



British firms unite to help heating oil users save hundreds on their energy bills

1.7 million UK heating oil users to benefit from home energy management and community purchasing power

14 July 2011 - Two British firms have joined forces to slash the energy bills of the UK's estimated 1.7million heating oil users.

With volatile heating oil prices contributing to the UK's fuel poor, connected home technology firm [PassivSystems](#) has made its PassivEnergy™ home energy management product available at a reduced cost to members of the [Community Buying unlimited](#) groups. PassivEnergy can monitor and manage energy generated from heating oil, saving customers hundreds on their energy bills.

Community Buying unLimited, backed by the likes of Jonathan Porritt and the Eden Project's Tim Smit, buys heating oil at a discounted rate for more than 250 communities across the UK and coordinates and links many more than that. Hundreds of farms, estates, studs and other rural businesses benefit from the purchasing power of being with the group which saw savings of around £80 on every thousand litres of oil purchased in 2010.

A recent user-trial of PassivEnergy saw an average energy saving of 23 per cent against the previous year's energy bill amongst a control group. One heating oil user in the trial saved more than £600 on their annual oil bill, an incredible saving given that oil prices have risen by 47.7 per cent since 2005. These savings combined with the price reductions offered when using Community Buying unLimited to buy oil bring hope to the UK's 1.7million users of heating oil.

"Buying groups can transform a community, making them stronger and more environmentally sustainable," said Community Buying unLimited founder Chris Pomfret. "But crucially, they can also save people a lot of money when buying heating oil. We've saved people so much money through group buying already and if you add savings made from managing energy better using PassivEnergy, our members will see even more significant reductions in their bills."

PassivEnergy is a heating and hot water control system that works according to a home's occupancy. A user tells the system when they will be: In and active, In and asleep, Out or on Vacation and PassivEnergy take care of the rest, learning about the thermal properties of a house and the performance capability of its heating system so it can control when heating comes on to reach the desired temperature just in time.

The hot water functionality allows PassivEnergy to learn how much hot water is used, how quickly the tank loses heat and controls how often it is heated. It can even track and compensate for the weather outside and iPhone users can remotely control the system from wherever they are in the world.

“Heating oil prices have risen by almost 50 per cent over the past five years so we felt rural communities and heating oil users could really benefit from an effective home energy management system,” said Colin Calder, CEO, PassivSystems. “PassivEnergy is the perfect complement to Community Buying unLimited. Its members buy their heating oil at a reduced cost and we then help them make further savings by managing that energy more efficiently, without them changing their lifestyle.”

With gas prices set to increase by more than 20 per cent, consumers are set to suffer increased energy bills yet again this year and heating oil users could be amongst the worst hit. The price of heating oil is particularly volatile and at the end of 2010 reached 70 pence per litre for the first time. However, the Community Buying unLimited approach has already delivered impressive results and attracted powerful praise from across the energy sector.

“Economic growth via communities is a new capitalism, it will play a massive part in the UK reaching ambitious carbon emission reduction targets,” said Eden Project Founder Tim Smit. “Eden is exploring how to join with the Community Buying unLimited movement and help establish a programme across the country. Why? Because in this idea lies nothing less than the promise of communities taking ownership and responsibility for their energy needs and this is only the beginning as it could transform how communities engage within and between themselves.”

For more information on PassivEnergy and its availability to Community Buying unLimited members please visit www.reducemyheatingcosts.com

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About PassivSystems: www.passivsystems.com

PassivSystems Ltd was established in 2008 to develop smart-home technology for the mass market. Beginning with energy, and continuing with security, assisted-living and other lifestyle services, PassivSystems creates simple, human-centred products that deliver effective solutions to some of today's most pressing global problems.

The company and its first product PassivEnergy have been widely commended by industry and media. The PassivEnergy home energy management product was cited as one of the top five gadgets at CES 2010 and PassivSystems was recognised as one of Europe's leading privately owned companies in the Red Herring 100 Europe 2010.

Further recognition followed with PassivSystems named as both a 2010 Global Cleantech 100 and Tech Media Invest 100 company and the latest commendation was as a Red Herring Global 100 company. This was awarded in January 2011 and recognises the world's most promising private technology businesses.