

Using gas  
safely is easy

## If you smell gas...

### Inside your home

- ✓ Keep flames and cigarettes out of the room and away from the area.
- ✓ If it can be done safely, turn off all gas appliances.
- ✓ If it can be done safely, turn off the gas supply at the meter or LPG cylinder.
- ✓ Open doors and windows to ventilate the area.
- ✓ Leave electrical appliances or switches as they are – a flick off or on could cause a spark and ignite the gas.
- ✓ Don't use your phone in the area.
- ✓ Contact your gas retailer or a licensed gas worker immediately to check the installation (use a phone away from the gas leak).
- ✓ If the smell persists in the house go outside to a safe place away from the building.

### Outside your home

- ✓ Keep flames, cigarettes, vehicles and electrical equipment (including mobile phones) away from the area.
- ✓ Turn off the gas supply at the meter or LPG cylinder.
- ✓ Leave the area.
- ✓ Contact your gas retailer or ring the gas emergency number listed in the 'Emergency Services' pages (page 4) in the White Pages phone book.

If you think you have a problem with your gas supply, contact your gas retailer (the company that sends you your gas bills) immediately. If you think you have a problem with your gas installation or appliances, contact your local licensed gas worker immediately.

## Important phone numbers

### My Gas Retailer

### My Licensed Gas Worker

### In a Gas Emergency

(see Emergency Numbers section on page 4 of White Pages)

### Produced by:

#### Energy Safety

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### In association with:

#### Gas Association of New Zealand

www.ganz.org.nz Tel: 04 472 9220

#### LPG Association

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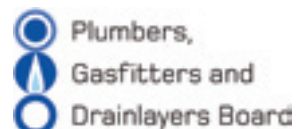
#### Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board

www.pgdb.co.nz Tel: 04 494 2970

#### Master Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers (NZ)

www.masterplumbers.org.nz Tel: 0800 502 102

### Working in partnership for your safety



# Living safely with gas

This leaflet contains important safety information for households where gas appliances are installed.

Gas is instant, reliable, efficient and safe if used wisely but, like any form of energy, it must be treated with respect to prevent accidents.

Keep this in a safe place

New Zealand Government

## Install safely

Always get a licensed gas worker (usually a gasfitter or craftsman gasfitter) to install your gas appliances or alter your gas supply.

A licensed gas worker will ensure that your gas appliance or installation is connected correctly, has adequate ventilation, is appropriately flued and is in good working order.

A Gasfitting Certificate is required for all new gas installations and most alterations to existing installations in your home.

You can request a Gasfitting Certificate from the gas worker or company that carried out the work or from the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board for a fee.

## Ventilate well

Gas appliances need a supply of fresh air for safe and efficient operation.

Use unflued (no vent or chimney) gas appliances only in well-ventilated areas with plenty of fresh air circulating. Unflued gas appliances draw the air they need from the space around them and discharge the waste combustion products directly into that space.

Never use unflued gas appliances, such as LPG cabinet heaters or instantaneous water heaters in small rooms and confined spaces such as bedrooms, bathrooms or caravans.

Outdoor gas appliances should never be used indoors. This includes patio heaters, barbecues and camping cookers.

## Maintain regularly

Consumers, homeowners, landlords and tenants are responsible for ensuring the safe operation and maintenance of their gas appliances and equipment.

To ensure the safety and efficiency of your gas appliance get it checked regularly, always by an authorised and competent person:

- Flame effect heaters and LPG cabinet heaters should be serviced annually.
- Other types of space heaters and water heaters should be serviced at least every two years.
- Whenever a licensed gas worker is working in your home, get them to check that your gas appliances and installation are safe.
- Consider replacing old appliances.
- Avoid buying second-hand appliances.

If ventilation inlets are blocked or restricted, or if a gas appliance is faulty or has not been adequately maintained, it can operate poorly, and possibly produce carbon monoxide, which can be fatal.

## Danger signs

Signs that an appliance is not working correctly or that the flue is blocked include:

- a yellow flame, rather than a blue flame (Note: some 'flame-effect' heaters are designed to burn with a yellow flame)
- soot deposits in or around the appliance
- an unpleasant, distinctive smell, similar to that of a car exhaust.

**If you notice any of these signs, turn off the appliance and contact a licensed gas worker immediately.**

## Portable gas heaters

Portable gas heaters such as LPG cabinet heaters, and other unflued space heaters, need special care and maintenance.

**Test your connections (cabinet heaters):** After connecting a gas cylinder, apply soapy water to the cylinder connections and turn on the cylinder. If bubbles appear, you have a leak. Close the valve and either call an LPG service agent or take the heater to the agent.

**Safe space:** Always keep your heater at least 1 metre away from anything that could catch on fire. Put a safety guard around your heater if you have young children in your home or there is a lot of foot traffic.

**Fresh air:** Keep a window partially open to help remove heater emissions and to reduce condensation.

**No obstruction:** Keep appliance grilles and vents clear of obstructions and free of lint and dust.

LPG heaters should not be used unsupervised by children or infirm persons.

## Carbon monoxide

If an appliance cannot burn its fuel efficiently (due to inadequate ventilation or an appliance fault), it may produce carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is a highly poisonous gas. While it is odourless, it is accompanied by other emissions that may produce a 'car exhaust' smell or watery eyes.

**Breathing low levels of carbon monoxide can cause headaches, nausea, flushed (red) skin, dizziness, a false sense of well-being, tiredness and vomiting.**

Prolonged exposure or high levels of carbon monoxide can lead to collapse, unconsciousness, or even death.

If you suspect you have been exposed to carbon monoxide move into fresh air, and seek immediate medical attention. If it can be done safely, turn off the appliance and ventilate the room. Contact a licensed gas worker to check the gas appliance.