

# SNIFE

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### **Government Announces Plans for "Green Deal"**

- Green Deal scheme will kick start £14bn investment over the next decade, supporting at least 65,000 insulation and construction jobs by 2015
- £1.3 billion a year additional help from energy companies for vulnerable and hard-to-insulate homes
- Overall average household energy bill in 2020 will be 7%, or £94, lower than without energy and climate policies

£14 billion worth of private sector investment in home energy improvements over the next decade will help insulate households from rising global energy prices and create thousands of jobs in the British insulation and construction sector, said Chris Huhne.

A consultation on the Green Deal, which will provide home energy saving upgrades to householders at no up-front cost, was published in November 2011 as part of the Energy and Climate Change Secretary's Annual Energy Statement to Parliament. He also published a new government analysis showing that homes will on average be cheaper to heat and light in future than if the Government was not pursuing policies to keep the lights on and emissions down.

Chris Huhne said "The Green Deal is also a massive business opportunity for firms up and down Britain, helping to power the economy and creating jobs. From one-man bands and local authorities, to the big supermarkets and DIY stores, we want as many providers getting involved as possible because that's what will give consumers the best deal."

"I want to insulate Britain's homes not just from the cold weather, but also from the chill winds of global fossil fuel prices. It's these that are pushing up consumer energy prices, and it's why our balanced package of policies aimed at achieving energy savings and shifting to more home grown alternatives is the right one for the economy and all of us who pay energy bills."

"There are certainly costs to replacing our ageing energy infrastructure with modern, clean power stations, and we take very seriously any impact of our policies on what consumers and businesses pay. We've repeatedly taken steps to reduce this – by removing some planned levies on bills and making others more cost effective and within budget. But a crucial – and too often ignored – priority of our whole strategy is to reduce the amount of energy we use in our homes."

The Green Deal framework will be launched from October 2012. The consultation outlines the following three big benefits of the ground breaking scheme – and asks for comments from industry and the public:

- Every British home and business will be able to install packages of energy-saving technologies such as insulation at no up-front cost, making their property warmer and cosier straight away, with repayments made over time out of the energy savings. Strict standards will be put in place to prevent consumers being ripped off by cowboys.

- A new requirement on energy companies to provide £1.3 billion a year to ensure everyone is able to benefit from the Green Deal – no matter their income or the type of house they live in. Additional help will be available to ensure the fuel poor get better boilers and fix draughty homes, while subsidy will also be provided to help tackle homes that are hard to insulate – including solid wall homes.
- The Green Deal is expected to kick start around £14 billion of private sector investment over the next decade – with new safeguards to help small family firms as well as big high street names become involved. The Green Deal could support at least 65,000 insulation and construction jobs by 2015.

Up to £150 in cash back could be available for homes taking out a Green Deal – to be funded through private sector Green Deal finance – as part of efforts to make the Green Deal as attractive as possible.

Separately, the Chancellor announced in Budget 2011 that the Government is committed to the success of the Green Deal and will act to encourage and incentivise take-up so the Green Deal will appeal to households, businesses and prospective providers alike, before it is introduced in 2012.

The annual estimate of the impacts of energy and climate change policies on energy prices and bills shows:

- By the end of 2011 household electricity prices will have increased by around 16% and household gas prices by 25% since the start of the year. This has been due mostly to global fossil fuel prices. Over the past year alone the global gas price increased by nearly 40%. Many experts expect global fossil fuel prices to continue to rise over the medium- and long term, meaning energy bills are likely to increase with or without policies.
- Government policies currently account for around 7% of an average household energy bill and have contributed very little to these recent price increases. In fact, accounting for the efficiency savings policies already delivered, the average household energy bill in 2011 is only 2% higher than it would have been if these policies were never introduced.
- In 2020 the average household bill will be 7%, or £94, lower than if the Government was not pursuing policies to achieve energy savings and incentivise the shift from fossil fuels to alternatives. A net saving will start to kick in from around 2013 and, over the remaining lifetime of this Parliament, average household bills will be lower than they otherwise would be, as a result of energy and climate policies. This assumes a central gas price estimate of nearly 70p/therm in 2020. If the gas price was to be higher, householders would be even better off.
- Government policies will enable more of the most vulnerable to heat their homes more affordably, as they will receive extra help through the new Warm Home Discount.

