

Ultra-Low Sulfur Heating Oil

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: What is ultra-low sulfur heating oil?

A: Ultra-low sulfur heating oil (ULSHO) is heating oil with 15 parts per million (ppm) sulfur content.

Q: What is sulfur content?

A: Sulfur content is the amount of sulfur in heating oil. This is measured by parts per million (ppm).

Q: What are the differences between ULSHO and traditional heating oil?

A: ULSHO and traditional heating oil are petroleum products distilled from crude oil. ULSHO only has 15 ppm sulfur content. Traditional heating oil previously sold in Pennsylvania in 2015 has up to 2,000 ppm sulfur content.

	ULTRA-LOW SULFUR HEATING OIL <i>As of September 1, 2020</i>	TRADITIONAL HEATING OIL <i>As of September 1, 2015</i>
Sulfur content	15 PPM	2,000 PPM
Reliable delivery from local dealers	✓	✓
Warm, efficient burn	✓	✓
Extended equipment lifespan	✓	
Greater operating efficiency	✓	
Reduced emissions	✓	

Q: How is ULSHO made?

A: Refiners use the process of hydrodesulfurization (HDS) to remove the sulfur component of diesel/heating oil fuels.

Q: Will I be able to purchase traditional heating oil instead of ULSHO?

A: No. The state of Pennsylvania adopted a regulation that will transition all heating oil sold in the state to ULSHO. During 2020, oil dealers will gradually transition from traditional heating oil to ULSHO. All heating oil dealers will comply with this requirement as of September 1, 2020.

Q: How will oil consumers in PA benefit from ULSHO?

A: Ultra-low sulfur heating oil is very beneficial for oil consumers. These benefits include:

- ULSHO burns cleaner than traditional heating oil. It produces less pollution in the air we breathe.
- Your heating system will run more efficiently on ULSHO. This will lower buildup in your equipment, which will reduce the number of cleanings needed. Increased efficiency and a cleaner burn will translate to fewer service visits and less money spent on service work.
- The transition will not cause any added costs, because ULSHO is compatible with current oil heating equipment.

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Q: What are the environmental benefits of ULSHO?

A: Researchers have found that lower sulfur content in heating oil significantly reduces the amount of nitrogen oxide, sulfur oxide, and particulate matter emissions. These emissions are linked to many environmental and public health issues. Fewer emissions in our air is better for the environment and our public health.

Q: How does ULSHO improve efficiency?

A: Ultra-low sulfur heating oil's reduced sulfur content produces a cleaner burn, which can slightly increase thermal heat output. Sulfur, which naturally occurs in fuel, does not burn. As fuel burns, sulfur will build up on the heat exchanger, which insulates the heating system from the flame. Lowering the sulfur content of heating oil reduces the amount of sulfur buildup and minimizes the need for heat exchanger cleanings. A cleaner heat exchanger will help your system run more efficiently and help you save money on service work.

Q: Is ULSHO compatible with my oil heat system and storage tank?

A: Yes. Ultra-low sulfur heating oil is compatible with current oil heating equipment. Oil heat consumers will not need to make any equipment upgrades or modifications.

Q: Does ULSHO cost more?

A: ULSHO prices are comparable to traditional heating oil prices and are susceptible to change, like any other fuel on the market. In the long run, ULSHO provides customers with greater annual savings than traditional oil heat.

Q: How does ULSHO help me save money?

A: Because ULSHO burns cleaner, your heating system will run more efficiently. This means it takes less heating fuel for your equipment to produce the same amount of heat and your fuel supply will last longer. ULSHO also lowers the frequency of necessary services, like professional cleaning. All of these factors add up to savings.

Q: What do I have to do to prepare for the change?

A: ULSHO is compatible with current oil heating equipment. This means no upgrades, no additional inspections, and no increased spending. You will continue to enjoy the convenience and reliability of heating with oil.

Q: When will I start receiving ultra-low sulfur heating oil?

A: Some heating oil companies have already been delivering ULSHO for a number of years. In early 2020, the supply system in Pennsylvania began transitioning to ULSHO. As of September 1, 2020, all heating oil companies will be required to purchase ULSHO which in turn will be supplied to consumers.