



# Oily Rag

News for users of domestic heating oil in Shropshire and the Midlands

## Our Early Warning Advice

**REMEMBER LAST WINTER? THE FREEZING COLD, THE DIFFICULTIES OF HEATING OIL DELIVERIES ON ICE-COVERED, SNOW-CLOGGED ROADS? OUR EARLY WARNING ADVICE TO OAKLEY'S CUSTOMERS AS THIS WINTER APPROACHES IS TO BE PRUDENT BY ORDERING HEATING OIL IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO AVOID BEING CAUGHT BY THE FIRST COLD SNAP.**

### HIGH ENERGY PRICES

You will have noticed that heating oil prices have remained high all summer and in our view costs are unlikely to drop much. We are not alone in experiencing high prices. Gas and Electricity charges have also soared. High energy prices affect us all, and they seem here to stay.

### BE SAFE – BUY SOON

To avoid sudden price rises and anxiety about delivery lead times, we advise our customers to buy a good buffer of heating oil in September or October. These are sensible months to top up your domestic tank and so avoid any price rises and delivery delays triggered by future bad weather and pressure on supply. Ordering in the coming weeks will give you the peace of mind of knowing that your household has heating oil to withstand a cold spell.

Oakley's value and appreciate our customers and we do our utmost to keep our prices competitive. However, sudden snow or an early cold spell will inevitably create a swell in demand. Oil supply prices are



volatile and peaks in demand tend to push prices up. Our heating oil price to you will always reflect the price we have to pay to buy it.

### FRIENDLY, DEPENDABLE LOCAL SERVICE



We said in the previous Oily Rag that Oakley's long-term objective is always to build a reputation for **friendly, prompt and reliable local service**. We are an independent heating oil

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distributor, not part of a group, and we are proud of our local history.

### HEATING OIL SUPPLY THAT IS GUARANTEED

As an independent distributor, we have a policy of obtaining our heating oil only from the UK's biggest suppliers. We have already signed contracts to ensure we receive supplies to satisfy the needs of our customers throughout the winter, whatever the weather may bring. However, even with this security of supplies, if the road and rail systems grind to a halt because of the weather, we will all experience difficulties in making and receiving deliveries of heating oil.

### LONG-RANGE WEATHER

Of course, no-one can fortell the weather, but if some long-range predictions are correct, we are in for an even longer, harder winter than we experienced last time.

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# Buying Groups: what you need to know

**WITH HEATING OIL PRICES** uppermost in everyone's mind, there has been much talk about whether forming or joining Buying Groups can save money for individual householders.

Oakley's are happy to pass on any savings in delivery time and road fuel usage that we are able to make as a result of delivering to a Buying Group of people in a local area. If you run, or are thinking of forming, a buying group with near neighbours, here's what you need to know about how Oakley's prices are affected.

The optimum order from a buying group is around 17,000 litres. That is the carrying capacity of one of Oakley's larger delivery tankers. If we can deliver a tanker full to several drops in one limited area, there are the greatest savings for everyone. However, many buying groups can still make savings on lesser quantities. The price per litre that a buying group can achieve depends on the following factors:

**1 - overall round-trip distance to all the group delivery points from our nearest storage depot (Telford or Kingsbury).** The closer together the deliveries are, the greater the potential savings in driver time and transport fuel to complete the group's order. We will work out the most cost-effective route before giving you a price per litre. If buying group deliveries are many miles apart, then the savings will be smaller.

**2 - number of deliveries.** The larger the average size of each delivery, the greater the savings in driver time and transport costs that Oakley's can pass on to the group.

**3 - access for our standard tankers.** For example, if one of the group drops can be made only by a mini-tanker, we will have to factor in the extra costs of sending out a small vehicle for that particular delivery.

**4 - time restrictions.** If one of the drops is stipulated for a certain time or a specific day (for example only

after 2pm, or only on a Wednesday), we may have to visit the area more than once, eating into the time and transport discounts available to the group.

Customers who already place substantial orders as individuals (say 2,000 litres or more) may see the smallest savings in a buying group. That is because they will already be receiving a favourable pence per litre rate from Oakley's based on the volume of their order. Users who generally order smaller quantities (say 500 or 1,000 litres) could see relatively greater benefits, because their individual volume discounts will not have been as big. The price per litre they pay will reflect the overall group order volume.

**Oakley's are always interested in hearing from buying groups. If you want to talk further to us about group buying, please speak to Shirley at Oakley's Telford depot (01952 684 600) or Peter at our Kingsbury, Tamworth depot (01827 875 588).**

## Avoid the danger of runouts

**WITH WINTER APPROACHING,** the worst thing that can happen is running out of heating oil.

The Apollo electronic oil level monitor, available through Oakley's, supplies information on your heating oil level direct to you in your home. The green conical monitor can screw into 20, 32 or 38mm gauge holes in your storage tank (most plastic tanks have the appropriate aperture) and transmits the oil level to the display monitor, which plugs into a 13 amp power point of your choosing in the house. The monitor is equipped with a long-life lithium battery that carries a three-year warranty.

The Apollo unit costs £72 inc. VAT



and delivery is free with your next order of heating oil from us. Phone Oakley's to order one, or to get more details.



**YOU CAN ENSURE** best possible heat from your boiler by specifying Oakley's K•B•K, a fuel that carries special additives that work to cut sooty deposit build-ups in the boiler and to keep fuel feed lines and filters clear of sludge. If you have an Aga, Rayburn or other vapourising boiler, then Oakley's V•B•A can help minimise performance issues and cut clogging and build-up of deposits. Ask our staff next time you order fuel.



## Tanks and more from the Oakley's store



**I**F YOUR HEATING OIL STORAGE TANK is starting to show its age, then don't worry... as part of our service to customers, we can recommend independent inspectors who can check it is oil tight and safe.