The analysis published today also covers the impact of policies on prices and bills for businesses. Energy and climate change policies affect businesses differently to households. Businesses are not supported by the same range of energy efficiency policies, and not many of them are able to make significant savings due to the nature of the industrial processes involved. Their energy prices are also on average lower than household energy prices – many pay closer to wholesale energy prices – and so a given unit cost will result in a higher percentage increase in bills. These factors combine to mean energy and climate change policies are expected to, on average, add to business energy bills. While it is important businesses play their part in the transition to a low-carbon economy, it is equally important they remain competitive and that the UK remains an attractive location for them. There would be no advantage – neither for the UK economy nor in terms of global emissions reductions – in simply forcing UK businesses to relocate to other countries. That is why the Government is committed, before the end of the year, to announce a

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package of measures for those energy intensive industries for which the impact of Government policies on the cost of electricity will put their international competitiveness most at risk.

## **SNIPEF Recognises Excellence at Local School**

One of SNIPEF's near neighbours at its new offices in Bellevue House is Drummond Community High School (DCHS). Shortly after the move into the new office, SNIPEF Chief Executive, Robert Burgon, arranged a meeting with Headteacher Norma Prentice and members of her senior team to explore ways in which the organisation could create links with the school. This approach was welcomed and a range of activities have been discussed including the provision of work experience to school pupils and the sponsorship of the school newsletter.

During the discussions, it became clear that while the school had trophies for sporting activities and some subjects, it had never had awards for Craft, Design and Technology (CDT). Principal Teacher of CDT, Cian O'Doherty, said that he would welcome something which could recognise excellence among pupils in this subject. SNIPEF arranged for a series of "star" trophies to be produced and these were presented to the first winners in June 2011 at the school's annual awards ceremony.

The SNIPEF and Drummond Community High School Awards for CDT are now displayed prominently in a cabinet just inside the school premises and this year's pupils in CDT are already working hard with an eye on receiving one of the awards in June 2012.

## **New Guidance Issued by HMRC on VAT Rates for Energy Saving Installations**

Following communications with HMRC earlier in the year related to the application of VAT on energy savings materials, the Plumbing & Heating Contractors' Alliance - the overarching body for plumbing and heating businesses in the UK - advises that HMRC has now issued revisions to its guidance on VAT and energy saving materials.

In May 2011, APHC and SNIPEF issued warnings to the industry to make sure they applied the appropriate VAT rate when installing heating systems. This followed increasing industry confusion about when and how the lower rate could be applied, with installers receiving dramatically different messages depending whose advice they took.

HMRC has now produced further guidance about the application of VAT on energy saving materials. [Notice 708/6 – November 2011](#) seeks to clarify a number of issues relating to VAT, with the main point of interest for plumbing and heating engineers being the guidelines in section 2.3, which give more specific advice on the VAT rate to be applied to energy saving materials installed with other works.

John Thompson, Chief Executive, APHC said: "We are pleased that our dialogue with HMRC has been productive. These updated guidelines mirror the advice HMRC provided in a letter to us in response to our enquiries. At the time we received the letter in the summer, we advised members and the wider industry to think very carefully when applying VAT to certain types of work and we would reiterate this advice. Now that the guidance is laid out in black and white, I'd urge all installers to take the time to read it."

