

BUILDING REGULATIONS & LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

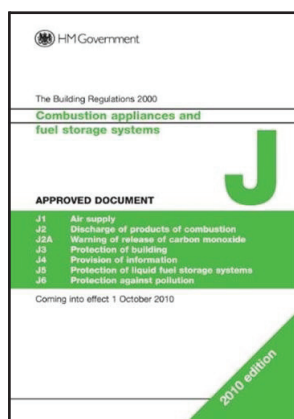


The Building Regulations in England and Wales promote standards for design and construction which apply to most new buildings and alterations to existing buildings. They control methods and materials used in construction, fire protection and the operation, safety and efficiency of services within the building. Building Regulations vary between countries. *A separate version of this advice sheet is available for people living in Scotland and Northern Ireland on the HETAS website.*

This leaflet deals with the requirements for new and replacement solid fuel systems in existing or extended dwellings. It provides a basic understanding of what is and isn't permitted under the Regulations. It is not a guide to installation. We would always recommend that advice is sought from a HETAS registered competent person to discuss the merits and suitability of different systems.

Approved Document J

Approved Document J provides guidance and requirements with respect to the installation of solid fuel burning appliances. It covers:



- Guidance on the construction and size of the hearth
- Details of the dimensions, position and construction of the chimney and methods for testing.
- Ventilation requirements for solid fuel appliances
- Proximity of combustible material to an installation
- Notice Plates, their fitting and location

Chimneys and Lining

There is no regulation requiring an *existing* chimney to be lined. However, the installer of any appliance must satisfy themselves that the chimney is free from defects and suitable for its intended use. If any work undertaken on the chimney (including installation of a new liner) is done in conjunction with the installation of a heating appliance, then that work is a controlled service and must be undertaken by a Competent Person or approved by your Local Area Building Control. Note also that any alteration to a fireplace which renders it capable of being used for a different fuel – e.g. from gas to solid fuel, is subject to Building Regulations.

For more information see "Chimneys & Lining" advice sheet.



Selection of Central Heating and Hot Water Systems

Regulations state the type of heating and hot water system that may be put into new dwellings or as replacements in existing dwellings. The consideration is to have the most energy and carbon efficient installation possible. Choosing the right system and fuel is therefore important. Complex calculations have to be made when designing new dwellings to ensure they reach carbon emissions targets. Wood fuel is generally accepted as carbon neutral and the choice of a wood burning stove in a new build house will allow more flexibility with other energy and carbon saving elements. Solid mineral fuels have a higher carbon content and compensatory measures may have to be taken elsewhere if you are considering a system based on this fuel type.

Minimum Efficiencies for Solid Fuel Appliances

All solid fuel appliances must meet minimum efficiency requirements as specified in part L of the Building Regulations. All HETAS approved appliances conform to these requirements and are listed in the official HETAS Guide. These efficiencies are displayed as 'gross'. You may find some efficiencies quoted in appliance manufacturers' literature as 'net'. As a guide, to convert to 'gross' simply multiply the 'net' figure by 0.91 (for wood burning appliances) or 0.98 (for solid mineral fuel burning appliances). Appliances not approved by HETAS may still be suitable, but must be verified by your installer prior to installation.

Rules for Selecting Replacement Appliances

When replacing any heating appliance, the new appliance must be more efficient in terms of its carbon emissions than its predecessor. This may not necessarily mean that the actual appliance efficiency is higher as the fuel type is also an important consideration and may offset a reduction in appliance efficiency, e.g. when replacing an oil, gas or mineral solid fuel heating appliance with one that can only burn a renewable fuel such as wood (firewood, pellets, briquettes and wood chip).

Solid Fuel Appliance Installation

In England & Wales, there are two routes to achieve a safe and legal installation:

1. Installation by a HETAS registered installer

When a HETAS registered engineer has completed an installation, they self certify their work as compliant with legal requirements. The consumer will receive a certificate of compliance and the installation is notified to the local authority so that there is filed evidence of the engineer completing work that is compliant with building regulations.

2. Local Area Building Control approval

Building Control consent is required prior to installation or replacement of a solid fuel appliance and also once the installation is complete. A Building Control body or approved inspector will visit the installation and deem whether it is safe for use.

More Information

The Solid Fuel Association consumer helpline provides helpful advice of any aspect of solid fuel appliance installation and use.

Tel: 08456 014406

Web: www.solidfuel.co.uk



The planning portal website has access to all of the Approved Documents. This site also allows you to search for your local Building Control department.

Web: www.planningportal.gov.uk



You can find your nearest registered installer on the HETAS website. HETAS run the only competent persons scheme in the UK that specialises in solid fuel and wood burning appliances.

Tel: 0845 634 5626

Web: www.hetas.co.uk

