
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1996 No. 551

Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996

Gas escapes and investigations

7.—(1) It shall be the duty of British Gas p.l.c. to provide a continuously manned telephone service (which shall be contactable within Great Britain by the use of one telephone number) for enabling persons to report an escape of gas from a network or from a gas fitting supplied with gas from a network.

(2) Where British Gas p.l.c. is notified of such an escape of gas it shall, if it is not responsible for preventing the escape under paragraphs (4) or (5), report it forthwith to the person who is.

(3) A person referred to in regulation 6(2)(a) to (c) and the holder of a licence issued under section 7A(1) of the Gas Act 1986 who discovers or is notified of any such escape of gas (other than by virtue of a report made to him pursuant to paragraph (2)) shall report it forthwith to British Gas p.l.c.

(4) Where any gas escapes from a network the person conveying the gas in the part of the network from which the gas escapes shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable after being so informed of the escape, attend the place where the gas is escaping, and within 12 hours of being so informed of the escape, he shall prevent the gas escaping.

(5) Where any gas escapes from a gas fitting supplied with gas from a network, the person conveying the gas in the part of the network immediately upstream of the emergency control for the supply of gas to that fitting shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable after being so informed of the escape, attend the place where the gas is escaping, and within 12 hours of being so informed of the escape, he shall prevent the gas escaping.

(6) Where a person conveying gas in a network has reasonable cause to suspect that gas conveyed by him which has escaped has entered, or may enter, any premises, he shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, take all the steps necessary to avert danger to persons from such entry.

(7) If the responsible person for any premises knows or has reason to suspect that gas is escaping from a gas fitting in those premises supplied with gas from a network he shall immediately take all reasonable steps to cause the supply of gas to be shut off at such place as may be necessary to prevent further escape of gas.

(8) If gas continues to escape into those premises after the supply of gas has been shut off or when a smell of gas persists, the responsible person for the premises discovering such escape or smell shall immediately give notice of the escape or smell to British Gas p.l.c.

(9) Where an escape of gas has been stopped by shutting off the supply, no person shall cause or permit the supply to be re-opened (other than in the course of repair) until all necessary steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of such escape.

(10) In any proceedings against a person for an offence consisting of a contravention of paragraphs (4) or (5) above it shall, in so far as the contravention is not preventing the escape of gas within the period of 12 hours referred to in those paragraphs, be a defence for the person to prove that it was not reasonably practicable for him effectually to prevent the gas from escaping within that period, and that he did effectually prevent the escape of gas as soon as it was reasonably practicable for him to do so.

(11) A person conveying gas may appoint another person to act on his behalf to prevent an escape of gas, and where he does so in advance of discovering or being notified of such an escape—

- (a) he shall notify British Gas p.l.c. of the name of the person appointed;
- (b) the appointee shall in relation to the escape be responsible for complying with paragraphs (4) to (6) in substitution for the person conveying the gas, and paragraph (6) shall have effect as if the reference to the person conveying gas having reasonable cause to suspect that the gas has entered or may enter premises were a reference to the appointee having such cause.

(12) Where an escape of gas from a gas fitting on domestic premises has resulted in a fire or explosion, the person conveying the gas in the part of the network immediately upstream of the emergency control for the supply of gas to that fitting shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving notice of the fire or explosion, cause an investigation to be carried out so as to establish, so far as is reasonably practicable, whether the escape was from installation pipework or from an, and if so which, appliance.

(13) Where an escape of gas from a network has or was likely to have resulted in a fire or explosion, the person conveying the gas in the part of the network where the gas escaped shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving notice of the escape, cause an investigation to be carried out so as to establish the source of the escape and, so far as is reasonably practicable, the reason for it.

(14) Where an incident notifiable under regulation 6(1) of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995⁽¹⁾ has arisen as a result of an escape of carbon monoxide gas from incomplete combustion of gas in a gas fitting, the person who supplied the gas shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving notice of the incident, cause an investigation to be carried out so as to establish, so far as is reasonably practicable, the cause of the escape and accumulation of the carbon monoxide gas.

(15) Where a person who conveys gas receives notice of an incident referred to in paragraph (14), he shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable, inform the relevant gas supplier of that fact.

(16) A person who causes an investigation to be carried out pursuant to paragraphs (12), (13) or (14) shall—

- (a) ensure that the individuals who carry it out are competent;
- (b) notify the Executive before the investigation begins of the intention to carry it out;
- (c) ensure that a report of the investigation is prepared and a copy of it is sent to the Executive as soon as is reasonably practicable after the investigation has been completed.

(17) In this Regulation—

- (a) “the responsible person” has the same meaning as in regulation 2(1) of the 1994 Regulations;
- (b) any reference to an escape of gas from a gas fitting includes a reference to an escape or emission of carbon monoxide gas resulting from incomplete combustion of gas in such a fitting;
- (c) any reference to a fire or explosion of gas is a reference to an unintended fire or explosion of gas;
- (d) any reference to a person supplying gas does not include a reference to a person to whom the gas is supplied and who provides it for use in a flat or part of premises let by him.

(1) S.I. 1995/3163.