

2021 Gas Safety Webinars

Your clients. Your responsibilities.

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Frequently Asked Questions

This list of FAQs will be updated each week following the scheduled webinar. Please check in regularly to keep up to date with the latest responses.

Heat Exchangers

During service work, you should check for cracks in the heat exchanger. A crack in a heat exchanger does not mean the appliance is immediately unsafe. The presence of combustion products at the outlets (nearest outlet) is the trigger to isolate the appliance.

If the owner/occupier refuses to allow you to isolate the appliance, call ESV 24/7 Emergency Hot Line on 1800 652 563 – select option 5. It is strongly recommended that if you have located crack in a heat exchange you advise your client that they should have the heat exchange replaced or the heater replaced.

Isolation of a dangerous gas installation

With consent from the owner/occupier, it is recommended that you physically isolate gas supply from the appliance and tag the appliance off.

If the owner/occupier refuses to allow you to isolate the appliance, call ESV 24/7 Emergency Hot Line on 1800 652 563 select option 5. Without consent, cutting either the power lead or thermocouple may leave you liable for the damage to a person's property.

Conducting a Carbon Monoxide Test on a Type A appliance

You must hold a gasfitting licence or registration to carry out tests on a Type A Gas Appliance installation. To carry out service work on a Type A gas appliance you are required to hold the specialised class of Type A appliance servicing work.

It is not recommended to just complete a carbon monoxide test on a Type A Gas Appliance without servicing the appliance.

Q: Can a ducted heater have an effect on the open-flued gas heater (OFGH)?

A: The short answer is yes.

Clause 6.3.1 Adverse effect of air movement systems reads:

Gas appliances shall not be installed where the operation of any ventilation system, air distribution system, fan, or air blower could, under any circumstances—

- (a) deprive the gas appliance of the air required for combustion and draught diverter dilution; or
- (b) otherwise adversely affect the operation of the gas appliance.

Where there is an open-flued gas heater (OFGH) and a ducted heater in the same dwelling, the testing scenarios are installation specific.

One scenario to be mindful of is that extraction fans (bathrooms and rangehoods) require all doors to be open with fans leading back to the OFGH; whereas, the worst-case scenario for a ducted heater would be the return air in the room with the OFGH and the door shut.

One approach would be to complete the negative pressure and combustion spillage test as per the ESV VBA test report sheet, and then re-test taking into account the location of the return air and adjusting the tests to replicate the greatest risk. The appliance and flue system must be allowed to cool down before repeating the smoke test with the ducted heater in operation.

Q: I repair a leak in a gas consumer pipe. On restarting appliances, do I need to conduct a CO test on any internal heating appliances?

A: The gasfitter has an obligation to leave a safe gas installation. During the relight process, it would be expected that if they noticed a situation that would leave them of the opinion the installation is unsafe, they would need to action that matter. Negative Pressure and CO tests would not be expected unless you had concerns due to your observations.

Q: When is a compliance certificate required?

A: Under the Building Act 1993, a compliance certificate must be given for any of the following gasfitting related work:

1. Total cost of plumbing work (including labour and parts) is \$750 or more,
2. The installation, relocation or replacement of any gas using appliance,
3. The conversion of a gas-using appliance for use with a different gaseous fuel, or
4. The installation, modification or relocation of consumer gas piping (other than work that is carried out on consumer gas piping by, or on behalf of, a gas company and that is incidental to the modification of the gas company's assets under the provisions of an accepted safety case under the Gas Safety Act 1997).

Q: Is a compliance certificate required when a section of the gas pipework is replaced?

A: A compliance certificate is required when you replace a section of the gas pipework. This is because this work involves modifying the gas fitting line, and therefore the consumer gas piping is not the same as it was prior to the work being carried out.

Q: Is a compliance certificate required if I replace an isolating valve to the gas appliance?

A: A compliance certificate is required when you replace an isolating valve to a gas appliance as this work will involve a modification of the consumer gas piping. Note that testing of the fitting line downstream of the gas valve to the next point of isolation will also be required.

Q: I have carried out a service on a Type A gas appliance but not exceeded \$750.00 in costs. Is a compliance certificate required?

A: A compliance certificate is not required as this work does not involve the installation, relocation or replacement of a gas appliance and the total cost is less than \$750.

