



Gas Safety & Carbon Monoxide Advice

Gas Safety

What should I do if there's a problem with my gas supply?

If you smell gas or have any concerns about gas safety you need to:

- ventilate the property by opening all doors and windows
- avoid using any electrical equipment within the property (including light switches/mobile phones) or naked flames
- turn off the gas at the emergency control valve by the meter (it's normally turned off when the handle is at right angles to the pipe)
- call National Grid immediately on **0800 111 999**: Calls are free and advice is available 24/7.
- Once your supply is made safe, please call First Utility on **01926 320 700** to advise us on what has happened.

An appliance isn't working but I can't smell gas

If you can't smell gas, but are having a problem with an internal appliance, have you had a meter installed within the last 10 days?:

- if you **have**, follow the steps above
- if you **haven't** then:
 1. Contact a 'Gas Safe' registered engineer to investigate the problem. First Utility isn't responsible for internal appliances, so you need to get a qualified engineer
 2. If the Gas Safe engineer identifies that the problem is with the meter, then contact us
 3. We'll inform our service partner, who'll look into it 4. We'll aim to solve the problem and call you back to let you know what's happening within 4 hours.

Gas safety checks

All gas appliances and (if applicable) related flues and other gas fittings should be checked and serviced every 12 months for safety and efficiency.

When any work is carried out on or in relation to gas appliances and gas fittings, gas operatives should be Gas Safe Register engineers and hold a valid certificate of competence for each work activity that they wish to undertake. The valid certificate must have been issued under The National Accredited Certification Scheme for Individual Gas Fitting Operatives (ACS) – The ACS is the gas industry's recognised scheme under which individual gas operatives can demonstrate competence. It is required by the Health and

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Safety Commission's Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (ACoP and Guidance) and Gas Safe Register rules for registration. Competence can be proved by engineers showing their current Gas Safe Register ID. You can find one on the Gas Safe Register website, www.gassaferegister.co.uk.

All gas appliances and other gas fittings must be installed in accordance with The Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations, Building Regulations and Manufacturer's installation instructions. Installations should also comply with British Standards and Regulations for Electrical installations or those Regulations appropriate to the geographical region in which they are installed.

Safety advice for vulnerable customers

- if you're signed up to our Priority Services Register (PSR) and are classified as a 'vulnerable customer' you could be eligible for a free gas safety check
- information on our PSR can be found at www.first-utility.com or by calling us on **01926 320 700**
- if you're worried about the safety of your gas supply or any appliances, please contact us.

What to do if a gas appliance has been condemned as a result of a gas safety check

If an appliance is unsafe, the engineer should explain why and record this. If an appliance is unsafe it is because it is not burning gas properly and incorrect combustion means a risk of carbon monoxide exposure.

If your gas appliance has been condemned for this reason, air the whole house by opening doors and windows.

If an appliance is emitting carbon monoxide and you have been exposed recently, then whether or not the engineer tells you, go straight to hospital and tell them you believe you have been poisoned by carbon monoxide. They will need to determine your carboxyhaemoglobin level with a blood test. You should be treated as close to an emergency case as possible, so it is a good idea to take someone with you.

Carbon Monoxide

What is carbon monoxide and why is it dangerous?

You can't see it, you can't smell it and you can't taste it, but it's a highly dangerous gas. You need to be aware of the steps to take to avoid being harmed by it. High levels of exposure can prove fatal. Lower levels can still cause considerable harm. Find full details about the risks of carbon monoxide on the Carbon Monoxide Aware website, www.carbonmonoxideaware.com.

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I might be at risk - what should I do?

If you think you might be at risk, get your appliances checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer immediately – it could save your life! Below are a few symptoms to look out for:

- headaches
- flu-like symptoms
- dizziness
- nausea

If you find that the symptoms above improve when you're away from home, then there may be a problem with your appliances. **Get them checked immediately.**

What other signs can I look for?

- evidence of soot, stains or discolouration near appliances like boilers, gas fires or water heaters
- is your home properly ventilated? Never block air vents. Make sure the chimney is regularly swept
- gas flames should burn blue – if they look yellow they might need attention.

And remember, if you think you or your family may be affected, immediately seek medical help.

How can I avoid the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning?

Maintaining your gas appliances can help make sure that you and your family stay safe. Poorly-maintained gas equipment can leave you exposed to the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The best way to avoid the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning is to make sure that your gas appliances are regularly serviced by a Gas Safe registered engineer. You can find one on the Gas Safe Register website, www.gassaferegister.co.uk.

We strongly recommend the use of audible carbon monoxide (CO) detectors as a useful back-up precaution but they must not be regarded as a substitute for proper installation and maintenance of gas appliances by a Gas Safe Register engineer.

You can be particularly at risk from CO poisoning when you are asleep, because you may not be aware of early CO symptoms until it is too late. **Having an audible CO detector could alert you and save your life.**