

How to...make the most of your night storage heater

(apologies to those of you with gas central heating...a feature on how to bleed radiators will be in the next newsletter....!)

Night storage heaters work by storing up heat overnight in special bricks in each heater, then releasing the heat gradually throughout the day. The advantage of this is that as the most energy is used overnight when the electricity rate is at its cheapest, the heaters are efficient to run. The disadvantage is that unless this heat is used carefully during the day, the heaters will be cold by the evening.

"Night-time" is between 11.30pm and 6.30am. This is known as "Economy 7"

The heaters should **start charging automatically** each night without the need to switch them on (providing the input is above 1), however the temperature can be adjusted by two dials (usually found at the top or on the side of the heater). One should be marked "input" and the other "output".

(If the labels have rubbed off, look through the grill of the heater and move each dial in turn and see which one moves the flap inside. That dial is the "output" dial)

Turn both dials down to the lowest setting in the summer to stop the heaters coming on

Input

The "input" dial controls how much electricity is absorbed into the bricks overnight and therefore how hot the heater gets. **Typically, this should be set between 4 and 6.** If the weather is cold turn this dial up, if the weather is warm turn it down.

Output

The "output" dial controls how quickly the heater releases the heat. This should be **set as low as possible during the day and whenever the property is empty.** If the output is above 3 all day, you will have run out of heat by the evening. By having the output low during the day, it can then be turned up in the evening if needed.

Remember to turn the output down again before you go to bed, or you will have no heat by the next day.

Boost

Some heaters (usually the larger ones) also have a "booster switch" which provides instant heat. You should **only use this when the heaters are completely cold,** as it is very expensive to use.

Tip: As Night storage heaters cannot produce instant heat, only adjust the dials by 1 or 2 settings per day to avoid being left on warm days with too much heat or cold days with not enough

Final trick of the trade

When a night storage heater is used for the first time after being unused for more than a month, it needs **three nights charge** to bring up its efficiency again. During this time, try and keep the **input as high as possible, and the output as low as possible** to "charge" the bricks. After this time you can start to adjust the input/output dials a little to better suit you.

REMEMBER!! You must never cover a heater or put anything against it! Apart from risking starting a fire, each heater is fitted with a safety-cut out which shuts the heater down automatically if it overheats.