

Heating caravans from a central heating plant

John Pettersson from Funäsdalen was the first entrepreneur in Sweden to take over a district heating plant from a local authority. Now he is the first person to use a central heating plant to provide heating for caravans and motorhomes.

District heating is now a well-established system amongst private homeowners. In many parts of Sweden, streets, town squares, football pitches and bus shelters are kept free from snow thanks to warm water from a local district heating plant. And if John Pettersson has his way, district heating plants will soon be providing heating for caravans and motorhomes in Sweden and the rest of Europe or, alternatively, heating can be provided by a small-scale heating system run from a central boiler.

John's invention is called Energistolpen (the Energy Post) and looks similar to the electrical outlet posts that provide electricity for engine block heaters in cold climates. The Energistolpen, however, contains a heat exchanger that transfers heat from the central heating plant to the heating system of the caravan or motorhome. The central heating plant may be a

small-scale boiler, a district heating plant, a solar panel or any other source of energy. If biofuel is used, the system will not only be cheaper, but also more environmentally friendly than a traditional electric heating system. The Energistolpen can also be used in reverse, if the caravan is parked in Greece and needs air-conditioning instead of heating.

John, who is a plumber and a heating, sanitation and ventilation engineer, has always been interested in technical innovations. He has run a company in Funäsdalen for many years specialising in energy and real estate. He always finds something to improve or adapt, often with environmental benefits as a bonus. It is important not to get stuck in a rut, says John.

The idea of the Energistolpen came up when John planned to open a caravan park for winter tourism at his home. In order to avoid the cost of joining up with mains electricity and the fixed charges during the low season, he decided to investigate the possibilities of heating caravans from a central heating plant. Alde, the leading company producing hydronic central heating systems for

caravans and motorhomes, has tested the Energistolpen and estimates that it would not cost more than about SEK 3500 to adapt modern caravans to this new heating system. Exactly what it would cost and how much the caravan-park owner would save depends on the local conditions, but in general it should reduce energy costs by half.

At present the Energistolpen can be seen in action outside Energihuset in Funäsdalen. The Caravan Club is also about to introduce the system at the caravan park in Tandådalen and in Trysil in Norway. John intends to put the Energistolpen on the market from the autumn of 2009.



Photo: Sara Adelhult

John Pettersson practises what he preaches. His engine block heater runs on solar energy and his caravan is heated by a central heating plant.



Climate smart facilities

Would you like to know more about the Energistolpen? Contact John Pettersson
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Are you interested in other energy and environmental technology solutions in the area? The Östersund Tourist and Conference Office can organise study visits in all parts of Jämtland.
Tel. +46 (0)63- 14 40 01
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