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Robert Burgon, Chief Executive, of SNIFE, added: "The clearer guidance from HMRC is welcomed as many installers have been confused by the information which has been circulating about this issue"

Both trade bodies do, however, agree that a policy change is needed to allow the lower rate of VAT on all home improvement work as a stimulus to the plumbing and heating sector which has been hit hard in the recession. A policy change in this area would also address the complexities of VAT application on energy saving materials.

## **Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week 2011**

Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week starts on Monday 21 of November. The campaign is run by CO-Awareness, a registered charity that supports the many victims of Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning and other products of combustion (POC), their families and friends.

They campaign for the greater awareness to the dangers of carbon monoxide and other products of combustion associated with the burning of Gas, Oil, Coal and Wood.

They also campaign for changes in the legislation covering the manufacture, installation and servicing of appliances burning the above fuels and lobby the Government and Industry to improve safety and raise awareness.

For more information, click [here](#).

## **SNIFE Edinburgh Branch Presents Painting To Mark Centenary**

The SNIFE Edinburgh Branch presented a specially commissioned painting to SNIFE to mark their centenary year. The painting was done by Alasdair Banks a professional artist who specializes in Sporting, Equestrian and Architectural art.

"Edinburgh Highlights" was painted in oil and acrylic on canvas, and gave the artist the opportunity to explore the dramatic lighting effects on the city's most famous buildings, from the spiky crown spire of St Giles through the Bank of Scotland offices on the Mound with its green dome, past the dramatic Castle on the rock to the French style excesses of the Balmoral Hotel and the Gothic Scott Monument. These are buildings that make Edinburgh the most architecturally diverse and exciting city in Europe.

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*SNIFE President, Preston Fleming, right, receives "Edinburgh Highlights" from SNIFE Edinburgh Vice President, Ralph Shaw and Edinburgh Past President, George Thomson.*

## **SNIFE Chief Executive Awarded Plumbing Honour**

SNIFE Chief Executive, Robert Burgon recently received an Honorary Fellowship from Chris Northey, Chairman of the Society of Public Health Engineers (SOPHE) at their annual dinner. This is the highest award of the Society and recognised the major contribution Robert has made to the plumbing industry.



*SNIFE CEO, Robert Burgon receives his Honorary Fellowship from SOPHE Chairman, Chris Northey.*

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## **SNIEPF Edinburgh Branch Rewards Winning Apprentices**

The Edinburgh Branch of SNIEPF held their 10th annual Apprentice Prizegiving at Forth Valley College, Falkirk on Tuesday 8 November 2011. Branch Vice-President, Ralph Shaw welcomed the winning apprentices, their parents and employers to the event.

The prize winning apprentices were recognised at the event with each receiving a certificate and tool voucher courtesy of Plumb Center, the event's main sponsor.

Allan Hogg, Plumb Centers' Area Regional Manager, said "We were delighted to be involved in this event and the winning apprentices, who will make up the workforce of tomorrow, are a great credit to their employers, colleges and trade".

The highlight of the evening was the award of the David A More Trophy, which is presented to the apprentice who is judged to be the best from the four Colleges which operate in the Branch area (Borders, Forth Valley, Jewel & Esk and Telford).

The winner of the David A More trophy for 2011 was Joe Bickmore from Telford College. The three runners-up were Steven Meikle from Borders College, Neil Allan from Forth Valley College and Ross Cowan from Jewel & Esk College.



*Joe Bickmore receives the David A More Trophy from, L to R, Ralph Shaw, Branch Vice-President, David More and Allan Hogg from Plumb Center.*

## Edinburgh Council Recognises SNIEPF Edinburgh Branch Centenary

The City of Edinburgh Council has recognised the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Edinburgh Branch of SNIEPF by hosting a Civic Reception which was held in the city chambers on Tuesday 1 November 2011.

At the Civic Reception which was hosted by the Rt. Hon George Grubb, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the President of the SNIEPF Edinburgh branch, Robin Hall said: "Since it was founded in 1911, the SNIEPF Edinburgh and District Branch has been committed to raising the standards and profile of the plumbing industry in Edinburgh".

