

Steam Heat Wiring by Finn Home Inspectors

If the water in the boiler becomes depleted the Low Water Cut Off (LWCO) will shut down the boiler. Water needs to be flushed from a steam boiler weekly if it has an external (LWCO), see photo below of an external LWCO. Without flushing, over time debris builds up inside the LWCO and could lead to destruction of your boiler and possible fire. When flushing, only several pints of water need to be flushed, if the water is very dirty keep flushing.

Some units have an internal LWCO which does not require flushing.

Water needs to be added to the steam boiler periodically, if it is colder outside the boiler will run more so water will need to be added more frequent. Some units have an auto fill system, but if the boiler has an External LWCO it still needs to be flushed/drained weekly.

Steam boilers have a sight glass that shows the level of the water in the boiler, this will show when you should add water and when to stop adding water. Typically, when $\frac{1}{2}$ way down the sight glass add water until the level is at the $\frac{3}{4}$ level. When filling water do not become distracted, if you leave the water on it will fill the entire system, leak out every radiator flooding your house!



Turn yellow handle to flush external LWCO. Drain several pints typically, if water is very dirty: drain more. **DRAIN ONCE A WEEK.**

Internal low water cut off, no need to drain weekly. The service tech should clean once a year at the annual boiler maintenance.

Dirty sight glass, clean or replace so water level can be clearly seen.



This is a very dirty sight glass that needs to be replaced. Note the white color around the nut at the top of the sight glass and the white color on the outside, water has been leaking out the seal at the top of the glass and possibly out the bottom.

Have a service tech replace glass, this is NOT a home owner job.

Never turn the two black valve knobs at top and bottom of the sight glass, this would be bad!