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White Plains to Phase Out Use of Dirty Fuel Oils in Commercial and Residential Buildings

White Plains becomes the first community in Westchester County to make such a move.

Posted by [Alfred Branch](#) , July 15, 2014 at 06:56 PM



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Editor's note: This story was updated at 6:53 p.m. on Tuesday, July 15, 2014, to clarify that White Plains is phasing out the use of fuel oils #4 and #6 in commercial and residential buildings.

In a move to help the environment, the City of White Plains will phase out the use of #4 and #6 fuel oils to heat commercial and residential buildings, officials announced.

Over the next couple of years, the city will turn to using #2 fuel oil, which burns cleaner, and officials will also look into switching to natural gas where available.

Fuel oils #4 and #6 are considered the "dirtiest fuel oils in all commercial and residential buildings," according to White Plains Mayor Thomas Roach, who championed the move away from them.

White Plains becomes the first community in Westchester County to make such a move. The use of #6 fuel oil will be phased over the next year, and #4 will be phased out by the middle of 2020.

Below is the press release from White Plains Mayor Thomas Roach:

The White Plains Common Council approved legislation at its July meeting to phase out the use of the dirtiest fuel oils in all commercial and residential buildings throughout the City. These oils are commonly referred to as # 6 and # 4 fuel oils and are primarily burned for heat. With the passage of this legislation, White Plains became the first municipality in Westchester County to take this proactive approach.

The legislation was championed by Mayor Roach, who directed City staff to determine how use of these fuel oils could be phased out. "These are the dirtiest oils in use for heating today," said Mayor Roach. "Phasing out their use is the right thing to do from an environmental and public health perspective. It also makes good economic sense."

Fuel oils # 6 and # 4 pose a health risk to those who live in and immediately around the buildings where they are burned and can exacerbate conditions such as asthma. They are bad for the environment, particularly # 6, because when burned they release fine particles that contain high levels of nickel, sulfur and other pollutants into the air. Changing over to a cleaner burning fuel, such as # 2 oil or natural gas also makes economic sense. Conversions have shown a reasonable timetable for return on investment as well as long term fuel cost savings.

The City's legislation requires the phase out of # 6 fuel oil by July 31, 2016 and # 4 by June 30, 2020. The Department of Building will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the legislation.

Several state and local entities offer incentive programs for just this type of conversion, including Con Edison, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and the Energy Improvement Corporation (EIC)'s Energize NY Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, in which White Plains participates. The Department of Building will be reaching out to property owners in the near future about this new law and providing them with information about these incentives to facilitate the conversion process.

In developing it, the City met and initiated discussions with property owners and/or their representatives, environmental groups and staff at New York City's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which implemented a similar phase out a couple of years earlier. The phase out timetables were developed based on this outreach.

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