

OMA

OIL HEAT ■ MANUFACTURERS ■ ASSOCIATION

TECHNICAL UPDATE

USEPA AFFIRMS THAT MODERN OIL EQUIPMENT IS CLEAN-BURNING

The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) recently acknowledged that modern oil burners are much **cleaner burning** than older models. The updated (October 1996) USEPA emission factor for particulates from oil burners is 7-1/2 times lower than previous ratings. OMA submitted tests by Brookhaven National Laboratory and other sources to the USEPA and requested an update to the oil emission standard. This is an important revision. The new USEPA emission ratings affirm that oil burners are now one of the cleanest combustion sources in the US.

Particulate emissions include soot and smoke which are formed by incomplete burning of the fuel. Modern oil burners typically use *flame retention heads* and *higher air pressure* to lower soot and smoke and improve efficiency compared to older designs. The chart on the right shows that the USEPA emission rating for oil burners has been **reduced from 3 to 0.4** pounds of particulates per 1000 gallons of fuel burned. This is approaching near zero levels. Oil burners now emit particulates at a rate that is similar to the levels produced by natural gas burners over the past ten years (USEPA Publication AP-42 - 4th Edition).

This revision is important for two reasons:

1. It refutes the misconception that oil burners are "dirty". In fact, properly adjusted oil equipment produces about **10 to 20 times less** particulates than some older burners. While oil burners emissions have been lower for many years, this fact is now fully supported by a USEPA publication.

2. New ambient air quality standards are now being proposed by the USEPA that may restrict particulate emissions from combustion equipment in the future. Residential oil burner emission ratings are now already much lower than the previous ratings, which will make it easier for oil equipment to comply with more stringent regulations in the future.

This is an important accomplishment by OMA which benefits the oil heat industry. All oil heat company employees, homeowners, realtors, legislators, and environmental groups should be informed about the advances in oil burner cleanliness.

