



## Save Fuel, Water and Electricity With Boiler and Utility Monitors

In our ongoing efforts to improve efficiency and energy conservation in all our properties, Douglas Elliman Property Management (DEPM) is constantly seeking out the latest tools and technology.

In several buildings, we have installed heating controls on the boilers that allow the super, manager or board members to monitor heat levels any time, from anywhere. Using a computer, a smart phone, or any Internet access, we can log in and view the temperature in the buildings. This information helps us to prevent overheating, and keep temperatures nice and steady. The cost of the new equipment is reduced by 50 percent through a conservation rebate program, resulting in a payback period of less than two years.

According to Steve Stadmeyer, Manager of a building complex in Sunnyside, Queens that has installed these boiler controls, "We hired an independent engineering firm to analyze the projected annual savings, and they have estimated that these controls should reduce fuel costs by 15 percent."

Carl Reinlib, General Manager of London Terrace, another DEPM-managed property, reports that heating sensor controls were installed there in February. "Preliminary results show that we are already seeing savings over previous years. In addition, the increased ability to monitor the system helped uncover other inefficiencies that needed correction."

This type of proactive energy policy has a huge impact on the City as a whole, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and on the buildings themselves, by reducing

energy consumption and significantly reducing energy costs. The end result for residents is improved comfort and better budget controls.

A second level of monitoring has also been implemented in a number of DEPM properties. Using a unique digital application, we can now track water, electric, gas and oil usage in buildings where we have implemented this system. Boards and managers can then view and compare usage from the current year to previous years, as well as comparing the building's usage to that of other buildings in the City.

This information helps us focus on where there are inefficiencies, and how we can correct them. Thus we can help our buildings reduce consumption and save money, while also improving their ability to forecast their utility budgets. Once we've made energy improvements, we can see how much savings have resulted, and make informed decisions about how to proceed in other properties.

If your board would like to view the monitoring sites, please contact us at [info@ellimanpm.com](mailto:info@ellimanpm.com) or through our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/DouglasEllimanPropertyManagement](https://www.facebook.com/DouglasEllimanPropertyManagement). ❖

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## Oil-to-Gas Conversion Update

In 2011, the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued regulations phasing out the use of "dirty" fuel oils No. 6 and No. 4. Effective immediately was the provision that all new boilers and burners must use clean fuel: natural gas, No. 2 oil, biodiesel or steam. All buildings must convert by January 1, 2030, or whenever their existing system needs replacement. The last three-year Certificates of Operations for buildings burning No. 6 oil will expire July 1, 2015, so many buildings are up against an impending deadline.

When the NYC Clean Heat plan was initiated, the City estimated that 10,000 buildings would need to convert to cleaner fuel. These buildings—just one percent of

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## Oil-to-Gas Conversion Update

the City's properties—create 86 percent of the building-produced soot pollution, an environmental and health threat that can lead to fatal heart and lung conditions, including asthma.

Already half the buildings have converted to cleaner fuel, leaving just 5,000 left to do so, and this change has resulted in the best air quality in New York city in more than 50 years. But the conversion itself can be both complex and expensive. Many buildings wishing to convert to cleaner and cheaper natural gas, have been unable to do so because they don't have the required gas lines, and are thus forced to switch to No. 4 oil while waiting for Con Ed to complete the infrastructure work, which they expect to take five more years (see Area Grown Map). As Con Ed runs the pipes, buildings in the zones pictured may be able to connect at no cost. Gas service requests may be made through Con Ed's website to determine the time frame and costs involved, if any.

DEPM is working with our client buildings to be sure they meet conversion deadlines. For more information on program requirements, deadlines and assistance, contact your DEPM Account Executive or visit NYCcleanheat.org, coned.com/gasconversions or edf.org/cleanheat. Or call us at 212-370-9200.



### Be Aware of Your Neighbors

Be sure that your building staff and neighbors are aware of any elderly or handicapped residents that may need help in the event of a power outage or other emergency. Be sure that anyone who might need help is checked on regularly.

## Changes to Co-op/Condo Tax Abatement Law Impacts Thousands of Apartment Owners

The January, 2013 extension of New York's "temporary" 1996 Co-op and Condo Tax Abatement statute added a few restrictions that could have a big impact on your property taxes. Originally passed to reduce the inequities in taxation of co-ops and condos, which pay about 30 percent more property tax than one-, two-, and three-family homeowners, the abatement is now available only to those who use their apartments as their primary residence. Those who live elsewhere more than half the year have already seen their taxes start to rise; most will have an increase of 17.5 percent phased in over three years.

The Department of Finance estimates that there are about 366,000 co-op and condo owners in New York City, of whom as many as one-third may no longer be eligible for the tax break. In February 2013, letters were sent to those owners, informing them that in order to continue to receive the lower tax rate, they would need to prove that their apartment was their primary residence.

Unfortunately, if you failed to return the proof of primary residence form by the deadline, you will have to apply for corrected ownership status for the next tax year. Those who find themselves in this predicament should contact their DEPM Account Executive in order to file the proper paperwork and obtain future tax benefits. The change forms must be submitted by February 15, 2015. For those who are not primary residents, the higher tax rate is unavoidable unless the law is changed some time in the future.

Douglas Elliman has been proactive in this area since the amended law was passed in early 2013. By instituting internal controls and following up on the responses from apartment owners who have been incorrectly phased out, we are hoping that our main objective—securing full abatement status for all those deserving it—will be met.

If you have any doubt about your eligibility, call 311, contact your Managing Agent, or visit the City's website at

nyc.gov/ccabatements. Whether or not you remain eligible for the co-op and condo property tax abatement, you may be eligible for other property tax abatements, such as Basic or Enhanced School Tax Relief (STAR), Disabled Homeowner, Senior Citizen Homeowner and Veterans. Applications for these exemptions are due by March 15 and are the responsibility of each apartment owner to file. ❖

### DEPM President Jim O'Connor Receives Partner in Caring Award from The Bridge



Dr. Peter D. Beitchman, Bridge CEO; Cynthia C. Wainwright, President of The Bridge Board; and Jim O'Connor, President of Douglas Elliman Property Management received awards at The Bridge's 60th Anniversary Gala at The Pierre Hotel on June 5th.

DEPM Jim O'Connor was honored on June 5th at The Bridge's 60th Anniversary gala at the landmark Pierre Hotel. The event raised \$466,000 to help support the broad range of mental health and housing services the non-profit provides to more than 2,300 New Yorkers every year. Jim was honored for his service to the real estate industry, his volunteer involvement, and his commitment to The Bridge, which has been providing these important services to those dealing with mental illness, substance abuse and homelessness for 60 years. Congratulations, Jim, and thank you to The Bridge. For more information on this important organization, visit TheBridgyNY.org. ❖

### Keep A/C Costs Down This Summer



Air Conditioning season has arrived! Here are some quick tips to keep your electric bill down this summer: 1) Be sure to turn all A/C units OFF whenever you leave your apartment; 2) Insulate around window A/C units with foam insulation, plastic and/or tape; 3) Clean your A/C filter to improve efficiency; 4) Enhance comfort with oscillating fans; 5) Use Energy Saver setting; 6) Use lowest fan setting and highest temperature setting comfortable for the most efficient energy use.

Summer 2014 Residents Newsletter

published by  
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