

Cornwall Rural Housing Association

Gas, Oil and Solid Fuel Safety Policy

Aims

1. Cornwall Rural Housing Association (CRHA) is required under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and the appropriate Codes of Practice for oil and solid fuel installations to ensure the ongoing safety, and maintenance of gas, oil and solid fuel appliances, flues and fittings in properties that we own.
2. The overall aim of this policy is to protect our customers, their visitors, neighbours, staff, contractors and the general public from risks associated with gas, oil and solid fuel appliances so far as is reasonably practicable.
3. We will conform to current regulations regarding the service, maintenance and repair of all gas and solid fuel, combustible fuel appliance works and installations for which we are responsible. We will follow the Health & Safety Executive's (HSE) Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs) and ensure all industry best practice guidance is properly considered.
4. We will take all reasonable measures to carry out annual safety checks on all gas, oil and solid fuel appliances installed by us.
5. We will take all reasonable measures to maintain all installations, appliances and flues serving these appliances in a safe condition, commissioning regular and routine servicing, including as necessary, any repairs required.

Risks

The principal risks to human life are:-

1. Carbon monoxide poisoning, as a result of poor combustion in faulty or poorly maintained installations.
2. Fires and/or explosions caused by gas, oil leaks, and by poorly maintained and installed appliances.

Further potential risks which may cause harm, damage to property and could put CRHA at risk from prosecution are:-

1. Environmental contamination of poorly maintained and installed oil appliances and installations.
2. Burns and scalding due to poorly maintained and installed appliances and installations

Gas Safety

Legislation

1. CRHA has responsibility, under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, to ensure that all gas appliances in their properties are serviced at least once every twelve months.
2. Other relevant legislation includes:
 - The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018

Scope

The gas section of this policy covers any relevant gas fitting within a property owned by CRHA.

A relevant gas fitting is any gas appliance, other than an appliance which the tenant is entitled to move from the relevant premises (e.g. tenant owned gas cooker)

This Policy sets out the principles in relation to the following:

- Annual Safety Checks
- Maintenance and Servicing
- Competency of Contractors
- Gas Leaks
- Replacement gas appliances

Smoke & Heat Alarms

CRHA has hard wired smoke alarms in all properties. More recently built properties also have heat alarms installed.

The alarms will be serviced on an annual basis, and their installation and servicing will conform to BS5446 and BS7671.

Where a property has a gas, oil or solid fuel installation the smoke and heat alarms will be inspected by the engineer at the time of the annual service. All other properties will have the alarms inspected by an electrical contractor or a heating engineer carrying out other servicing work.

Annual Safety Check

CRHA will annually carry out a safety check on all gas appliances and gas carcasses where there is a gas meter or gas bottle present, including all flues. Where there is a gas carcass present but no gas meter, we will not perform a safety check and cap the gas supply. Capped gas installations will be checked annually.

CRHA is responsible for the safety of the gas installation from the gas meter into the property. Any pipework from the meter to the external supply is the responsibility of the Public Gas Transporter (PGT)

CRHA will aim to ensure that the safety certification is less than 365 days old and renewed at every change of tenancy. The certification will be sent to the customer within 28 days of the date of the check. An electronic copy will be retained by the issuing contractor and provided to CRHA.

To ensure that no gas installation exceeds the legislative 365 day interval between gas safety checks, CRHA operates a 10 month cycle for its programme of gas safety checking and servicing i.e. our gas contractor will start trying to gain access at 10 months. This allows 2 months prior to the gas safety check expiring within which they can attempt to gain access to properties where the first or subsequent attempts have failed.

Gas installations without a gas supply due to non-payment to a supplier will be capped. Capped gas installations will be checked annually. The installation will be checked, re-commissioned and serviced when the customer informs CRHA that a gas supply has been secured and/or serviced on the annual inspection (whichever comes first).

A safety check record should not be issued unless and until all of the required tests / examinations have been completed on all relevant appliances and flues. CRHA will take action to correct / manage any safety defect shown on a safety record which is not remedied at the time of the safety check. These will be attended to according to the urgency level indicated, from emergency, urgent, routine.

Where an appliance is deemed to be dangerous the gas contractor will ensure that the appliance is turned off and clearly labelled that it is not to be used until the defect has been remedied. The gas contractor will also ensure that customers are advised of any safety related defects to appliances owned by the customer and will disconnect the appliance and attach a disconnection notice which states the reason for disconnection. CRHA will not be responsible for the supply of a temporary appliance if they are disconnected where this is a customer owned appliance. Where a customer refuses to allow a dangerous appliance to be switched off the gas contractor is obliged to call the Public Gas Transporter to attend to disconnect the gas supply.

