



Preventing oil theft: Verify independently and accurately

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Last summer's FBI sting of two major oil delivery companies and their indictment for stealing over \$75 million worth of oil was just the tip of an iceberg that refuses to melt. Reports of pumping oil into adjacent tanks, mixing air with oil and tampering with truck tickets have made it clear that what property owners and managers need are procedures to eliminate the potential for theft.

The oil industry has its own programs of self monitoring, but given the temptations heightened by the price of oil these days, it is not likely that building owners and managers will want to continue trusting a system that is akin to "the fox watching the chickens."

The only truly effective answer to "skimming" is for oil purchasers to have their own accurate and independent method of verification - a "double-check" that the truck is honestly delivering all the oil you are paying for.

Historically, the oil delivery process was based on building owners and managers relying on an outmoded, inaccurate oil gauge technology, developed when the price of oil was less than a dime a gallon. This air-pump system is notoriously inaccurate. Today, when an 8-14% "short" or "skim" can mean the loss of hundreds of dollars each delivery and many thousands of dollars each year, accuracy and independence is critical.

Changing the oil industry's decades-old, theft-prone and one-sided delivery process is not easy. There is denial and avoidance, but mostly there is simple inertia and resistance to change. The theft issue must be taken more seriously and building owners and managers must have a method of double-checking deliveries they can trust. The time is right for change.

For thirty years, U.S. Energy has been on the side of building owners and managers with a heating control (EMS) product that significantly reduces fuel use. Now, the patented Verifier Digital Fuel Gauge is the only accurate (to 1/10th of an inch) and independently-monitored fuel gauge, specifically designed to double-check deliveries and seriously deter oil theft.

Visit the U.S. Energy Group website at www.use-group.com to learn more about preventing heating oil theft, the FBI's arrests, and The Verifier Digital Fuel Gauge.

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