



Gas safety in Great Britain is changing – what does this mean for you?

There will be a new gas registration scheme from 1 April 2009 in England, Scotland and Wales (Great Britain). The new scheme, Gas Safe Register™ is delivered under an agreement with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and replaces the CORGI gas register which ends on 31 March.

In relation to domestic gas under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, landlords' legal duties apply to a wide range of accommodation, including residential premises provided for rent by private landlords, local authorities, housing associations, housing co-operatives, and hostels.

It remains a legal requirement for all landlords to have an annual safety check on all gas appliances and flues provided in a rental property. However, from 1 April 2009 a Gas Safe registered engineer, not a CORGI installer, must carry out the safety check.

If you let any properties of this kind, you must now make sure that pipe work, appliances and flues provided for tenants are maintained in a safe condition and subject to an annual safety check carried out only by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

In all cases, all gas equipment (including any appliance left by a previous tenant) must be certified as safe or otherwise removed before re-letting. A record of safety checks must be provided to the tenant within 28 days of completing the check, or to each new tenant before they move in. You must also keep a copy of the safety check record for two years.

Gas Safety Certificate

The 'Landlord Gas Safety Record' is often referred to as a 'Gas Safety Certificate' or 'CP12' form. It is quite acceptable to continue to use this style of certificate – even if it has a CORGI logo or the word CORGI on it. There is no requirement for new paperwork. The important change after 1st April 2009 is to have a check carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

It shouldn't cost you more to get appliances checked and maintained under the new scheme; the cost of registration is only a small element of the bill you pay. As a minimum, the record of a gas safety check must contain the following information:

- a description of and the location of each appliance or flue checked
- the name, registration number and signature of the individual carrying out the check
- the date on which the appliance or flue was checked
- the address of the property at which the appliance or flue is installed
- the name and address of the landlord (or his agent where appropriate)
- any defect identified and any remedial action taken
- a statement confirming that the safety check completed complies with the requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

All existing gas safety records will be valid until their expiry date (even if that date is later than 1st April 2009). Any gas safety record given to you after 1st April 2009 will only be valid if the engineer is on the Gas Safe Register. There is no dual running of the schemes. CORGI will operate the registration scheme in GB until 31 March 2009 and Gas Safe Register will start on 1 April 2009.

If letting or managing agents are involved

As before, by law you must make sure that the letting or management contract clearly specifies who is to make arrangements for maintenance and safety checks on gas equipment and for keeping associated records. Where specified by the contract, make sure gas appliances and flues are serviced at least once every 12 months or at any other time if there is a safety doubt. We strongly advise that you request to see copies of the maintenance information and safety check from any agent you use to ensure maintenance has been completed by Gas Safe registered engineer.

Always check the ID card

Whatever the letting arrangement, you must always check the engineer's ID card (and details of the type of work that an engineer is registered to carry out) before they begin work on any gas appliances. Please also encourage your tenants to do the same. From 1st April, anyone can find or check a Gas

Safe registered engineer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week online at www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk or call **0800 408 5500**. You can even get a photo of the engineer with details that tell you if they're qualified to do the job sent to your mobile phone for added peace of mind.

Refused entry

In some cases, there have been problems experienced with engineers refused entry by tenants and subsequent failure for safety checks to take place. Please encourage your tenants to let the Gas Safe registered engineer into the property upon presentation of the ID card.

To help you explain the situation to your tenants, you can download free leaflets from our website www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk or email 'Consumer Leaflet Request' to marketing@GasSafeRegister.co.uk

Install a carbon monoxide alarm

There is no substitute for annual safety checks carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer, but for the added safety of your tenants we strongly recommend you fit a CE-approved audible carbon monoxide alarm in every property and test it monthly. Carbon monoxide has no odour or visibility, so an audible alarm is the only way to detect harmful levels in the property. If your tenants report that they are suffering from headaches, nausea, chest pains or dizziness, and feel better when away from the property, encourage them to report it to you immediately and seek medical attention.

No to DIY

If you are letting or renting a property you should never attempt to install or repair a gas appliance yourself in an attempt to save money. This is breaking the law and putting lives at serious risk. HSE gives gas safety a high priority and will take the appropriate action to ensure compliance with the regulations. If your tenants suspect a gas appliance isn't working correctly, ask them to turn it off and report it to you immediately so you can contact a Gas Safe registered engineer for advice. If ever in doubt, call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999.

Remember before April installers must remain registered with CORGI to carry out gas work legally. From 1 April, always use a Gas Safe registered engineer. Be gas safe.

More information can be found on our website www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk

Leaflets for landlords can be obtained by emailing 'Landlord Leaflet Request' to marketing@GasSafeRegister.co.uk

Further advice on landlords' duties is contained in *HSE's Guidance to Landlords and Letting Agents* found at www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/faq/landlord.htm