by debris.

If you have a system like this, walk around your home and check these vents regularly, especially after a storm. If vent pipes are blocked, take a broom and gently clear away any obstacles. An obstructed vent can lead to carbon monoxide buildup. It can also cause your heating system to shut down.

## 5 things you can do on your own

1.

Keep the area around heating appliances as clean and clutter-free as possible. Keep combustible materials (news-papers, bedding, clothing, rugs) **at least three feet away from heat sources.**

2.

If you have a steam boiler, **check the water gauge periodically.** Low water levels are a leading cause of shutdowns. Steam boilers should also be flushed when the water in the gauge looks rusty.

3.

**Change or clean the filters** in your furnace about once a month; a dirty filter compromises efficiency and can even result in a shutdown.

4.

Keep your registers, base-boards or radiators **clean and unobstructed** to ensure maximum heat flow.

5.

Get to know which **circuit breaker (or fuse)** controls your heating system. You should also know the location of your system's **power switches.** This will be helpful if you lose your heat and need to troubleshoot.