

# Gas Safety Statement

Emergency information and advice

## Gas Safety

### Update on the registration of gas engineers

Gas safety in Great Britain has changed. From 1st April 2009 don't ask for a CORGI registered engineer, ask for a Gas Safe Register™ engineer. CORGI will still exist as a member organisation but Gas Safe Register™ will be the only government approved body for safe gas installation and maintenance work. For more information visit [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

### Free annual checks

As part of our commitment to customer service, Southern Electric provide a free annual gas safety check if you have not had a gas safety check carried out at the premises in the last 12 months and:

You are on a means-tested benefit and live in a household where at least one of the occupants is:

- Under five years old; or
- Of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick and either:
  - Lives alone; or
  - Lives with others who are all of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick, or under 18 years.

If you live in rented accommodation, your landlord will be required to arrange an annual gas safety check, for further details visit: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg285.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg285.pdf)

Our gas safety checks will be carried out free of charge by a Gas Safe Register™ engineer\* and will include checks on the safety of gas appliances and other fittings.

For a gas appliance the check includes examining the effectiveness of any flue, the supply of combustion air, its operating pressure and/or heat input and that it is operating safely.

The following safety advice is also available at [www.southern-electric.co.uk](http://www.southern-electric.co.uk), or by calling **0800 622 838** and asking for a free copy. Lines open 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 9am-2pm Saturday.

### Safety advice

The following advice should help you use gas safely:

#### a. The safe use of gas appliances and other gas fittings

- Do not use any gas appliances that you think are not working properly.
- Make sure that ventilation bricks or grilles or outside flues are never covered or blocked.
- Make sure you have your gas appliances serviced at least once a year by a Gas Safe Register™ engineer.
- Fit a carbon monoxide detector. Use this as a guide. Do not rely on it completely.
- If you suspect a gas leak –
  - Call the National Gas Emergency Number immediately on **0800 111 999**. (Do not phone from a mobile phone as this may ignite a spark).
  - Check if the pilot light has gone out. If any gas appliances have been left on, turn them off. If the pilot light is still on and your gas appliances are all off there may be a gas escape.
  - Do not turn light switches on or off, use doorbells, mobile phones, or any other electrical switches as they may cause a spark.
  - Do not smoke, light a match or use any other kind of naked flame.

#### b. The dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning

Carbon monoxide is a very dangerous gas. It is colourless and has no taste or smell. If your gas appliance is faulty, or there is not enough ventilation in the room, carbon monoxide may be produced.

#### Danger signs:

- Orange or yellow gas flames. Gas flames should be blue.
- Sooty stains or discolouration on or by the appliance.
- You may develop some of the following symptoms: headaches, drowsiness, sickness, giddiness or stomach pains.

If you spot any of these signs, phone the National Gas Emergency Number on **0800 111 999**. Make sure you have your gas appliances serviced at least once a year by a Gas Safe Register™ engineer.

### **c. The benefits of fitting a carbon monoxide alarm that complies with a relevant British or European safety standard**

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.

Before purchasing a CO alarm, always ensure it complies with British Standard EN 50291 and carries a British or European approval mark, such as a Kitemark. CO detectors should be installed, checked and serviced in line with the manufacturer's instructions.

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.

### **d. The benefits of 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 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.

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.

### **e. 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 in legible writing. Key words are: condemned, spillage, carbon monoxide and blockage. If an appliance is inefficient it is because it is not burning gas properly, and incorrect combustion means a risk of carbon monoxide exposure. Some engineers carry a multi fuel gas analyser which can tell you what is being emitted. Keep this reading if you can. 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.

If you have any questions or require any further information call Southern Electric on **0800 622 838**.

\*For more information go to **[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)**

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