

## REPLACING YOUR OLD BOILER

If you have a gas or oil boiler and it is over 10 – 15 years old, it is likely to be very energy inefficient. To encourage us to replace older boilers, the Government has funded a scrappage scheme. If you don't know the age of your boiler you can find this out from the SEDBUK database [www.sedbuk.com](http://www.sedbuk.com). This gives the efficiency of boilers but also the dates each model was made, which can be useful for working out the age of a boiler. The website can be quirky for older boilers.

If your boiler is 15 years old or more then it is likely to be a G rated boiler. This is a boiler which is less than 70 % efficient. Replacing an old G rated boiler with a new A rated condensing boiler with a full set of heating controls can save up to a quarter on your heating bills straight away and can save up to 1.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. To determine if you are able to access the Government's £400 scrappage grant, contact the local Energy Saving Trust office on 0800 512 012.

All replacement boilers in Scotland now have to be condensing boilers. These are available as standard "system" boilers and condensing combis.

"A" rated condensing boiler models are over 90 % efficient and are not always more expensive than the less efficient models.

You can save on the costs of a boiler by having one that's not any bigger than required, or by having a modulating boiler. Modulating boilers automatically adjust for the heat required.

Installers generally overestimate the capacity of boiler required. Unless you have had an extension built since the existing boiler was installed, you will not require a new boiler with a higher capacity than the existing boiler. However if you opt for a combi boiler it's best to have a capacity of at least 82,000 BTUs.

In addition to saving on the cost of the boiler, having a boiler the correct size will be cheaper to run and will last longer, especially if it is linked to a room thermostat.

At the same time as replacing an old boiler, it is well worth upgrading the heating controls to get the most benefit from the system. A key issue for homes with hot water tanks is to have a separate thermostat fitted around the middle of the tank in most systems.

Modern heating systems with boilers require both an overall room thermostat and thermostatic radiator valves (TRV) on each radiator apart from in the same room as the room thermostat. Programmable room thermostats are also available. You may

wish to have a 7 day programmer and some provide the facility to set the heating and hot water at totally independent times. Many households overestimate how much hot water is needed and the hot water rarely needs to be heated as long as space heating, especially in the winter.

If you have an instant electric shower, you would make further fuel savings if you had these showers supplied with hot water heated by through the new boiler. These are much more economical to run than instant electric showers.

### **Condensing Boiler with a Room Thermostat**

To ensure maximum boiler efficiency, work out by trial and error the lowest settings you need for each time of year. If the settings are too low, there will not be enough heat available to the house as a whole. Non condensing boilers with room thermostats should be set at high.