Robin added "The plumbing industry suffers from a poor, and in our opinion, an unjustified reputation, despite the fact that our industry is responsible for the health and welfare of the world's population. In fact in 2007, the *British Medical Journal* chose the introduction of clean water and sewage disposal – "the sanitary revolution" - as the most important medical milestone since 1840 when the *BMJ* was first published".

As part of the celebration a centenary cake in the shape of a WC was cut by Robin and the Lord Provost.



Cutting the cake. Robin Hall with Edinburgh's Lord Provost, Rt. Hon. George Grubb.

## New Website Goes Live

The new Plumbing and Heating Contractors' Alliance Ltd website has now been launched. Click [here](#) to visit the site. The Alliance was created by the Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors (APHC) and the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIEPF) as an overarching body

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for plumbing and heating businesses throughout the United Kingdom. The Alliance will provide the mechanism for undertaking joint activities that affect plumbing and heating businesses across the UK.

## **More Money Off Boiler Scrapage Scheme Via Plumb Center**

Homeowners taking advantage of the extension of the Scottish Government's boiler scrapage scheme will get a total of £450 off their new A-rated appliance when they buy any Worcester Bosch boiler from Plumb Center and it's installed by a SNIFE member.

The Scottish Government has announced a further extension of its boiler scrapage scheme which will provide homeowners with a grant of £400 towards the cost of a new boiler. And, Plumb Center is offering a further £50 discount on any Worcester Bosch boiler purchased under the scheme, provided that the installer is Gas Safe registered and a member of SNIFE. The boiler must also be on the Energy Saving Trust recommended list

Homeowners need to obtain a grant voucher by following the scrapage scheme procedure either online on the Energy Savings Trust or by calling 0800 512 012 before installers can apply for the £50 discount at Plumb Center. Once the voucher is received the installer should call Plumb Center on 0870 1622557 and quote the voucher number.

## **New Scottish Boiler Scrapage Scheme Goes Live on 28 June 2011**

Households will soon be able to apply, via the Scottish Government's Home Energy Scotland organisation, for a grant of £400 towards the cost of a new boiler under the reopened boiler scrapage scheme.

Households who have a central heating boiler which is listed as a category G rated boiler in the SEDBUK listing ([www.sedbuk.com](http://www.sedbuk.com)) and which convert less than 70 per cent of fuel into heat will qualify for cash back on a new energy saving model. However they must use an installer who must be registered with Gas Safe (for gas installations) and a recognised industry body such as [CLE](#) or [SNIFE](#) and the boiler must be on the Energy Saving Trust Recommended list.

Click [here](#) to visit the EST website for more information including details of when the grants will be available.

## **CLE Launches MCS Scheme**

The CLE (Construction Licensing Executive) has recently met the criteria to become a certifying body for MCS. MCS is designed to enable installation companies to demonstrate to customers their competence to install green energy products including micro wind turbines, biofuel systems and heat pumps. Companies certified under the scheme must demonstrate they have the quality systems and technical competence to install microgeneration technologies to a consistently high standard.

Energy minister, Fergus Ewing presented certificates to the first two Scottish companies to achieve MCS certification including SNIFE member, Dundee-based plumbing firm John Clarkson, which successfully achieved certification to install solar thermal products.

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Commenting on the scheme's launch, Mr. Ewing said: "With the introduction of the Feed-In Tariff and the forthcoming Renewable Heat Incentive, there has never been a better time to invest in micro-renewables. Financial support for green energy technologies is available through the Scottish Government's home renewables loans schemes and it is crucial that we have a robust and skilled industry that is ready to meet demand and that builds a reputation based on competence, quality and consumer protection. The Microgeneration Certification Scheme, delivered by CLE, will give Scottish consumers an exceptionally high standard of installation and contribute to building a thriving low carbon economy for Scotland."

