

GRAB THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE ENERGY AND STIMULATE THE ECONOMY

Until now, Massachusetts didn't have a dedicated energy conservation program for oil heat customers, other than low-income households, who qualify for the free federal low-income weatherization program. Moderate- and higher-income oil consumers could get their electricity energy audit from MassSave, which would help them save electricity, but there was very little available to save on heating oil. At long last, Conservation Services Group (CSG) will begin accepting applications in the coming weeks for the Oil Heat Efficiency Program, a rebate program financed by federal stimulus funds to help residents who heat with oil use and spend less.

The new pilot enables moderate-income working families to upgrade their heating systems by providing incentives to help defray their out of pocket costs. The program is available to Massachusetts residents in the 60% to 120% of median income bracket who own and occupy

a 1- to 4-family building. Participants can replace an oil-fired heating system with a qualifying high-efficiency oil-fired system. The pilot program expects to serve about 500 consumers.

CSG is working with the Massachusetts Oilheat Council to train dozens of oil heating service technicians in energy efficiency and the "house-as-system" approach that will maximize the benefits of the upgrades. They will collaborate with the Massachusetts Low Income Energy Affordability Network to qualify candidates for eligibility.

The Oil Heat Efficiency Program will provide rebates of up to \$4,000 on high efficiency, oil-fired, forced hot water boilers, warm air furnaces and indirect-storage hot water tanks. Consumers should contact their oil heat professional or Mass. Oilheat Council (800-722-0623) with any questions about the Oil Heat Efficiency Program and to determine their eligibility. ★

NOT THE BEST YEAR, BUT STILL SAVING

We all got a break this past winter as it was 8% warmer than a "normal" winter. Many of us saved money by conserving energy and the warm weather helped everyone.

The wholesale markets ignored the reduced demand and oil prices made a run to over \$80 per barrel for crude oil. While this pales in comparison to the \$140 reached in the middle of 2008, it is still very high compared to historical averages. The rally drove our prices to

almost \$3 per gallon at their peak points in October and April, with our members paying an average of \$2.60 per gallon, our second most expensive winter on a per gallon basis.

Meanwhile, oil dealers realized they were losing volume and hunkered down and lowered their margins to fend off further loss of customers. This spawned some local price wars last summer and fall, with many days showing the Mass Energy's price close to the state average instead of



Don't sign up for this program if you qualify for fuel assistance—if so, you can get your home completely weatherized for free. The low-income weatherization program is available through your local Community Action Agency (which you can find by dialing 617-357-6012). If you rent, your landlord will have to apply, but your income level may help your landlord qualify, as well. So talk to your landlord about this terrific program, which helps you afford to live there and helps them as well, as weatherization increases the value and longevity of their building and reduces tenant turnover.

our typical 15-30 cents less than regular full service dealers. Ultimately this past heating season, our prices averaged at 22 cents less than the state average, but not as great compared to the 40 cents saved the previous season.

Our price-on-the-day program was challenged and we heard from some of our members early last fall expressing their displeasure. However, beginning in the middle of November the price concerns waned as dealers began to

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Energy
Conservation
Saves
Money

ALL ABOUT THE DISCOUNT HEATING OIL PROGRAM

To help you decide to renew your *Discount Heating Oil Service* membership for the upcoming heating season, here are some details about the program and how it works.

The program hinges on group buying power: Mass Energy brings together Massachusetts heating oil consumers to bargain for better prices and service from select full service oil dealers. We act on the members' behalf: our nonprofit negotiates a deal to set the maximum markup an oil dealer may charge over the wholesale price. That's how the Discount Heating Oil Service makes home heating more affordable, saving consumers \$150-\$350 a season over the statewide average, every year. That's about 15-30 cents a gallon.

Prices fluctuate daily according to the wholesale price or the market. The set markup gives the dealers a fair price, but makes sure they don't make a windfall when wholesale prices come down: those savings come to you instead. It also ensures members the best fair price in the middle of winter, when people are rarely shopping around (which is why our price might not look as good in September, when it's time to renew, as it will by the end of the heating season).

We do not offer cap prices because, over time, consumers who stay with the program always win. They pay the price of the day without the added expense of the insurance built into locking your price or buying oil up front. The dealers' cap prices are designed to make a profit

Now is the Time to Sign Up for BUDGET PAYMENT PLANS

To deal with the risk of changing oil prices or a cold winter, members can sign up for their dealers' budget payment plans to spread the cost out over the year and avoid unexpected high bills. This is an optional service and guidelines vary from dealer to dealer. Remember that you have to sign up now, before the heating season begins, in order to participate in these programs.

no matter what happens to the wholesale price. Consumers, who chose a cap, over time, pay extra for the dealer taking the risk. Our members don't. ✨

SPREAD THE WORD - GET \$50 FOR REFERRALS



As a small nonprofit with a big mission, we rely on the help of our friends to spread the word about Discount Heating Oil. So we are asking you to ask your friends and family to sign up for the program.

Every member who brings in a new member will receive \$50 when the new member takes their first delivery of a tank of oil, as long as it is within one year of your referral.

New Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages

Mass Energy has ramped up our presence in social media by making dedicated Facebook, twitter, and LinkedIn pages. Find us online to stay tuned for what's happening with energy programs and events in your community. We are called "Mass Energy" on all pages.

facebook

twitter

LinkedIn



MEET YOUR LOCAL WIND TURBINES!

