

Planning permission and building regulations

You may not need planning permission to install a wood-fuelled boiler, but you should always check - permitted development rights have made installations much simpler. All new wood heating systems have to comply with building regulations, and the best way to ensure this is to use an installer who is a member of a Competent Person Scheme.

Planning permission

Installing renewable energy technologies, such as biomass boilers, has been made a lot simpler thanks to permitted development rights. Read about these at the government's site for UK legislation:

[Download a PDF of the Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(Domestic Microgeneration\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2010 for full details.](#)

You must check with your local authority in case other conditions apply, but in general wood-burning boilers and stoves are permitted as long as:

- ✔ flues on the rear or side elevation of the building are no more than a metre above the highest part of the roof
- ✔ in a conservation area or a World Heritage site, the flue is not be fitted on the principal or side elevation if it would be visible from a highway
- ✔ the building is not listed or in a designated area (in which case you may need permission for internal alterations too)
- ✔ in Scotland, the flue is not in an Air Quality Management Area.

If the project also requires an outside building to store fuel or related equipment the same rules apply to that building as for other extensions and garden outbuildings.

[The Scottish government's Planning Portal has useful information that may help you.](#)

Building regulations

All new wood heating systems have to comply with Building Regulations. The UK government's planning portal has a PDF of the Domestic Building Compliance Guide 2010 (see section 5).

However, the simplest way to comply is to use a member of a Competent Person Scheme such as HETAS. You can find a list of all the relevant schemes [here](#). If you use a member of an appropriate scheme your installer will ensure your system is safe and legal, and certify that your system complies, so there will be no need for you to contact the local building control office.

Smokeless zones

If you live in a smoke control area, you will need to use an exempt appliance. These are available for all types of wood heating system. To find out whether you are in a smoke control area, contact the Environmental Health or Protection department of your Local Authority. [Find your local authority.](#)

Finding an installer

We strongly recommend that you choose a system and installer that are certified by the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS); this will help you to ensure the quality of your installation and the level of customer care that you receive. To be eligible for payments through any financial support scheme, your system must be installed by an MCS-certified installer.

Next steps

Search for [products](#) and [installers](#) at the MCS website.

