

tested

Eberspächer D4

It's been a few months since we installed our Eberspächer heating system and it has certainly been put to work. 2017/18 may have been a long way off from reaching the record books in terms of severity, but I have never had ice around the boat like we did this year, nor can I remember so many periods of snow in one winter.

Despite this we have spent quite a few winter nights onboard and all I can say is, "wow, what a transformation". In the past we used an electric fan heater in the absence of a proper heating system, but it had two major drawbacks. First, it only heated the part of the boat that it was in. Second, I would never leave it running when we were not onboard nor when we were asleep, meaning it was always fighting a battle to bring the boat up to a bearable temperature. Of course, it also relied upon being somewhere where shorepower was available.

This year though, the heating has been turned on and left running for days at a time. It doesn't even get turned off when underway, and the outlet I installed next to the helm has proved to be the best thing since someone suggested cutting a loaf of bread into thin slices.

Our boat was on the borderline when it came to choosing between the D2 and D4 models. We chose the larger, on the basis it could always be turned down, and have found that we have had to resort to doing that a lot. The efficiency of the heater is such that if we turn it up full blast, the boat very quickly becomes too warm. In hindsight, I think a D2 might have just been OK, but I'm not complaining about having plenty of heat in reserve.

In use, we tend to crank it up high to get it going, then turn the control down to somewhere just below half way. This keeps the boat lovely and warm and only requires dropping the setting a notch or two on the display overnight to keep a nice background warmth that makes getting out of bed in the morning a pleasure, even when there was snow on the ground outside.

Noise levels are excellent when its on low, with slightly higher levels when the unit



PRICE

£2,908

The heating unit was fitted in the large storage locker at the end of the S28's mid cabin berth



is being worked hard. This is one of the benefits of going larger than you need, the fact that it doesn't need to work hard to keep the boat warm means that noise levels in normal use are very low. Some people with diesel heaters complain about the constant ticking from the fuel pump. While we can't hear it during the day, it is just about audible overnight. Having said that, I have slept in rooms with a louder ticking clock, so it really isn't bad. If we were particularly light sleepers it should be fairly simple to reduce the noise levels even further with a bit of sound insulation. Ours is mounted in an un-insulated locker at the foot of the bed, to give you an idea. I suspect those that find it an issue are more often than not suffering the results of a poor installation.

The only thing I have found frustrating is trying to work out how to operate the timer. So far, my attempts have been thwarted, but I am going to persevere, and may even have to resort to the user manual, and crack it for next winter, as I can think of many occasions when arriving at an already warm boat would have



Easy to use, but the timer function is a little tricky to programme

been a godsend. Alternatively, I might bite the bullet and upgrade to Eberspächer's remote control unit, the Easy Start Web at £422 with a yearly subscription fee of £22.50. This would be the ultimate upgrade in my opinion, and would turn what I consider to be the best comfort upgrade we have ever made to the boat, into a perfect system.

I was hoping to be able to bring some actual figures for fuel usage to this update, but the truth is that despite running for hours and hours, I simply did not see any change in fuel levels or notice an obvious change to the boats fuel usage when we filled up. In short, after adding the Eberspächer, our

fuel usage is within the tolerances of what it was before. Eberspächer's figures suggest between 0.1 litres per hour on low setting and 0.5 LPH on high so, given our average setting sitting somewhere in the middle, and the fact that we have run the heater for approximately 100 hours over the winter, it has probably used around 25 litres and cost around £25 in fuel.

With hindsight, the one change I would make to the installation would be to add an outlet into the toilet compartment. The heater certainly seems to have the power to cope with another outlet, and a warm toilet on a cold morning would be a luxury worth the extra effort during the installation. I will probably upgrade this at some point as it will also help dry out the compartment after showering and provide a useful drying area for wet waterproofs.



A cockpit outlet is a great feature on an open boat

Motorboat Owner

"The best comfort upgrade we have carried out"

Value	4/5
Usability	3/5
Performance	5/5



We regret not fitting an outlet in the S28's toilet compartment

Enquiries: Eberspächer UK www.eberspacher.co.uk