Should you find you need a new tank, then Oakley's are approved stockists for top quality tanks. And we can recommend experienced local fitters. We stock the Envirostore range of rotomoulded plastic tanks, with capacities from 1000 to 8500 litres, lockable lids and unique inner trays to catch and feed any spilt oil back to the main storage tank. We can also source a range of steel tanks, from 2500 to 10000 litre capacities and we even offer 'fuel stations' with dispensing pumps and nozzles if you want road or agricultural diesel on tap.

Phone us on 01952 684 600 or 01827 875 588 for further advice.



## The pros and cons of heating oil price comparison websites

**P**UMP 'HEATING OIL PRICES' INTO Google or any other web search engine and a raft of price comparison sites floats up.

Feed them with your relevant details and all of them will come up with the best price they can. But are they actually the best or cheapest way to buy heating oil?

### Consider these facts:

- Heating oil price comparison sites are NOT heating oil distributors. They are companies who advertise a service that they then outsource to distributors.
- The price you pay is the amount they have to pay the distributor to buy and deliver the fuel, plus the comparison site profit margin on top. It can therefore be cheaper to buy direct from your local distributor.
- Householders should look at comparison site prices and be aware that the websites do not actually store heating oil or run fleets of delivery tankers. Consequently the website operators may find it difficult to deliver promptly to a household (particularly at times of high demand, like last winter).
- Local distributors have to prioritise their deliveries and plan their

routes. Oakley's try to repay customer loyalty by offering preferential delivery options to regular buyers. Occasional one-off orders that come via comparison websites may just be fulfilled as a lower priority.

We at Oakley's pride ourselves on offering competitive heating oil prices and building long-lasting relationships with customers throughout our delivery areas. We strive to deliver heating oil when you want it and to provide friendly backup advice and extras such as Budget Payment Plans, Direct Debits, replacement tanks, fuel additives and many more important accessories.

### IT CAN PAY TO DEAL DIRECT

So next time you're buying heating oil, be sure to ask us for a price. You should not be surprised at how competitive it is to deal direct and locally!

Phone us on 01952 684 600 (Telford) or 01827 875 588 (Kingsbury) during office hours. Or out of hours, request a quote via [www.oakleysfueloils.co.uk](http://www.oakleysfueloils.co.uk), remembering to provide your address and postcode, quantity needed, any special delivery details (ie difficult access, small tanker). We will reply to you with a competitive price – and you are assured we will deliver promptly and reliably when you want, with a courteous smile.

## Let us smooth your payments

**O**NE OF THE ADVANTAGES of ordering regularly from Oakley's is that we can help you manage your heating oil bills with our Budget Payment Programme and Direct Debits. Most people take at least two deliveries of oil a year and we will re-assess your usage and payments pre-winter (September or October) and in the spring (April, May). We will then adjust your monthly payments according to your usage and current costs of heating oil. This can smooth out the winter high and summer low, making it easier for you to control your household budget. Ask about it the next time you order.



## Our Early Warning Advice (from Page 1)

### EMERGENCY SUPPLY

If foul weather seriously disrupts our deliveries again, we have an emergency contingency plan to repeat what we did last year at our Telford depot. We will make an Emergency Heating Oil Tank available so Oakley's customers can collect small quantities to keep their home heating systems going. We must emphasise that we will only provide this service as a last resort. Ideally, householders should avoid letting their heating oil supply run too low.

## Putting thieves in a spin

**H**HEATING OIL THEFT is a major concern for all users and you have to do all you can to deter thieves.

Oakley's Fuel Oils can now supply Tanklock Spinsecure products to increase your oil tank security.

Spinsecure have designed a unique, innovative locking device to fit a standard threaded two inch fill point inlet on a storage tank. Using 'Spinsecure' technology, when the cap is locked, it spins freely and, unlike most padlocked locking caps, it is almost impossible to remove or force with a crowbar. With over 50,000 combinations, Tanklock keeps your tank contents safe. Each Spinsecure costs £53.99 inc. VAT and delivery is free with a fuel delivery from Oakley's. Phone Oakley's on 01952 684 600 (Telford) or 01827 875 588 (Tamworth).



## Oakley's offer new way to control water in your storage tank

**W**ATER IN HEATING OIL storage tanks can spell trouble for householders, because it encourages the growth of a sludge which can block the feed to the boiler or clog filters and the boiler burner.

In prolonged very cold weather, water lying on the bottom of the tank can freeze solid and actually block the outlet pipe feeding your heating boiler.

Oakley's have sourced a simple, low-cost product to help householders limit the water in their tanks. The Tank Dryer is a cloth-covered rod that can be lowered on an attached cord through the filler hole to sit on the bottom of your tank. There, its silica gel absorbs any water while leaving your oil untouched. After a few days or weeks, the Tank Dryer can be withdrawn, taking the absorbed water with it.

You can use Tank Dryers as often as necessary to remove water from the bottom of a tank.

Tank Dryers are available from either of our depots, priced £17.95 each inc. VAT. Delivery is free with a fuel delivery from Oakley's. Phone us on 01952 684 600 (Telford) or 01827 875 588 (Tamworth) for details.



Halesfield 19, Telford TF7 4QT  
and

Warwickshire Oil Storage, Kingsbury,  
Tamworth B78 2EF

E: mail@oakleysfueloils.co.uk

## KEEPING IN TOUCH...

The best way to find out about Oakley's fuel price deals and special offers is by checking our website, [www.oakleysfueloils.co.uk](http://www.oakleysfueloils.co.uk) regularly. It is also where you will find future issues of Oily Rag. We are trying to cut the environmental impact of having so much printed material and will notify you when we publish a new issue online by putting a note on your invoices and statements.