Safety Alert New Gas Regulation 2013

Latest Gas Safe Regulation : From 1 January 2013 onwards, any of our Gas Safe registered engineers will turn gas supply to the boiler off in any property that has flues which run in ceiling spaces, with your permission and formally advise the property owner that the system is at **"RISK"**
and isn't not to be used until inspection hatches have been fitted in appropriate places

Our engineers need to be able to see the flue as part of essential safety checks. A flue in poor condition combined with a boiler that isn't working properly could put you & your family in danger from carbon monoxide poisoning which can cause death or serious injury. **You will need to take action**
! The inspection hatches have to be fitted as soonest as possible.

Boiler Flues in Ceiling Spaces - Important advice for consumers who have flues which run in ceiling spaces Some properties, mainly flats and apartments, have been built with boiler flues which cannot be inspected because they are hidden behind walls or ceilings. The boiler flues that this information relates to are connected to room-sealed fan assisted boilers. If you live in one of these homes then please read on for more information so you know what to do. If your boiler is situated on an outside wall, it is unlikely you have this type of flue. Alternatively, if your engineer can see all of the flue, you will not need to take any further action in relation to this matter.

If you do have a boiler where all, or part of, the flue cannot be seen, you, or your landlord, will need to arrange for inspection hatches to be fitted. This does not mean that

your flue system is suddenly unsafe.

Carbon monoxide alarms are not an alternative to being able to see the flue and you will still need to have inspection hatches fitted. It is recommended that inspection hatches are fitted as soon as you are able to do so. From 1 January 2013, any Gas Safe registered engineer will turn the boiler off, with your permission and formally advise you not to use it until inspection hatches have been fitted in appropriate places.

Although most of the affected boiler and flue systems are relatively new (installed since 2000), the risk of faults leading to the release of carbon monoxide increases as the system gets older, especially if it is not serviced regularly. It is important that you have your gas appliances service yearly.

You will need to take action now!

If your property is less than two years old then contact your builder. If your property is between two and ten years old contact your home warranty provider, as you may be covered by them if there are defects in the flue. A list of the main home warranty providers is shown below. If your property is 10 years or older you should contact a gas safe registered engineer like us.

Gas boilers - Excess Hatches for Flues in Voids Installation – Installers

Who gets effected?

Urgent action is required as changes come into effect on 1 January 2013 where flues (from room sealed fan assisted gas boilers) located inside a void must be fitted with inspection hatches for your gas engineer to be able to inspect it and pass as safe.

As this deadline is fast approaching, registered heating gas safe engineers will be forced to place boilers 'At Risk'. If you are a homeowner, Landlord, tenant, letting agent, housing association, management company, estate agent **.** If you have not acted on this it may leave you or your tenants with no heating or hot water!

Background: Typical flue within a ceiling void

The introduction of fan-flued gas appliances in the mid 1990s allowed gas central heating boilers to be installed away from external walls. This meant that builders could design new-build and refurbishment properties with boilers being installed on internal walls to make better use of the available space. The flues to these boilers were, in some cases, routed through voids in the ceiling space (and through stud walls) between properties above.

This practice became progressively more popular from 2000 onwards and the vast majority of affected systems are thought to be located in new build flats and apartments completed since 2000. It is however possible that other types of home may have similar central heating systems installed.

Gas engineers are legally required to check the flue after carrying out any work on the boiler. This will include a visual inspection. Similarly, when an engineer installs a boiler they need to ensure that it can be used without constituting a danger to anyone; this would include checking whether the flue is safe. The original installer and every subsequent servicing or maintenance engineer need to be able to check that:

- - The flue is continuous throughout its length;

- - All joints are correctly assembled and are appropriately sealed; and
- - The flue is adequately supported throughout its length.

An inspection hatch in a ceiling

The original industry technical guidance (aimed at registered gas engineers) advised that where the flue to the boiler was concealed within a void and could **not** be visually inspected it should be assessed as "not to current standards" (NCS) in accordance with the Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure, This was dependent on there being no other risks being present which may have made the boiler unsafe.

