

New Part J for 2010

Part J of the Building Regulations is concerned with Combustion Appliances and Fuel Storage Systems, in other words boilers, room heaters and oil tanks. There are a number of health and safety hazards associated with these if not correctly installed, including fire, explosion, carbon monoxide poisoning and pollution. It's therefore important that this part of the Building Regulations, and the guidance supporting it, is periodically reviewed in the light of changes in technology and standards as well as operational experience and new research.

There has only been one change to Part J of the actual Building Regulations. That is a legal requirement to make appropriate provision for detection and warning of carbon monoxide release. This requirement applies whenever a fixed combustion appliance is provided, as a new installation or a replacement, in a dwelling. The guidance in the new Approved Document J is that this requirement will be satisfied for a solid fuel appliance up to a rated output of 50 kW by fitting a specific type of carbon monoxide detector in the same room. This applies to ALL solid fuel appliances including open fires, solid fuel room heaters, log burners, pellet stoves and boilers, whether or not the appliance is claimed to be room-sealed.

Aside from this new guidance supporting the new requirement, other guidance has been added or amended to support existing requirements. One new addition to the Approved Document is specific guidance on permanent access provisions for visual inspection of concealed horizontal flues. This addresses the situation of "boxed-in" flues from boilers mounted on internal walls that can't easily be inspected to verify flue integrity. Access for inspection is already a requirement Regulation 27 of the Gas Safety Installation and Use Regulations 1998.

An important change to the Approved Document is an increase in the area of permanent ventilation openings required for open flued appliances in modern airtight properties (those with an air permeability of less than $5.0 \text{ m}^3/(\text{h} \cdot \text{m}^2) @ 50 \text{ Pa}$). Previous guidance on requirements for combustion air assumed a certain level of ventilation through cracks and holes in the building fabric that are being progressively eliminated in new buildings to comply with the requirements of Part L and the Code for Sustainable Homes. A new Appendix F provides guidance on whether an existing property is likely to fall into this category.

There is a slight relaxation of hearth requirements for some solid fuel appliances and additional recommendations for flues in thatched roof properties to reduce the risk of fire.

Other changes are mainly clarifications or updates to guidance in the 2002 Approved Document J. Solid biofuel is now explicitly included within Section 2 and liquid biofuel (and biofuel blends) within Section 4. Also, many of the references have changed since 2002, particularly the applicable product standards for chimneys and flues, with flue designations being explained in a new Appendix G.

As with all Building Regulations changes, there are transitional provisions. In brief, any work started before 1st October, or for which a building control application was made before that date, can follow the old regulations. Otherwise, the new regulations and guidance will apply from 1st October 2010.

Further information and promotional events

BSRIA is organising an event to promote the changes to the guidance in Approved Document J and the implications for building services practitioners. In addition, there will be a live webinar, and a recorded presentation will be made available online for the duration of the promotional period. CLG will also issue an FAQ document based on questions received via the web page and the events.

Details of the events and web presentation will appear at www.bsria.co.uk/goto/partjpromotion2010. The revised Approved Document can be downloaded from the www.planningportal.gov.uk. Promotion of the new Approved Document is being coordinated by BSRIA.

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