For more information, click [here](#).

## **Triple Triumph As Plumbing Apprentice Wins Top Scottish Title In SNIFE Competition**

Raymond McWilliam, an apprentice plumber from Moray College in Elgin, has won the prestigious Scottish Regional SkillPlumb Competition held at Clydebank College on 3 and 4 June 2011. Raymond also won the trophies for best lead work and copper work. Second place in the competition was won by Conor Cormack, representing Inverness College, whilst William McDowell from Ayr College finished third.

Raymond will now participate in the UK National SkillPlumb Competition which will be held at Leeds College of Building on the 14, 15 and 16th of September.

The competition, which is organised annually by SNIFE, attracted fifteen apprentice plumbers from Colleges and Training Centres across Scotland where the Plumbing SVQ Level 3 qualification is taught. The competition combines both practical exercises and theoretical tests which, explained SNIFE President Mr Preston Fleming, "have been devised to test the entrants in the types of skills demanded of a professional, modern plumber."

These tests included two workshop exercises, a copper pipework exercise and a lead bossing and forming exercise, followed by a multiple choice exam paper on aspects of plumbing and heating work. Materials used in the exercises were donated by leading industry suppliers Plumb Center, Stelrad, Ideal Boilers and First Supplies/Calder Direct.

Speaking at the Prizegiving, Mr Fleming said: "This 4 year modern apprenticeship - the only recognised plumbing apprenticeship in Scotland - is at the heart of our industry and is vital to delivering the high standards of plumbing professionalism SNIFE requires." He continued "This year's SkillPlumb competition has enabled entrants to demonstrate an impressive level of skills and I congratulate them all, particularly, of course, the very worthy winners. I also commend all those employers who invest in the future of plumbing by supporting the Apprenticeship Scheme."

Prizes were donated by Bosch and Plumb Center and were presented by Mr Robert Beagley, Regional Trading Director of Plumb and Parts Center in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Mr Beagley said "Having sponsored this event for many years we see it as a valuable investment in the future. Apprentices like these will go on to become excellent tradesmen and a credit to their employers. We are delighted to have this opportunity to invest in the growth and development of our industry."

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## **New SNIFE President Elected**

Preston Fleming, principal of Preston Fleming Plumbing and Heating, based in Cardross, Dunbartonshire, became President of SNIFE at its Annual Conference which was held in the Marriott Hotel, Glasgow on Saturday, 28th May, 2011.

Mr. Fleming is the 20th President of SNIFE to come from the SNIFE Glasgow and West of Scotland Association.

Preston is the third generation of the family firm which was established in 1954. He has over 30 years experience within the Plumbing & Heating industry and was a winner of the prestigious CORGI/Grundfos award as best heating installer in the UK in 1993.

Preston is a committed supporter of the Plumbing Industry Licensing scheme and his business was the first firm to become a member of the Approved Certifier of Construction scheme operated by SNIFE on behalf of the Scottish Government which allows members to “self-certify” work which is subject to a building warrant.

He is married to Margaret and their three children, James, Carly and Claire all work in the firm in different roles. James is a 4th year apprentice with the firm, whilst daughters Claire and Carly assist with a range of administrative roles in the firm.

In his inauguration speech Preston said “SNIFE provides all sorts of services and schemes to help us run our businesses more efficiently and effectively but another benefit of being a SNIFE member is being able to share experiences with plumbers across Scotland and Northern Ireland. On many occasions I have been able to share my concerns, problems and on the odd occasion successes with colleagues who face the same challenges”.

He added “SNIFE strives to make sure that its members have a cutting edge and to ensure that they are “ahead of the game” and I will be working hard to ensure that members continue to benefit from the schemes and services we provide”.

## **Scottish School Wins World Plumbing Day Prize**

Cardross Primary School pupil, Grace Wain, was the winner of the World Plumbing Council poster competition designed to highlight World Plumbing Day which is held on 11 March each year.