For customer owned appliances e.g. gas cookers CRHA will only safety check the installation pipe work up to the shut off device at the inlet to the appliance.

CRHA will make every attempt to gain access to a home but where access is refused by the customer or the customer refuses to respond to the appointment letter

or calling card, CRHA will apply for a court injunction on the grounds of breach of tenancy and behaviour jeopardising the safety of the occupant, visitors and adjacent properties. Where a home has an external gas meter and access for the gas service has not been allowed, CRHA will consider capping the gas supply. This will only be done following an assessment to determine whether this action is reasonable.

All safety record documents will be kept electronically and for a minimum period of 10 years. This will detail appliance types, flues checked, any defects identified and whether remedial action is required / taken.

The gas supply for void properties will be capped at all changes in tenancy upon the departure of the current customer whilst void works commence at the property. A turn on and safety test will then be completed the day that the customer moves in or when convenient to the customer. A copy of the current gas safety record will be provided to the customer at the time of handover.

Mutual exchanges will have a gas safety check as soon as possible after the exchange takes place, but in any case, no longer than 1 day after. The certificate will be issued to the new customer(s).

Details of new homes with a gas supply including all necessary documentation will be passed on to the Property Services team by the New Homes Delivery Lead. New homes definition is any new build or existing home acquisition that will be a new asset to CRHA.

Details of new gas installations shall be added to SDM property data base.

Maintenance and Servicing

CRHA will maintain a full servicing and repairs agreement and any defects noted to CRHA appliances will be rectified by the attending gas contractor or the manufacturer / manufacturer's agent if it is still under warranty.

All reactive repairs to gas installations will be undertaken and prioritised in line with Response Maintenance guidelines. Servicing will take part generally at the same time as a gas safety check to minimise disruption to the customer. Where a property has become void within 2 months of a service being due then this will be picked up at this time. Where an appliance is isolated, awaiting parts, temporary electric heating will be supplied if requested by a customer.

Open flued gas fires are to be capped off and removed by the gas servicer.

Competent Contractors and Operatives

All contractors and their operatives appointed by CRHA for gas safety checks and servicing must be registered on the Gas Safe Register.

Gas leaks and Carbon Monoxide

Any reports of a carbon monoxide and gas escape will be dealt with by the Property Services team as an immediate priority above all other tasks.

If a member of the Property Services team receives a report of a gas leak, natural gas or carbon monoxide the customer will be advised of the following:

- Turn off the gas supply at the meter
- Extinguish all sources of ignition / naked flames
- Ventilate the building by opening all the windows and doors
- Not to smoke
- Not to operate electrical lights or power switches
- Ensure access to the premises is possible
- To phone the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999

A member of the Property Services team will also arrange for the gas contractor to attend site as an emergency and rectify the leak and report to the Property Services Manager or Head of Homes and Customers. Where the cause of the leak is the customer's negligence or because of a contractor/person employed or engaged by the customer then they will be recharged for the remedial works. The customer will be required to supply the name and contact details of any person who worked on the system, their details and the cause of the defect be supplied to National Grid as required by the current gas safety regulations. Where the customer refuses to supply the details of the person who worked on the system then the customer's name will be supplied to National Grid as the responsible person.

In the case of an incident relating to carbon monoxide a member of the Property Services team will query if any other people in the household are showing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, if they are then an emergency service should be called.

In accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and relevant Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance, carbon monoxide (CO) detectors shall be installed in all rooms where a fixed gas appliance is present, where reasonably practicable.

All carbon monoxide detectors installed must conform to the requirements of BS EN 50291 and be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and current British Standards.

Carbon monoxide detectors will be inspected, tested, and serviced at least annually, in conjunction with the annual gas safety check and servicing of gas appliances and systems, to ensure they remain in proper working order.

Any defective or expired detectors will be replaced promptly to maintain compliance and ensure occupant safety.

Replacement Appliances

Where gas boilers fail prior to the scheduled planned maintenance replacement, CRHA will install replacement heating and hot water appliances. Possible replacements will be a) a high efficiency gas boiler b) programmable electric heating or c) a renewable system, Ground Source or Air Source Heat Pump.

Open flued appliances such as gas fires will not be replaced. A focal point electrical fire will be offered as a replacement. Defective fires will be capped off and removed.

Permission will not be granted to customer's who wish to install open flued appliances.

Oil Safety

Standards and Legislation

1. CRHA will follow advice from OFTEC (Oil Firing Technical Association) requirements for Oil.
2. Other relevant legislation includes
 - The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990

Scope

The oil section of this policy covers any oil boiler and oil storage tank within a property owned by CRHA.

