



**Summary of reported gas
accidents for which the
investigation was completed
between October and December
2009**

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This is the list of the 1 natural gas and the 5 LPG notifiable accidents reported to Energy Safety for which the investigation was completed between October and December 2009



The natural gas notifiable accident

Event ID:	090923 04
Event summary	A mother was briefly attending to her baby while the gas stove was in use. She was alerted by a smoke alarm and found a fire had occurred about the stove. The Fire Service was called and arrived just as the fire was taking hold.
Event date	23/09/2009
Site	Domestic
Environment	Building
Equipment	Domestic freestanding cooker
Event	Fire, Explosion
Casualty	No casualty
Injury	No injury
Property damage level	Extended to the room and structure containing the equipment
Outcome of investigation	The Fire Service expressed the view that the fire was caused by a gas leakage from the appliance and not from unattended cooking. A gasfitter examined the appliance and found a substantial gas leakage at the oven thermostat. The gasfitter could not, however, establish cause of the leakage so the appliance was sent to the manufacturer for examination and testing. The manufacturer considered that there had been a leak, which could not have occurred without prior intense heating of the thermostat body. The manufacturer concluded the fire resulted from a grease fire in the grill compartment.

The LPG notifiable accidents

Event ID:	090819 01
Event summary	The District Coroner sought Energy Safety's assistance with an investigation into the death of a male with high levels of carboxyhaemoglobin in a sample of his blood who had been found deceased two months previously in a caravan supplied with LPG.
Event date	19/06/2009
Site	Public
Environment	Caravan
Equipment	Domestic hotplate (hob)
Event	CO Poisoning (Incomplete Combustion)
Casualty	Fatality
Injury	Asphyxiation, Toxicity
Property damage level	No property damage
Outcome of investigation	The cooker was in extremely poor condition. Tests with combustion analyser indicated that high levels of carbon monoxide were given off as a result of malfunctioning of a grill. Lack of ventilation in caravan was considered to be a contributory factor.

Event ID:	090923 03
Event summary	Apparent exposure to products of combustion (CO) associated with use of LPG cabinet heater.
Event date	9/09/2009
Site	Domestic
Environment	Building
Equipment	Space heater cabinet heater
Event	CO Poisoning (Incomplete Combustion)
Casualty	Injury
Injury	Toxicity
Property damage level	No property damage
Outcome of investigation	CO exposure can not be ruled out as symptoms consistent with exposure to CO were reported. However, on the evidence available, it can not be established that there was a significant exposure to CO. A blood test was not taken and heater testing did not indicate abnormal operation. Operation in a relatively small space may have been a factor.

Event ID:	091006 01
Event summary	The owner noticed smoke coming from the top of a two year old cabinet heater soon after lighting it. On investigation she observed flames, about the size of a pen, from the area of the controls. She turned the heater off at the cylinder and the flames extinguished. She then went outside and at the suggestion of a neighbour, contacted the Fire Service. The Fire Service checked the heater, disconnected it from the cylinder and took possession of the heater.
Event date	4/10/2009
Site	Domestic
Environment	Building
Equipment	Space heater cabinet heater
Event	Fire, Explosion
Casualty	No casualty
Injury	No injury
Property damage level	Restricted to the direct vicinity of the equipment
Outcome of investigation	Fire evidently resulted from a gas leakage in the area of the heater controls. There had been no previous problems with the heater, but the owner had noticed a distinctive smell when it was operating (which did not occur with a replacement cabinet heater). Leakage at the valve was confirmed in independent testing. The make and model has been withdrawn from sale due to other occurrences of leakage about control valve.

Event ID:	091006 02
Event summary	An operator of an LPG fuelled frost protection machine, towed by tractor, was slowly turning to start on new furrow when he heard a gas leakage. He pulled the manual shut off valve and as he did so fire broke out. Fire continued to burn from ruptured gas supply system so the operator left out of tractor and ran to the road. The Fire Service was called and trucks from three locations attended.
Event date	6/10/2009
Site	Rural
Environment	Outside (Above Ground)
Equipment	Other
Event	Fire, Explosion
Casualty	No casualty
Injury	No injury
Property damage level	Restricted to the direct vicinity of the equipment
Outcome of investigation	Possible leak in gas supply system. Emergency control valve turned off gas supply to burner but did not stop fire because gas was escaping upstream of valve.

Event ID:	091218 01
Event summary	A consumer purchased a 6 burner barbecue some 11 months previously and used it about three times for a short period. He carried out leak tests at the connection point to cylinder with soapy water. On the last occasion of use he turned the cylinder on, closed the door of a cupboard that housed the cylinder, turned two of the burners to a low position then pressed a piezo igniter (which lights both burners). He was enveloped with flames as he did so (and does not know if he actually succeeded in establishing a flame at the burners). He then opened the door to the cupboard where the cylinder was stored and saw a flame, the width of a finger nail and about 2 feet long.
Event date	13/12/2009
Site	Domestic
Environment	Outside (Above Ground)
Equipment	Barbecue
Event	Fire, Explosion
Casualty	Injury
Injury	Burn
Property damage level	Restricted to the direct vicinity of the equipment
Outcome of investigation	On examination, the regulator diaphragm was found to have ruptured, evidently as a result of a manufacturing defect. The ruptured diaphragm caused gas to escape at cylinder pressure. The barbecue retailer advised that the regulator was from the previous season's stock and that no other similar faults had been reported.