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Oil Heating Tips

Service your system annually; oil combustion produces soot that insulates heat exchanger and flue pipe surfaces over time and must be removed. This is part of an annual service routine that includes nozzle and filter replacement, safety control testing, and a combustion efficiency test (measurement of stack temperature and flue gases plus a calculation). Ask your serviceman for the efficiency test result: if it is less than 80%, ask why? If it cannot be increased with minor tuning/changes, it may make economic sense to consider replacing your heating system. New systems typically produce 85%+ efficiency test results.



Consider replacing older systems. If your system is over twenty years old, and efficiency is low, consider replacing it. It's not unusual for homeowners to experience a 20% fuel saving after upgrading from an old system to a new high-efficiency system.

Ask your serviceman if your nozzle can be 'downsized'. Smaller nozzles allow the system to run longer while burning the same amount of fuel, thus increasing the on-time and operating efficiency. This is a no-cost option.

Inspect your oil tank regularly for any sign of leakage. Oil tanks tend to leak from the bottom first; run your hand under the bottom to detect any areas of dampness. If you suspect water in the oil (particularly with outside tanks), ask your serviceman to 'dip' your tank. This test will reveal the amount of water, if any, sitting on the bottom of your tank. If necessary, it can be pumped out to prevent corrosion. Some newer tanks have the outlet at the bottom of the tank to ensure that water is removed as soon as it forms, thus preventing corrosion. Contact your fuel oil supplier for details.

Make sure the air filters are replaced/cleaned as required on warm air distribution system. With hot water distribution systems, fix leaks promptly and ensure air locks are not compromising water movement.

[Space Heating Fuel Cost Comparison Table](#)

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