This Policy sets out the principles in relation to the following:

- Annual Safety Checks
- Maintenance and Servicing
- Competency of Contractors
- Monoxide and oil leaks
- Replacement oil appliances

Annual Safety Check

CRHA will annually safety check all oil boilers including flues and associated oil storage tanks. Where there is a capped oil storage tank a check will be carried out annually.

CRHA will aim to ensure that the safety certification is less than 365 days old and renewed at every change of tenancy. The certification will be sent to the customer within 28 days of the date of the check. An electronic copy will be retained by the issuing contractor and provided to CRHA.

All safety record documents will be kept electronically and for a minimum period of 10 years. This will detail appliance types, flues checked, oil tanks checked any defects identified and whether remedial action is required / taken.

CRHA take the same attitude to oil safety as with gas. We will make every attempt to gain access to a property, but where access is refused by a customer or the customer refuses to respond to the appointment letter or calling card, CRHA will apply for a court injunction on grounds of breach of tenancy and behaviour jeopardising the safety of the customer, visitors and adjacent properties. CRHA will consider capping the oil supply. This will only be done following an assessment to determine whether this action is reasonable.

Oil installations without a supply of oil will be capped until such time that a supply by the customer is provided. The installation will be checked and serviced when the customer informs CRHA that an oil supply has been secured.

Maintenance and Servicing

CRHA will maintain a full servicing and repairs agreement. Any defects noted to appliances will be rectified by the attending oil contractor or the manufacturer/manufacturer's agent if it is still under warranty.

All reactive repairs to oil installations will be undertaken and prioritised in line with Response Maintenance guidelines. Servicing will take part generally at the same time as an oil safety check to minimise disruption to the customer. Where a property has become void within 2 months of a service being due then this will be picked up at this time. Where an appliance is isolated, awaiting parts, temporary electric heating will be supplied if requested by a customer.

Competent Contractors and Operatives

Operatives appointed by CRHA for oil safety checks and servicing must be registered on the OFTEC competent persons' scheme.

Carbon Monoxide and oil leaks

Any reports of an escape of carbon monoxide will be dealt with by a member of the Property Services team as an immediate priority above all other tasks.

A member of the Property Services team receiving the report of a carbon monoxide leak will advise the customer to:

- Ventilate the building by opening all the windows and doors
- Turn off the boiler
- Not to smoke

- Ensure access to the premises is possible

A member of the Property Services team will query if any other people in the household are showing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and if they are an emergency service should be called.

In the case of a report of carbon monoxide or report of an oil leak the Oil contractor should be called to attend on an emergency basis.

In accordance with The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended), Building Regulations Approved Document J, and relevant guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and OFTEC, carbon monoxide (CO) detectors shall be installed in rooms containing fixed oil-fired combustion appliances.

All carbon monoxide detectors must comply with BS EN 50291 and be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and applicable British Standards.

Carbon monoxide detectors will be inspected, tested, and serviced at least annually, in conjunction with the annual servicing of oil-fired appliances and associated systems, to ensure they remain in effective working order.

Any defective, activated, or expired detectors will be replaced without delay to maintain compliance and ensure the safety of occupants.

Replacement Appliances

Where oil boilers fail prior to the scheduled planned maintenance replacement, CRHA will install replacement heating and hot water appliances. Possible replacements will be a) a condensing oil boiler b) programmable electric heating or c) heat pump central heating when viable.

Solid Fuel Safety

Standards and Legislation

1. CRHA will follow advice from Hetas (Heating Equipment and Testing Approval Scheme) advice guides and technical bulletins.
2. Relevant legislation includes
 - The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Environment Act 2021

Scope

The solid fuel section of this policy covers any solid fuel appliance, fireplace and chimney within a property owned by CRHA.

Solid fuel appliances include multi fuel stoves and stoves with integral back boiler.

This Policy sets out the principles in relation to the following:

- Annual Safety Checks
- Maintenance and Servicing
- Competency of Contractors
- Carbon Monoxide and fire
- Removal of solid fuel appliances

CRHA will ensure all appliances and associated flues in our ownership have an annual safety check by appropriately qualified Hetas engineers.

Appliances and associated flues installed by our customers will be safety checked by CRHA on an annual basis, however, any malfunction and associated work to remedy may result in this work being rechargeable to the customer.

All chimneys with associated open fireplaces will be swept by a Hetas qualified chimney sweep and checked on an annual basis. The certification will be sent to the customer within 28 days of the date of the check. An electronic copy will be retained by the issuing contractor and provided to CRHA.