Q: I have disconnected a Type A gas appliance from the fitting line and removed it from its fixed position for the purpose of replacing of parts to a gas appliance e.g. burner assembly, heat exchanger. Is a compliance certificate required for this?

A: Yes, a compliance certificate is required to be issued and lodged as this work involves the removal from its fixed position of the gas appliance for the purposes of repair (or any other purpose), and then reinstalled. Note that the gas appliance will also need to be fully commissioned to ensure correct operation after repair.

If I am disconnecting the gas supply to an appliance but the appliance is remaining in its fixed position, a compliance certificate is not required (unless that work is \$750 or more).

Q: If I remove a gas appliance permanently, do I need to lodge a Compliance Certificate?

A: A compliance certificate will be required as the gas installation has been modified.

Q: I am replacing a flexible hose on an upright stove in a house (like for like). If the flexible hose is part of the consumer piping, do I need to submit a compliance certificate?

A: A compliance certificate is required as this is considered a modification of the consumer gas piping.

Q: I am disconnecting a gas stove for the vinyl flooring to be fitted, the same stove is to be refitted the next day. Do I need to submit a compliance certificate?

A: A compliance certificate is required regardless of the value of the work as this is considered a replacement of the original installation, as the appliance is being removed from its fixed position and then reinstalled.

Q: Is a compliance certificate required if I carry out a gas safety check under the Residential Tenancy Regulations?

A: A compliance certificate is not required unless the gas safety check includes any of the following:

- a) Total cost is \$750 or more,
- b) The installation, relocation or replacement of any gas using appliance,
- c) The conversion of a gas-using appliance for use with a different gaseous fuel, or
- d) The installation, modification or relocation of consumer gas piping (other than work that is carried out on consumer gas piping by, or on behalf of, a gas company and that is incidental to the modification of the gas company's assets under the provisions of an accepted safety case under the Gas Safety Act 1997).

Q: Do I need to provide any documentation prior to starting any gas service work?

A: It is a legal requirement for a plumber to provide the person who commissioned the work a document setting out their name, license or registration number and business address.

Building Act 1993 221ZPA Information to be provided before work starts

(1) Before a licensed or registered plumber starts any plumbing work at a premises, he or she must give the person who commissioned the work a document that sets out the plumber's name, licence or registration number, and business address.

Q: What class of license or registration do I need to carry out service work on a Type A gas appliance?

A: Plumbers need to hold the specialised class of Type A gas appliance servicing work in order to carry out service work on a Type A gas appliance (listed as Gas Service-Type A on the VBA license/registration card).

Building Act 1993 221F Restriction concerning specialised plumbing work

(1) A person must not carry out any class or type of specialised plumbing work unless he or she is licensed or registered by the Authority to carry out that class or type of work.

The cardholder can only work in classes where registration is ticked and can only issue compliance where licence is ticked

License Number: 123456

Main Classes	License	Registration	Restricted Classes	License	Registration
Drainage	✓	✓	Comm & indust fire sprinklers	✓	✓
Fire protection	✓	✓	Fire system pump sets	✓	✓
Gasfitting	✓	✓	Hydrants & hose reels	✓	✓
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	✓	✓	Ras & down pipe sprinklers	✓	✓
Mechanical services	✓	✓	Gas - mobile homes	✓	✓
Refrigerated air-conditioning	✓	✓	Gas - disconnect / reconnect	✓	✓
Roofing (stormwater)	✓	✓	Gas - restricted to type A appliances	✓	✓
Sanitary	✓	✓	Duct fixing	✓	✓
Type B gasfitting	✓	✓	Single head split systems	✓	✓
Water supply	✓	✓	Solid fuel heaters	✓	✓
Specialised Classes			Refrig air-cond (basic)	✓	✓
Gas servicing - type A	✓	✓	Refrig air-cond (intermediate)	✓	✓
Gas servicing - type B	✓	✓	Class 10 Roofing	✓	✓
Type B gasfitting advanced	✓	✓	Domestic hot water services	✓	✓
Backflow prevention	✓	✓	Routine servicing - Hose reels	✓	✓
Thermostatic Mixing Valve	✓	✓	Routine servicing - Unloaded hydrants & valves	✓	✓
			Routine servicing - Pumped systems & valves	✓	✓
			Routine servicing - Fire sprinkler systems	✓	✓

Look for: Gas servicing - Type A →

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Q: If I am registered in the specialised class of Type A appliance servicing work (shown on the VBA identification card as Gas Servicing -Type A), are there any restrictions on the work I can do?

