

Safety in the Home (Extract from the Warm & Safe Homes Action Guide Nov 2018)

Free Emergency Numbers:

Power Cut – Call 105

Gas Emergency – Call 0800 111 999

Priority Services Register – Call 0800 096 3080 or www.westernpower.co.uk/psr

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a deadly gas that cannot be seen, smelt or tasted. It can be produced by fuel burning appliances in your home such as a gas boiler. Householders should take the following steps to protect their homes and families:

Make sure that fuel burning appliances such as fires, boilers and gas cookers are regularly serviced by a qualified engineer.

For gas appliances engineers must be Gas Safe-registered. For oil and solid fuel appliances it is recommended to use an engineer registered with a relevant trade body, for example HETAS or OFTEC. Ask your engineer for proof of their registration.

Install an audible Carbon Monoxide alarm. These can be bought from DIY stores, supermarkets and high street shops, they cost around £15 and could save lives!

Danger signs are:

gas flames burning orange or yellow instead of the normal blue

soot stains on or above the appliance

coal or wood fires that burn slowly or go out.

Actions to take:

appliances should be checked for safety every year by a competent person. Gas appliances should only be checked by Gas Safe (official body for gas safety in GB and the Isle of Man) engineers

the property must be properly ventilated – vents should never be blocked

chimneys and flues should be regularly swept and cleaned

carbon monoxide detectors can be purchased (they should conform to British Standard BS 7860).

Power Cuts

The UK's electricity network is very reliable. However, problems sometimes occur that affect your electricity supply. In these circumstances, please do not panic. There is a simple, free number to call which will put you through to your local electricity network operator. If you have a power cut or need to report damage to power lines just dial **105** or visit

www.powercut105.com.

If you spot a potential hazard on or near an overhead electricity line

Do not approach any hazard, even at ground level.

Keep as far away as possible.

Warn anyone in the vicinity to evacuate the area.

Contact your distribution network operator (call **105**).

What to do during a power cut

Switch off all electrical appliances.

Leave a light on so you know when power is restored.

Check to see if your neighbours are OK.

Keep a blanket near you.

Wrap up warm.

Keep one room warm and stay in it.

Using phones during a power cut

Cordless phones take their power straight from the electricity mains and often don't have battery back-up, so are unlikely to work in the event of a power cut even if they are fully charged.

Mobile phones may work as long as they are fully charged; depending on how widespread the power cut is and how long it lasts.

You may wish to keep a traditional corded phone which plugs straight into the phone socket for a situation such as power cuts to enable you to make essential calls.

Restoring supply is the responsibility of the local electricity distribution company that maintains the cables and wires supplying electricity to the home. If the power cut is caused by a fault on the network the householder may be entitled to a payment if it:

lasts for longer than 12 hours in normal weather where the power cut affects less than 5000 homes

lasts for longer than 24 hours in normal weather

where the power cut affects more than 5000 homes

lasts for 24-48 hours in severe weather, and

is the distributor's fault

Gas Emergencies

If you smell gas or are worried about gas safety, call **0800 111 999** at any time, day or night and you will be put through to a trained operator who will take all the details. If you smell gas:

Open windows and doors to get rid of gas by ventilating the rooms.

Don't touch electrical switches – turning switches on or off can ignite escaping gas.

Extinguish all naked flames.

Turn off gas at the valve unless the meter is in the basement or cellar – if you smell gas there, evacuate the building.

Don't smoke or strike matches.

If a gas main pipe is dug up or breached, contractors should call the emergency helpline number on **0800 111 999**.

999 is for use when an IMMEDIATE RESPONSE is required and should only be used if:

Someone is in immediate danger.

Someone needs immediate emergency medical care.

A crime is taking place or about to happen.