Grace and her Head Teacher, Elspeth Davies, attended the SNIFE Conference which was held in the Marriott Hotel, Glasgow on Saturday 28th May. The school was presented with a cheque for \$1000 (£610) and Grace with a cheque for \$100 (£61) by World Plumbing Council Chairman, Robert Burgon.

## **Second SNIFE Merit Award Presented**

Agnes Fraser, secretary of the Southern Counties Branch of the SNIFE Glasgow and West of Scotland plumbing association has been awarded the SNIFE Merit Award.

# SNIPEF

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The Merit Award was introduced to recognize individuals or organizations who had given exceptional service to SNIPEF and the wider plumbing industry in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The award was presented by SNIPEF President, Preston Fleming at the recent SNIPEF Conference held in Glasgow.

In presenting the award, Preston said “Agnes Fraser has worked tirelessly for the plumbing industry over many years. Serving as Secretary of one of SNIPEF Local Association Branches for more years than she would admit she has epitomised how much the plumbing industry benefits from the influence of women. As well as acting as Secretary she also found time to help her husband Max run a successful plumbing and heating business”.

Preston added “Her role as secretary means more than just business as she organises trips to the Panto and a whole host of other social events which helps members share experiences in a social context. There is absolutely no doubt that the recipient of the second ever SNIPEF Merit Award has made a real difference to the plumbing industry”.

Agnes Fraser said that she was honored at being a recipient of the SNIPEF Merit award and thanked all those who had nominated her.

## **SNIPEF Past Presidents Visit SNIPEF Offices**

Current President, Tom Galloway welcomed a number of SNIPEF Past Presidents and their partners to SNIPEF's new offices at Bellevue House on Friday 27 May 2011

Past Presidents, Alex Whyte (1979), Hamish Thomson (1980), David More (1988 & 1994), Murray Menzies (1993), Hamish Edward (2001) and George Thomson (2007) were present at the event.

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*Back row L to R, Murray Menzies, Jennifer Menzies, George Thomson, Robert Burgon, David More, Alex Whyte, Margaret Thomson, Hamish Thomson. Front Row L to R, Marion Thomson, Sheila Edward, Tom Galloway, Margaret More and Hamish Edward.*

## **Plumbing Trade Associations Establish UK Body**

The Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors (APHC) and the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIFE) have established an overarching body for plumbing and heating businesses throughout the United Kingdom.

While the two organisations will continue to operate under their own identities, the new Plumbing and Heating Contractors' Alliance Ltd will provide the mechanism for undertaking joint activities that affect plumbing and heating businesses across the UK.

Tim Keeler, Chairman of APHC, commented "One of the main aims of the APHC Board is to work together with partner organisations to achieve common goals. With so many issues in our industry being common across the whole of the UK this initiative can only strengthen the voice of plumbing and heating businesses when dealing with important industry matters. Both our organisations have strong and influential voices in the industry and by combining them we hope to provide even more robust and far-reaching leadership."

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Tom Galloway, Immediate Past President of SNIPEF, and the first Chairman of the new body said that his organisation “had felt for a long time that there was a need for the two principal contractor associations in the industry to work closer together on a wide range of issues. We already work together successfully on the Plumbing Industry Pension Scheme which operates across the whole of the country and there is no reason why our two organisations cannot collaborate on a wide range of issues. I look forward to seeing this initiative develop further over the coming months.”

Secretarial support for the Plumbing and Heating Contractors' Alliance Ltd will be provided by APHC under the guidance of its Chief Executive, John Thompson. In addition to Tom Galloway and John Thompson, the other Directors of the new body will be:

- Tim Keeler, Chairman of the APHC Board.
- Andrew Beaumont, Company Secretary of APHC
- Robert Burgon, Chief Executive of SNIPEF
- Duncan Wilson, Deputy Chief Executive of SNIPEF

## **Trade Bodies Unite To Warn Over The Application Of Reduced Vat Rates For Heating Systems**

APHC and SNIPEF are warning the plumbing and heating industry to make sure that they apply the appropriate VAT rate when installing heating systems. Although the installation of certain types of Energy Saving Materials (ESM) can be charged at a lower rate of VAT there has been uncertainty in the industry over the use of VAT calculation software and APHC and SNIPEF approached HMRC for clarification.