A: Yes. You must be working under the supervision of a person who is licensed in the specialised class of Type A appliance servicing work (listed as Gas Service-Type A on the VBA license/registration card).

Building Act 1993 221OA Registration as a plumber

(5) A person who is registered to carry out a particular class of specialised plumbing work under this section must not, unless otherwise exempted by the Authority, do any specialised plumbing work of that class unless that work is carried out under the supervision of a person who is licensed to carry out work of that class.

Q: What constitutes supervision?

A: The onus is on the licensed supervising person to determine the level of supervision that is required. This will be determined by the level of competency of the registered person and complexity of the work. Ultimately the licensed person has overall responsibility for the work carried out.

Building Act 1993 221G Obligations on licensed plumbers concerning their agents

- (1) A licensed plumber must not permit a person to carry out on his or her behalf, or direct a person to carry out, any plumbing work or specialised plumbing work—
 - (a) that is of a class or type in respect of which the person is not licensed or registered under this Part; or
 - (b) that is defective in workmanship or that involves the use of materials that the licensed plumber knows, or reasonably ought to know, are defective or that does not comply with the plumbing laws.

Q: Does the owner of a gasfitting business need to be a qualified gasfitter?

A: No they do not, however businesses that operate a gasfitting business must ensure that all their staff or contractors that carry out gasfitting or gas appliance service work are suitably qualified to carry out such work.

Building Act 1993 221H (3) People involved in a plumbing business need not be licensed or registered

A person who owns, operates, manages or otherwise participates in, is employed by, or shares in the profits of, any business that carries out plumbing work or specialised plumbing work must not cause or permit any plumbing work or specialised plumbing work to be carried out on behalf of the business by a person who is not permitted by this Part to carry out that work.

Q: What to do if you identify non-compliant plumbing work?

A: In the course of your work, you may come across non-compliant plumbing work. As the existing gas installation belongs to the owner of the property, they must approve of any rectification work to be undertaken. The action the gasfitter takes will depend on whether the non-compliant plumbing work identified is considered to be dangerous or not. A dangerous installation is one that presents a threat to life or property – see ESV’s “Gas Information Sheet 27 – Dealing with dangerous installations” for more information.

Example scenario 1:

When conducting a service on a gas cooktop (cleaning the injector), the attending gasfitter identifies that the rangehood clearance is non-compliant (e.g. 590 mm clearance). What should they do?

Gasfitters are required to assess the safety of an installation. If you assess the installation as dangerous your first priority is to safe guard life and property:

The person carrying out the work must:

- (a) make the installation or appliance safe;
- (b) notify the occupier or owner about the defect; and
- (c) if unable to make safe, notify ESV and the gas distribution company (if NG) or gas retailer (if LPG).

If the gasfitter considers the installation to be non-compliant, but not a dangerous installation (e.g. no signs of scorch marks or damage in the surrounding cooktop area), they should advise the owner of the situation and recommend it be rectified.

If the non-compliant gas installation is within the warranty period covered by a compliance certificate (six years), the property owner may be able to take action to have that work rectified by the original gasfitter.

Example scenario 2:

When conducting a Gas Safety Check (to comply with the Residential Tenancy Regulations 2021) on a freestanding gas cooker, the gasfitter identifies that the appliance is not secured from tipping over. What should they do?

An unsecured free standing gas cooker is considered a dangerous installation as the misuse of the appliance can have catastrophic consequences. As the installation is considered dangerous your first priority is to safe guard life and property:

The person carrying out the work must:

- (a) make the installation or appliance safe; (This means either fix/ temporarily fix to ensure it cannot topple over with weight placed on oven door or isolate)
- (b) notify the occupier or owner about the defect; and
- (c) if unable to make safe, notify ESV and the gas distribution company (if NG) or gas retailer (if LPG).

Disclaimer: Please note that the above scenarios are only examples of some situations and do not constitute a complete list. All situations of non-compliance have to be considered as to the danger they present.