Take the chance to see local wind turbines up close and personal this fall at our *Harvest the Wind* turbine festivals. We will gather members and friends at the turbine in Princeton, MA on Sept. 11th and Medford, MA on Oct. 17th for a day of fun and education. Stay tuned for details. ✨

A gathering of people who support the development of wind turbines at the Hull Wind Turbine

HEATING OIL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

IMPORTANT NOTES

1. You can check the status of your membership by visiting our Members Only website, www.massenergy.org/extranet. If you wish to change the name or address on your account, we will need additional information to renew your membership. Call our office today at 800-287-3950 for assistance.
2. If you are a member of *New England GreenStart* or *New England Wind Fund* only (not a member of the heating oil program) you do not need to renew.

THREE EASY WAYS TO RENEW YOUR HEATING OIL MEMBERSHIP

1. **Online:** www.massenergy.org
2. **Phone:** Call our office at 800-287-3950
3. **Mail:** Fill out the form below and mail to: Mass Energy, 284 Amory Street, Boston, MA 02130

HEATING OIL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

MEMBER INFORMATION

Name _____ Membership # _____

Mailing Street Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail (*make sure we have your most recent e-mail*) _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

(Please select one. Dues are not tax-deductible and are not refundable.)

\$20 Basic \$10 Fixed Income & Retiree \$45 Three year \$25 Non-residential Customer

Note: If you are a Fuel Assistance Client, please call Mass Energy (800-287-3950) to find out how you can renew for FREE.

DONATIONS

Yes, I will make a tax-deductible donation to support Mass Energy's Oil Bank for emergency heating assistance.

\$10 \$50 \$100 \$300 \$500 Other \$ _____

PAYMENT

Total amount (membership fee and/or donations) \$ _____

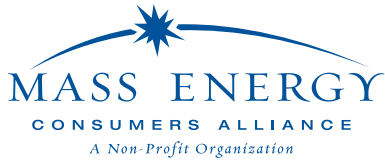
My check is enclosed. Please make checks payable to "Mass Energy"

Please charge my: Mastercard Discover Visa

Card Number _____ Exp Date _____

Signature _____

Payments to the Massachusetts Energy Consumers Alliance for membership are not tax-deductible. However, contributions to the Massachusetts Energy Consumer Alliance for the Massachusetts Energy Oil Bank are tax-deductible for federal income tax purposes. Dues are non-refundable.



Making energy more affordable and environmentally sustainable since 1982

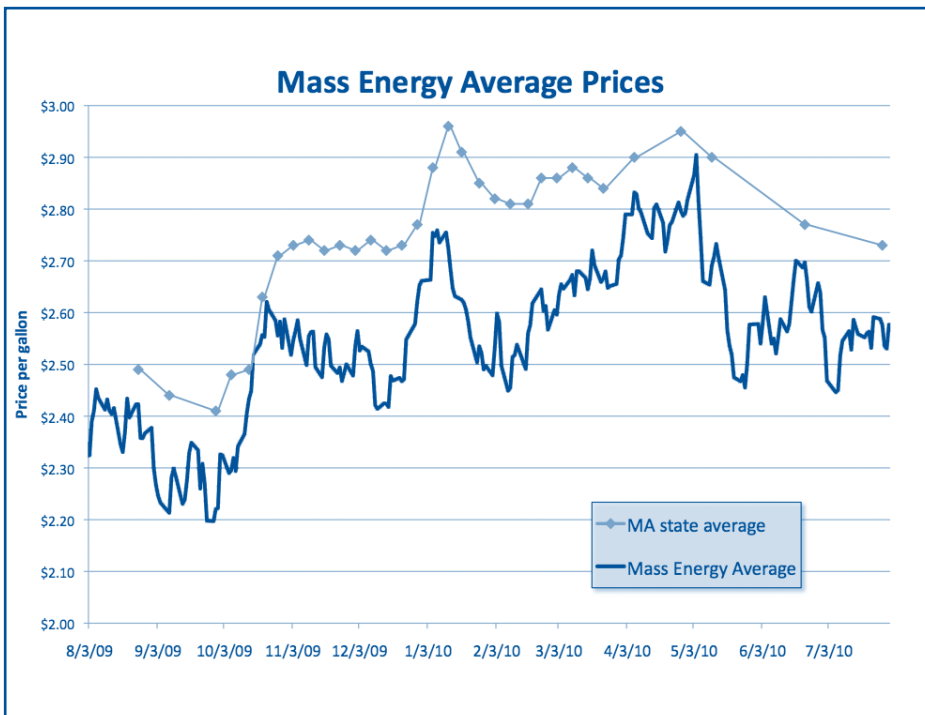
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Not the Best Year *(continued from front)*



restore their margins. Our price graph illustrates how our savings were the best during the coldest months when we all use the most oil. As usual, once most people stop shopping, the dealer's margins edge upward.

Remember, our program keeps our dealers margins the same all year round. You typically take five deliveries a year and if our price does not seem that great for one given delivery, it won't always prove to be the case. It worked for our members this last winter and it has worked for the past 28 winters.

Heading into this season the price wars have resumed. Please don't be fooled by a one-time price that is the same or less than ours. You may wake up in the cold of winter and realize the \$10 you saved in August is costing you \$30-\$60 in January. ✨