Revised guidance takes effect on 1st January 2011. This is the result of the industry working group who undertook a review of the original guidance and concluded that the potential risk from such systems, should it not be possible to inspect the flue, requires an alternative approach to ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken.

Action required:

The revised technical guidance requires inspection hatches to be fitted in properties where the flue is concealed within voids and cannot be inspected. The homeowner (or landlord etc.) has until 31st December 2012 to arrange for inspection hatches to be installed. Any gas engineer working on affected systems after 1st January 2013 will advise the homeowner that the system is "at risk" (AR) in accordance with the GIUSP and, with the owner's permission will turn off the gas supply to the boiler so it cannot be used.

In the interim period, where no inspection hatches are fitted, the registered gas engineers will carry out a simple risk assessment which should ensure that the risk from exposure to CO is managed in the short-term. This risk assessment includes:

- - Looking for signs of leakage along the flue route; and
- - Carrying out a flue combustion analysis check (and obtaining a satisfactory result); and
- - Checking for the presence of suitable audible carbon monoxide (CO) alarms (and installing such alarms where they are not already fitted).
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If you are unsure whether a property has concealed gas flues and think you might be at risk:

- - If you have your gas appliances checked annually by us, our Gas Safe registered engineer he/she will be able to advise whether this Notice applies to your property.
- - If you do NOT have your boiler regularly serviced arrange for this to be done

 If a property has concealed flues in voids and no inspection hatches:

- - If the property is less than 2 years old contact the original builder for assistance with the retrofitting of inspection hatches and repair of any flue defects.
- - If the property is between 2 and 10 years old contact the home warranty provider as you may be covered by them if there are defects in the flue.
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Warning ! Things that you are not to do yourselves!:

- Attempt to check the flue system yourself (unless you are a gas safe registered engineer) You are likely to do more harm to the installation and place you and your family at greater risk.

- Try to install inspection hatches yourself. You may damage other key functions of the ceiling, such as fire and noise proofing.

If you live in rented accommodation and think your property might be affected:

Bring this Notice to the attention of your landlord or managing agent. It is the responsibility of the landlord to ensure that inspection hatches are installed and that the boiler and flue are che cked every year.

If you think you are suffering the symptoms of CO poisoning:

- Turn the appliance off immediately and contact the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999.
- If you think you or your family experience any of the symptoms of CO poisoning [10] you should seek urgent medical advice from either your GP or an accident and emergency department.

We recommend you to have your flue & all gas appliances safety checked alongside yearly service for your own safety

What our gas safe registered engineers can do :

- We can provide you with landlords gas safety certificates

- - Gas Safe registered engineer can service your boiler yearly
- - We can fit Carbon Monoxide detectors where necessary
- - We can also provide panels with an acoustic rating to 28db
- - We can also fit larger access panels, these may allow an engineer to actually carry out repairs rather than the standard size which allow inspection only

A Gas safety Certificate is a record, also referred to as a certificate, that is required by law to be held for all rental accommodation in the UK where there are gas appliances present. The requirement is enshrined in the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. The law requires all gas appliances in a rented property to be checked annually, with a gas safety record being completed and a copy provided to tenants.

Gas safety records must completed by engineers who must be registered with the Gas Safe Register scheme which took over form the previous CORGI scheme in 2009.

At Advanced Plumbing & Heating Services – we have reliable gas safe (ex corgi) registered engineers who can assist you on this whenever you need this done we are always here for you 24 hours a day 7 days a week and we cover all areas of Central London (City London), East Central & West Central London, City of London and Westminster, West End London (West), Northwest London, East London, North London, Enfield, Southwest London, Southeast London, Enfield, Bromley & Kent, Croydon, Richmond & Twickenham, Uxbridge, Essex, Uxbridge, Dartford, St. Albans and all surrounding areas