

Kingstanding house gas explosion: Stay safe with a gas safety check

Getting a gas safety check is the best way to protect your property.

That's the message to people in Kingstanding who might be concerned after a gas explosion destroyed a house in the Birmingham neighbourhood last month. A woman died and a man was seriously injured in the incident.

Gas incidents such as the Kingstanding explosion are devastating but extremely rare. HSE's statistics show there were 25 gas related fire and explosion incidents in 2020/2021. This is despite there being over 22 million households using gas across the country.

The authorities recommend some simple steps people can take to keep their homes safe.

Gas appliances should be regularly checked to prevent gas leaks and stop carbon monoxide being released. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) says homeowners should get an annual gas safety check carried out by a qualified engineer listed on the Gas Safe Register.

Anyone living in rented accommodation should check their landlord has had an annual gas safety record check carried out by a registered Gas Safe engineer.

The Gas Safe Register is the official list of gas businesses which are registered to work safely and legally on boilers, cookers, fires, and all other gas appliances. By law, anyone working with gas in domestic or commercial premises must be listed on the register. Gas Safe registered businesses can be found on their [website](#).

Meanwhile, everyone should find where in their property the gas emergency control valve (also called gas emergency shut off valve) is. This will be found at their gas meter. Householders should check they have access to it. If they ever smell gas, call the gas emergency number on 0800 111 999.

In some circumstances, suppliers can offer free gas safety checks through the Priority Services Register. For further advice and information homeowners can contact their gas supplier (the company they pay their bills to).

John Rowe, HSE policy lead for gas safety, said: "Our thoughts are with those affected by the terrible Kingstanding incident. When something so devastating happens, people understandably worry.

"The truth is gas is an incredibly safe way of fuelling our homes. Serious incidents are extremely rare. We should all be careful and not unduly concerned about using gas in our home. We're encouraging householders to get a gas safety check, carried out by a registered Gas Safe engineer. Everyone should know where their emergency gas safety valve is and that it is

accessible. These steps will help keep people safe.”

Bob Kerr, Gas Services Director at Gas Safe Register, said: “Regular safety checking and servicing of gas appliances can ensure that they are operating safely and as intended. Having an audible carbon monoxide alarm is also a good second line of defence.”

Alex Shapland, Area Commander with West Midlands Fire Service, said: “Our thoughts remain with everyone affected by the devastating incident in Kingstanding; in particular those who grieve and the man who was injured.

“The events of 26 June are a stark reminder of how important it is to get gas appliances regularly tested by a Gas Safe professional.

“We would also urge anyone who’s concerned about fire safety at home to contact their local fire and rescue service. Our own ‘Safe and Well’ visits can be requested via our website, wmfs.net, and by calling 0800 389 5525.”

Further information:

For more information on gas health and safety visit HSE’s [website](#).

You can find out more at [Check Your Gas Appliances – Gas Safe Register](#)

Tips to keep gas safe:

1. Only use a Gas Safe registered engineer to fit, fix and service your appliances. You can find and check an engineer at GasSafeRegister.co.uk or call 0800 408 5500.
1. Know the six signs of carbon monoxide poisoning – headaches, dizziness, breathlessness, nausea, collapse and loss of consciousness.
1. Check gas appliances for warning signs that they are not working properly - for example lazy yellow flames instead of crisp blue ones, black marks or stains on or around the appliance and condensation in the room.
1. Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm. This will alert you if there is carbon monoxide in your home.
1. If you smell gas call the gas emergency number on 0800 111 999.
1. Check both sides of your engineer’s Gas Safe Register ID card. Make sure they are qualified for the work you need doing. You can find this information on the back of the card.
1. Have all your gas appliances regularly serviced and safety checked every year. If you rent your home, ask for a copy of the landlord’s current Gas Safety Record.

Notes to editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury

and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.hse.gov.uk

1. HSE news releases are available at: <http://press.hse.gov.uk>