HMRC was clear in its response: “ESM are only eligible for the reduced rate of VAT when they are supplied and installed in isolation and not when they are ancillary to another supply or part of a greater supply. Under basic VAT principles of single/multiple supply any element which is integral or incidental to a greater supply must adopt the same liability of that greater supply.

“Thus, if the supply and installation of a central heating system is liable to VAT at the standard rate (20%), any energy saving materials which are incidental or integral to that supply must also have the same standard-rated VAT liability. Under the same principles should the central heating system be installed as part of a zero-rated or reduced-rated building project the supply and installation of the energy-saving materials will have the same liability.

“For example, a central heating system will consist of a boiler, radiators, copper pipe, radiator valves, heating controls etc. Supplied together they form a single supply of a central heating system even though some components of the central heating system are ESM and would be eligible for the reduced rate of VAT if supplied on their own. As there is no reduced rate for the supply of a whole central heating system the supply is standard-rated (20% VAT).”

## **UK Government Announce Details of Grants for Microrenewables**

The world's first financial incentive of its kind to revolutionise the way heat is generated and used in buildings has been launched by Energy Secretary Chris Huhne. The **Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)**

will support emerging technologies and businesses in the UK, strengthening security of supply by reducing dependence on fossil fuel heating and emissions.

The new financial incentive will encourage installation of equipment like renewable heat pumps, biomass boilers and solar thermal panels to reduce emissions and support jobs in the heating industry.

### **RHI tariff scheme: industry, commercial and public sector**

- Anything from a pub to a public library, a school to a power plant will be eligible under the RHI to install technologies like biomass boilers, heat pumps and solar thermal. Community projects will also be eligible provided a single installation is providing heat to more than one house.
- The tariffs will be paid for 20 years to eligible technologies that have installed since 15th July 2009 with payments being made for each kWh of renewable heat which is produced.
- Once in the scheme the level of support an installation will receive is fixed and adjusted annually with inflation. However, as with feed in tariffs, we expect the levels of support available for new entrants to the RHI scheme will decrease over time as the costs of the equipment and installation reduce through economies of scale.

### **RHI premium payment: households**

- RHI tariff payments will start for homes alongside the Green Deal from **2012** to allow a more whole-house approach to heat production and energy saving.
- Up to 25,000 installations from July 2011 will be supported by an "RHI Premium Payment" to help people cover the purchase price of green heating systems. Those taking up the Premium will then be eligible for a RHI tariff from October next year when the Green Deal begins as will anyone else who has had eligible equipment installed from July 2009.
- For new build homes an RHI tariff will be considered for the 2012 phase.
- There will be clear eligibility criteria in order to qualify for a Premium payment including:
  - a well insulated home based on its energy performance certificate;
  - agreeing to give feedback on how the equipment performs
- A key focus of this initial phase will be on people living off the gas grid where fossil fuels like heating oil are both more expensive and have a higher carbon content.
- DECC plan to publish details of the "RHI Premium Payment" and how this will apply in May this year. They will consult on the RHI tariffs that will apply from October 2012 later in the year.

### **SNIEF Slam Conservative Manifesto Plans Over Apprentice Training**

SNIEF Director, Robert Burgon has warned that the Conservative manifesto proposal that young people should be able to leave school at the age of 14 to take up a trade apprenticeship fails to recognise the demands of most trade apprenticeships today.

