



NEWS RELEASE

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BUY OIL EARLY FOR WINTER

Oil distribution industry trade association, FPS (Federation of Petroleum Suppliers) is urging homeowners and businesses that use oil for heating to get themselves prepared for the winter and not be caught out by the bad weather that was experienced by many last year.

Now is the time when householders and businesses should be starting to think about what their needs are going to be for the winter and should be prepared. Last year many left filling up to the last minute and were caught out by the bad weather in November and December. Filling up your tank now is a good idea, especially as the price of oil is lower and demand is not as high. The increased demand during the winter months and especially in the run-up to Christmas, usually means delivery delays so the FPS is urging people to make sure they don't get caught out by leaving it too late.

Chief Executive of the FPS, Mark Askew comments: "Our members understand that times are hard and people may want to wait before ordering fuel but many oil distributors run payment schemes to encourage customers to have bigger, less frequent deliveries but then spread the payments out over the whole year, helping both financially and ensuring homeowners don't run out of fuel when winter hits."

The message being promoted by the FPS to buy oil early is being backed by Government Ministers and key consumer groups.



Commenting on the initiative, Energy Minister Charles Hendry said: “I welcome this campaign by consumer groups and industry to encourage heating oil consumers to stock up early this winter.”

“The early snow last December shows that it is better to stock up before the winter, when suppliers have spare delivery capacity and prices are likely to be lower than when demand is higher.

Clearly, leaving orders to the last minute risks longer delivery times, especially if cold weather increases demand and disrupts transport making deliveries difficult.”

Mark Askew adds: “Our members remind customers that they should order early, but people have got into a pattern of ordering the minimum quantity. Customers last year had a trend of ordering 500 litres and then ran out in the middle of the worst snow, when tanker drivers just couldn’t get to them. We are trying to educate people to think ahead and be prepared.

In winter, the UK can also experience shortages of heating oil at terminals. Demand is obviously governed by the weather and a prolonged cold snap, such as was experienced last winter, means that the terminals are unable to provide product quickly enough and consumers can run out whilst waiting for deliveries as distributors have to go further afield to get supplies.”

ENDS

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EDITORS NOTE

This press release is part of a coordinated campaign by consumer groups and industry to encourage heating oil consumers to stock up early on winter supplies when prices tend to be less and suppliers have spare delivery capacity. Leaving orders to the last minute during the winter risks longer delivery times and higher prices.

About FPS

FPS (Federation of Petroleum Suppliers) represents the majority of oil distribution companies in Great Britain, who are, in the main, small family businesses responsible for deliveries of almost all the home heating oil used in Great Britain, in addition to marine, agricultural, commercial, industrial and forecourt deliveries. There are currently over 180 members of the FPS across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.