

# Wood Pellet Quality Criteria FAQ's

Ref: Relaxation of pellet quality criteria

Version 1.2

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The quality criteria of wood pellet, used by recipients of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), has been suspended for the next 12 months to help ease the wood pellet shortage.

Since April 2022, wood pellets used in RHI registered boilers have had to be EN*plus* A1 certified to qualify for RHI payments. The rule change will apply to domestic and non-domestic RHI subsidy schemes.

The announcement by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) follows a global wood pellet shortage caused by the sanctions imposed on Russia and Belarus. Prior to this, it is estimated that up to 40% of the EN*plus* pellets used in the UK were imported from Russia and Belarus.

### Why has BEIS suspended the fuel quality requirement of wood fuel used in RHI registered boilers?

Prompted by the wood pellet supply crisis, BEIS carried out a consultation to temporarily suspend the quality requirement of wood fuel used by recipients of the RHI. The criteria previously stated that wood pellet should be EN*plus* A1 certified.

BEIS recognised that the sanctions imposed on Russia and Ukraine was likely to further impact the availability, and consequentially the prices of wood pellets, in the coming months and through the next winter.

Relaxing the quality criteria will enable wood fuel suppliers to explore new sources of pellet - which do not meet the EN*plus* quality criteria – to help meet customer need.

### When does the suspension come into effect and for how long for?

The temporary suspension will come into effect in on 16 November 2022 for a period of 12 months. After this BEIS says it will review the situation again.

### Will this temporary rule change affect my RHI payments in any way?

This will not affect your RHI payments in any way. It means that your fuel supplier is not purely restricted to providing wood pellet which is EN*plus* certified and can source a wider range of wood pellet.

The pellet you are supplied should continue to have a Biomass Suppliers List number which identifies it meets specific sustainability and legality criteria and ensures eligibility with the RHI scheme.

### Does this mean that I can use any wood pellet in my boiler, regardless of its quality certification?

For the next 12 months you do not need to use EN*plus* certified pellet. However, as wood pellet quality can impact on boiler performance, AMP Clean Energy strongly recommends that if you cannot source EN*plus* pellet that you buy pellet of a comparable quality to the EN*plus* A1 specification. You should also discuss with your wood fuel supplier the wood pellet they intend to supply you with in the future.

Thanks to our robust and secure supply chain, AMP Clean Energy will continue to supply its customers with wood pellet from EN*plus* mills, that are not in Russia or Belarus.

### What about bagged wood pellet?

The rule relaxation applies to bagged pellet too. AMP Clean Energy only sells EN*plus* certified bagged pellet. We have recently been made aware of 'fake' websites surfacing which purport to sell both EN*plus* and non EN*plus* pellet. These websites ask for BACS details to complete payments so please take care when buying bagged pellet.

### How can I assess fuel quality moving forward?

There are many other pellet certification schemes which include quality criteria and it is best to talk to your fuel supplier about the pellet they will be providing you with this winter. Your pellet supplier should be able to tell you if the pellet they are supplying has met other quality criteria, and the details of the relevant scheme.

If you are an AMP Clean Energy customer, rest assured that we have adequate pellet stocks to continue to provide you with wood pellet from EN*plus* mills.

### If I don't use high quality wood pellet will this lead to problems with my boiler?

Low grade pellet can create problems for your boiler as it tends to have higher volumes of fines and other contaminants. Using poor quality fuel can even lead to breakdowns, which in turn means a loss of RHI payments.

When it comes to pellet quality it's important to consider the whole pellet supply chain from the production mill to delivery into a fuel store. Good quality pellet can be ruined by a poor delivery method so it is always best to buy from a reputable fuel supplier.

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### Is there anything I can do to improve the operation of my biomass boiler?

With the introduction of the HETAS Approved Biomass Maintenance Scheme (HABMS), you must get your boiler serviced at least once a year by an accredited engineer to qualify for RHI payments. Specialist boiler service and maintenance will also help boost the performance of your boiler and reduce the risk of costly breakdowns. It is also more important than ever to organise regular fuel store cleans to support the smooth and efficient running of your biomass installation.

### Does AMP Clean Energy have enough wood pellet to supply its customers this winter?

AMP Clean Energy is confident it can supply its customers with adequate supplies of EN*plus* wood pellet this winter.

### What quality controls does AMP Clean Energy have in place to ensure that they supply customers with the best quality pellet available?

At AMP Clean Energy we already go above and beyond the requirements of EN*plus* by screening our pellet both at depots and on-board delivery vehicles. We also carry out independent pellet inspections of wood fuel coming in from vessels overseas.

We have made a significant investment into our biomass delivery fleet to help ensure that our fuel is not degraded in the delivery process. Some of our vehicles have on-board screening facilities to filter out dust and other contaminants that can arise during transportation and a non-tipping delivery system that blows directly into the store.