Robert said "For years the Scottish plumbing industry has worked to raise the standard of young people entering an apprenticeship. Professional plumbing requires an ability to calculate and to read and interpret instructions. An understanding of basic scientific principles is also desirable. Candidates for plumbing apprenticeships in Scotland (who will be expected to undergo a four year training programme of work experience and college attendance leading to an SVQ qualification at Level 3) are expected to have General or Credit passes in 4 Standard Grades ideally including Maths, English and a science subject".

# SNIFE

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He added "Trade apprenticeships are not the ideal progression for those who are disaffected with the formal education system and it is highly likely that the adoption of such a policy will lead to considerable disappointment among the 14 year olds who will be unable to compete for limited apprenticeship places with older candidates possessing all of the maturity and qualifications expected by our industry".

Robert also appeared on the BBC Radio Scotland Phone-in show hosted by Kay Adams and had a piece published in the "Scotsman".

## **Second World Plumbing Day - Friday March 11 2011**

It looks likely that the second World Plumbing Day on Friday 11 March 2011 will see even more industry activity than on the first Day in 2010.

Plumbing organisations in several countries are making plans to mark the Day in the hope that they can draw attention to the important role which plumbing plays in relation to both public health and the environment.

Having launched the first World Plumbing Day at an event in Beijing, China last year, the principal World Plumbing Council (WPC) celebration this year will take place in Bangalore, India where a joint meeting has been arranged between WPC and the World Health Organisation (WHO). This event, which will be addressed by a range of prominent medical and plumbing experts aims to focus attention on the link between good plumbing and good health.

In addition, WPC has produced a Powerpoint presentation on water, health and plumbing for use with children in the 7-10 year old age range. This presentation (based on one which was trialled for World Plumbing Day 2010) is to be used by industry volunteers in several countries including USA, Canada, India and the UK. Copies of the presentation are available on request from the WPC Chairman ([robert.burgon@snipef.org](mailto:robert.burgon@snipef.org)). Executive Board member Richard Prospal from Cleveland, Ohio, USA was the first to use the presentation when he spoke to some 300 children in a local school in late January. He reported a good reaction from the children (and also confirmed that he had enjoyed making the presentation). All of the children attending one of these presentations will receive a World Plumbing Day sticker and be invited to participate in an international poster design competition.

WPC has also prepared a short video message from the WPC Chairman has been placed on YouTube and industry websites all over the world. Plans are also being made for a week long programme of events in Victoria, Australia culminating in an Awards Ceremony on World Plumbing Day itself. The Institute of Plumbing South Africa is another WPC member which has plans for an event on 11 March 2011.

Plumbing organisations throughout Canada are working together to promote the Day and early indications are that they are already receiving considerable press coverage. Another WPC member organisation, IAPMO has prepared a comprehensive list of World Plumbing Day activities which its staff and members will be involved in.

WPC Chairman, Robert Burgon comments "The idea behind having a single day to promote plumbing was very simple and it is already clear that this idea has sparked the imagination and enthusiasm of so many people in the global plumbing community. We will see it as a success if even a few people get to know that plumbing should be respected. My feeling is that through the wide range of activities being organised many people all over the world will get this message and that is excellent".

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## **SNIFE Member Survey Results Announced**

SNIFE asked its members to take part in an online survey to give us feedback on the services and schemes we operate. We also asked for views on our website and the PlumbHeat magazine and asked if members had any suggestions for new services they would like to see us introduce.

Nearly 20% of members completed the survey and the feedback from members was generally very positive especially in areas where we provide specific advice (employment, health and safety etc). There is however always room for improvement and we are now investigating how we can provide a better service for members in areas such as technical advice and information and in paying grants and travelling expenses to those firms who use SNIFE Training Services. We will also consider if we can introduce some of the new services suggested.

One of the suggestions made was for SNIFE to have more face to face contact with members and with this in mind the SNIFE senior staff propose to visit a selection of members across Scotland and Northern Ireland in the New Year.

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