



Water in your oil storage tank?

This is most unlikely to have been delivered with the fuel

Water has a very low solubility in fuel oils and, if present in a dispersed form, would create a distinctly hazy product that would immediately fail to meet the specified criterion for the product [required by the British Standard to be clear & bright].

Delivery tankers are not flushed with water, or water-based cleaning agents, and oil distribution facilities are fitted with high offtake points and comprehensive water trapping and filtration systems.

The principal sources of water in oil storage tanks are rainwater and condensation. Rainwater can enter a tank if openings in the tank are left open, seals are faulty or damaged or the integrity of the tank has been compromised by rusting or by perforations, cracks or splits in the body of the tank. Condensation will often occur naturally as the result of temperature differences between the tank/oil and the surroundings.

It is part of a delivery driver's training to ensure that all of the openings used when filling a tank and gauging its contents are closed securely after the filling operation has been completed.

Your heating system service engineer should be reminded to check for, and remove, any water from the tank during servicing of the system and can advise on the probable source of the water. If the most probable cause is condensation, then it may be necessary to increase the frequency of checking for, and removing, water, especially during autumn/winter periods.

If the cause is a failure of the tank, or an associated component, then this will need to be repaired or replaced before further deliveries of heating oil are made, to avoid a reoccurrence of the problem.

[NOTE: Environment Agency requirements prohibit the refilling of an oil storage tank that is damaged in such a way that it may leak or rupture after filling.]

Where the tank is still under warranty, the installer, or the tank manufacturer, should be informed of the nature of the failure and a claim made under the warranty.

Although a water ingress problem is unlikely to be the fault of your oil supplier, a Member of the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers will do all that is reasonable to assist you with resolving the problem and can carry out water dipping tests and water removal at your request, although a charge may have to be made for this service.

[NOTE: The removal of water, or any other contamination, from an oil storage tank is a specialist function and correct disposal of the resulting waste material is controlled by environmental legislation.]