All safety record documents will be kept electronically and for a minimum period of 10 years. This will detail appliance types, flues, details of open fires and whether remedial action is required / taken.

Maintenance and Servicing

CRHA will maintain a full servicing and repairs agreement. Any defects noted to appliances will be rectified by the attending solid fuel contractor.

All reactive repairs to solid fuel installations will be undertaken and prioritised in line with Response Maintenance guidelines. The servicing of stoves will take part generally at the same time as an appliance safety check to minimise disruption to the customer. Where a property has become void within 2 months of a service being due then this will be picked up at this time.

Competent Contractors and Operatives

Operatives appointed by CRHA for annual appliance safety checks and servicing must be registered engineers on the Hetas competent persons' scheme. Chimney sweeps must be Hetas registered chimney sweeps.

Carbon Monoxide and Fire

Any reports of carbon monoxide escape will be dealt with by a member of the Property Services team as an immediate priority above all other tasks.

Upon receipt of a report of a carbon monoxide leak a member of the Property Services team will advise the customer of the following:

- Ventilate the building by opening all the windows and doors
- Ensure access to the premises is possible

A member of the Property Services team will query if any other occupants within the household are showing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and if they are an emergency service should be called.

In the case of a report of carbon monoxide a solid fuel contractor should be called to attend on an emergency basis.

If a live fire is reported the customer is to be advised to ring **999** for the emergency services. Fire damage is to be reported to the Property Services Manager. Damage will be inspected and reported to insurers as necessary.

In accordance with The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended), Building Regulations Approved Document J, and relevant guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and industry best practice, carbon monoxide (CO) detectors shall be installed in all rooms containing fixed solid fuel combustion appliances (including wood-burning stoves, coal fires, and biomass systems).

All carbon monoxide detectors must comply with BS EN 50291 and be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and applicable British Standards.

Carbon monoxide detectors will be inspected, tested, and serviced at least annually, in conjunction with the annual servicing and maintenance of solid fuel appliances, flues, and associated systems, to ensure they remain in proper working order.

Any defective, activated, or end-of-life detectors will be replaced without delay to maintain compliance and ensure the safety of occupants.

Removal of Solid Fuel Appliances

CRHA will generally decline permission requests from customers to install solid fuel appliances but will consider requests on a case by case basis. The reasons for refusal for solid fuel appliances are set out below:

- Solid fuel appliances are an inefficient means of heating a property in terms of the energy performance of a dwelling
- Solid fuel appliances carry a high risk in terms of chimney fires and CO poisoning, particularly if the user does not use the right fuel or operate the appliance safely.

- Solid fuel appliances are not easy to use and require cleaning and resetting on a daily basis so they may not be suitable for all of our customers
- Wood and coal fires also give off tiny particles which can be detrimental to people with lung / breathing conditions

When an appliance is discovered without landlord's permission, the customer will be expected to remove the appliance within a given timescale unless retrospective permission is granted. Should this timescale not be met then CRHA will decommission at the customer's expense.

Stoves with back boilers owned by CRHA will be maintained until it is deemed no longer economical to do so. Possible replacements where the stove provides partial central heating will be a) programmable electric heating with a hot water cylinder b) heat pump central heating when viable. An electric fire will be offered as a replacement focal point.

Multifuel stoves owned by CRHA will be maintained until it is deemed no longer economical to do so. When a stove is removed, CRHA will arrange to block off the fireplace, install a suitable cowl to the chimney pot, offer to remove the hearth and provide a focal point electric fire if requested.

Open fireplaces not in use will be permanently decommissioned. CRHA will arrange to block off the fireplace, install a suitable cowl to the chimney pot, and offer to remove the hearth.

Date Reviewed	Changes to the policy	Date to be Reviewed	Approved By	Author
May 26	The policy has been reviewed with the following changes: New CRHA logo added. Where required 'tenant' changed to 'customer' and 'property' changed to 'home' – this is to achieve consistent language. Appliance Replacements (Gas), Ground Source and Air Source Heat Pumps added as a potential replacement solution. Gas installations without a gas supply due to non-	May 29	The Board	SA

	payment to a supplier will be capped. Capped gas installations will be checked annually. The installation will be checked, re-commissioned and serviced when the customer informs CRHA that a gas supply has been secured and/or serviced on the annual inspection (whichever comes first). For mutual exchanges the time allowance for checking gas systems after the new customer moves in has been reduced from a 4 day period to a 1 day period.			
	Added a specific section for each heating type (Gas, Oil & Solid Fuel) regarding Carbon Monoxide Alarms			