



Ken Field

Owner of Slate
Belt Energy
Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

BTUs are Your Friend

It is not an easy task to figure out what fuel is the best value for heating your home. Propane and oil prices fluctuate a great deal over the course of a winter but they have the highest heat content of all the sources available and you can store them for future use. Natural gas is a reliable source and prices are fairly stable but there would be no substitute if it was not available in the pipe leading to your home. Electricity is much the same as natural gas except that when it is not available you can replace it temporarily with a generator. The homeowner is responsible for the condition and maintenance of an oil storage tank. Some people own their propane tanks and are responsible for them also. If a propane tank is owned by the company filling it, there will be a cost associated with that rental. Oil and gas systems need periodic maintenance and that needs to be factored into the overall cost. Gas system efficiency is either 80% or 95% depending on the equipment used.

Oil systems are typically 85% efficient today. An average residential heating system produces anywhere from 30,000 to 100,000 btus per hour and may run for a total of 4 or 5 hours a day in weather like we have had for the past week so I have calculated how many btus you would get from each fuel for \$10.00.

Oil at \$3.35/gallon gets you 418,600 btus and with 86% efficiency you have 355,810 usable btus.

Propane at \$2.80/gallon gets you 321,300 btus and at 80% efficiency you have 257,040 usable btus and at 95% efficiency you have 305,235. Natural gas at \$.45335/ccf gets you 227,218 btus and at 80% efficiency you have 181,774 usable btus and at 95% efficiency you have 215,857.

Electricity cost is around \$.15/kwh with all the taxes and fees and you get 189,681 btus for \$10.00 at that rate. You can never get less than that amount of energy from electricity but you may get more. Heat pumps can use less efficiency to heat your home than electric baseboard heaters. They also need periodic maintenance to stay efficient. To spin this yet another way let's see how much you would pay for 500,000 btus which should heat your house for a weekend in this weather. Oil-\$11.96, Propane-\$15.57, Natural gas-\$22.01, Electricity-\$21.97

How you use the energy after you convert each of these fuels to heat is very important. How long the btus stay in your home is crucial. Do everything you can to keep them inside and your energy bills will be as low as possible.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

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GRANT FUNDS AWARDED

Nearly \$180,000 in Grant Funding Awarded to Bushkill Township Park

By Rep. Ann Flood

BUSHKIL - I am happy to announce a grant of \$172,604 has been awarded by the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) to benefit residents in Northampton County. These funds will be used to improve the Bushkill Township Park in Bushkill Township.

I am delighted this terrific park and recreation area has been awarded grant funding for vital improvements. Community parks are hubs for recreation and connection. This grant is a significant stride toward improving the park, ensuring that it continues to be an enjoyable and accessible space for everyone.

The Bushkill Township Park is located at 1114 Bushkill Center Road, directly across the road from the township building and police headquarters. The park facilities are available for township residents at no fee, on a first-come, first-served basis, for personal use only.

The CFA was established in 2004 as an independent agency of the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to administer Pennsylvania's economic stimulus packages. The CFA holds fiduciary responsibility over the funding of programs and investments in Pennsylvania's economic growth.

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