

Practical tips to help oil-heated homes stay warm, safe and supported this winter

As the colder months approach, The Fuel Distribution Association (UKIFDA) shares its Winter Heating Checklist, a simple, practical guide to help you get ready for winter, keep warm and avoid disruptions.

Whether it's ordering heating oil early, checking your tank, booking a boiler service, or exploring flexible payment options, this checklist assists you in planning ahead and staying in control.

It also includes guidance on supporting older people, making sure they're prioritised during cold weather or if there's a change to heating oil supplies.

Especially for rural oil-heated homes, the checklist offers clear steps to make sure you have enough heating oil and that your system runs efficiently as the weather turns colder.

Ken Cronin, CEO of UKIFDA, encourages households to plan ahead:

Preparation pays off. Getting winter-ready now can make a real difference when the cold weather sets in. UKIFDA member distributors are a trusted part of rural life. They offer reliable deliveries, expert fuel advice, flexible payment options and support through the Cold Weather Priority scheme.

This checklist is part of our commitment to fair heating choices, helping oil-heated households stay informed, supported and prepared for whatever winter brings.

Your Winter Heating Checklist



Order early and plan ahead

As we move deeper into winter, demand for heating oil can rise quickly, especially during cold snaps, heavy snow or unexpected market changes.

Ordering early means you're more likely to have enough heating oil when you need it most. When the weather changes, deliveries may take longer, and emergency deliveries are not always possible. Planning ahead helps you stay warm and avoid the stress of running low.

If you're unsure how to monitor your oil level, your local distributor can help.

[Click here to find your local UKIFDA distributor](http://www.ukifda.org/find-a-distributor)

www.ukifda.org/find-a-distributor



Check your tank

Before winter sets in, take a few minutes to look over your oil tank, its base and the surrounding area. Check for cracks, leaks or signs of rust and clear away any overgrown areas to keep access routes safe for deliveries.

A well-maintained tank is safer, more efficient and less prone to issues. Keeping it topped up also helps prevent condensation, which can lead to fuel contamination and system issues.



Book your annual boiler service

Your heating system works hardest in winter. Regular servicing keeps it running efficiently, reduces oil use and helps prevent costly breakdowns.

We recommend booking an annual service with a local OFTEC-registered engineer. They are trained and inspected to ensure the work is carried out safely and competently.

[Click to find your local OFTEC registered technician](http://www.oftec.org/find-technician)

www.oftec.org/find-technician



Choose a UKIFDA heating oil distributor

For peace of mind, make sure your heating oil supplier is a UKIFDA member.

UKIFDA distributors follow strict safety and service standards, backed by a Code of Practice and Customer Charter. They offer reliable deliveries, expert advice, and extra customer protection you might not get from non-members.

[To find your local UKIFDA distributor click here](http://www.ukifda.org/find-a-distributor)

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Your Winter Heating Checklist (Cont)



Share the Cold Weather Priority scheme

If you, or any of your relatives, friends or neighbours, are aged 75 or over, it's worth signing up for UKIFDA's Cold Weather Priority (CWP) scheme.

This free, potentially life-saving service helps UKIFDA distributors identify those who might need extra support, allowing them to prioritise deliveries during very cold weather or oil shortages.

Joining is simple – click here to find out more

www.ukifda.org/cold-weather-priority-initiative



Spread the cost or get support if you're struggling to pay

Talk to your local UKIFDA distributor about flexible payment options like monthly direct debits. Payment plans can make heating costs easier to manage, helping you stay in control, avoid unexpected bills and keep your home warm through winter.

If you're finding it difficult to afford heating oil, your distributor may also offer guidance or support to help households heat their homes during the colder months.

Support Schemes and Helpful Contacts



If you're concerned about your heating costs this winter, there are a number of support schemes available across the UK that could help. These include Winter Fuel Payments, Cold Weather Payments, and a range of funded, welfare and discretionary options provided to support households with essential heating needs.

A list of national and regional schemes is available on the UKIFDA website.

Click here for more information

www.ukifda.org/ukifda-winter-heating-checklist-2025

Organisations offering heating and energy advice

These trusted organisations offer free guidance on home heating, energy bills and extra support services:

- **Citizens Advice** – independent help with energy costs, benefits and budgeting
- **Fuel Bank Foundation** – emergency support for households at risk of fuel poverty
- **Age UK** – tailored advice for older people on staying warm and well
- **Advice Direct Scotland** – energy and welfare support for Scottish households
- **National Energy Action** – resources and campaigns to tackle fuel poverty
- **The Consumer Council Northern Ireland** – advice on energy bills and consumer rights

Winter Heating Checklist 2025

Find out more

www.ukifda.org/ukifda-winter-heating-checklist-2025