

Technical Bulletin 003

Developed with Industry and the GIUSP Working Group



Title: Built-over polyethylene (PE) Low and Medium pressure natural gas services – Safety concern

Date issued: 19 November 2010

Note: This version of Technical Bulletin (TB) 003 replaces the version previously published 2 September 2009 which is now withdrawn. This version has been reviewed and where appropriate revised to ensure that it remains both current and relevant.

There are gas safety concerns relating to the building over of certain natural gas service pipes, which become enclosed in an extension to a property. This Technical Bulletin provides Gas Safe registered businesses/engineers with industry agreed guidance when they encounter this issue

Introduction

The guidance provided in the current Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure (GIUSP) applies a classification of 'At Risk' ('AR') where an unprotected polyethylene (PE) gas service is located within a building. Following a review by the GIUSP Working Group and further consultation with the Distribution Network Operators, it is necessary to clarify the situation.

Risk assessment

Medium Pressure ('MP') fed gas service - If the property is supplied via an 'MP' service and it is discovered that it has been 'built over' i.e. the meter and regulator are located within the building, the installation should be classified as 'At Risk' ('AR') in accordance with the procedure detailed in the current GIUSP (TB 001⁽¹⁾). This is because of the increased risks associated with elevated gas pressures.

Low Pressure ('LP') fed gas service - If the property is supplied via a 'LP' service and it is discovered that it has been 'built over', i.e. the meter and regulator are located within the building, the installation should be classified as 'Not to Current Standards' ('NCS') in accordance with the procedure detailed in the current GIUSP (TB 001⁽¹⁾).

Note 1: *If the engineer is unsure about which pressure tier applies, then in the interests of gas safety, an 'AR' classification should be applied.*

In both of the above situations the relevant Gas Transporter (GT) needs to be notified immediately.

Existing building extensions

Where a property has been extended and the extension (or conservatory) has enclosed an existing gas meter installation (see examples below), it will be necessary to relocate the gas meter and gas service pipe to an agreed position, usually externally to the building within a meter box, in order for the installation to meet current standards.

Drawings showing an example of how a gas service can become enclosed within a building (applies to both LP and MP services) are shown in **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** below.

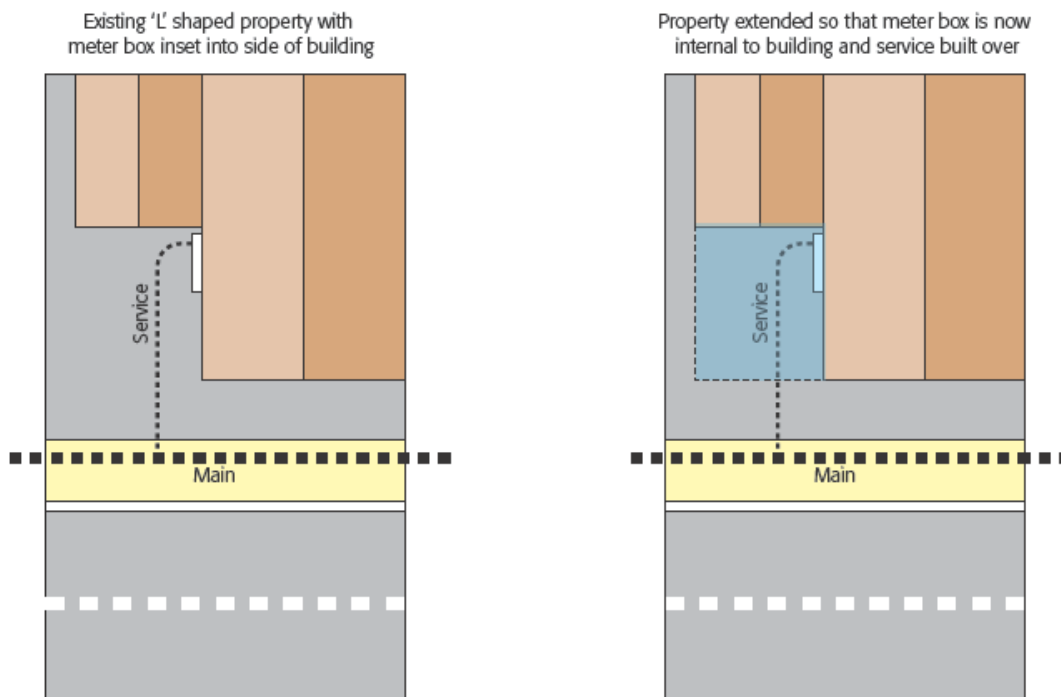


Figure 1 – Before extension built

Figure 2 – After extension built

Existing building extensions - actions required

Where a meter installation is encountered which has been enclosed within a building extension, the following actions should be undertaken:

'MP' fed gas service - Explain to the gas user/responsible person that the installation is classified as 'At Risk'. With their permission, turn off the supply at the emergency control valve (ECV) and issue a Warning Notice to the gas user/responsible person.

The situation will need to be reported to the relevant Gas Transporter (GT) (see below). The GT will record the information and send a competent person to site within 4 hours of the report being made, to undertake further investigation (see [Figure 3](#)).

'LP' fed gas service - Explain to the gas user/responsible person that the installation is classified as 'NCS' and issue an 'Advice Notice' to the gas user/responsible person.

Again, the situation will need to be reported to the relevant GT (see below). The GT will record the information and arrange for a competent person to carry out further investigations within 28 days of the report being made. The GT will advise the gas user/responsible person what further action may be required (see [Figure 3](#)).

Note 2: *In both situations, if a meter re-location is required this may be chargeable to the gas user/responsible person.*

In all cases, if there is a smell of gas associated with a built-over gas service pipe, then the National Gas Emergency Service will need to be contacted immediately.

Planned building extensions

For planned extensions the gas user/responsible person or their agent (contractor) should be advised to obtain formal agreement from the relevant Gas Supplier (GS) and GT to relocate the meter installation.

Identifying the Gas Transporter

The natural gas distribution system in Great Britain is divided into a number of different gas transportation companies and networks. There are 4 principle (main) GTs and a larger number of Independent GTs (IGTs). Licensed GTs own and operate gas pipeline systems which convey gas to premises. Through their licence approval (Ofgem) they can convey gas to premises in their licensed area or to the interface of other GTs' networks.

Note 3: *Some local authority and housing trust estates may not have gas conveyed to their dwellings via a GT's gas network. In these instances, gas is supplied to a bulk meter on the edge of the estate and the local authority or housing trust then conveys gas to the dwellings via its own private gas network. Such networks are common in London.*

Whenever there is a need to make contact with the appropriate GT/IGT responsible for the gas service to a particular premise, it will be necessary for the registered business/engineer to contact the Gas Transporter Helpline on **0870 160 0229** to establish the identity of the relevant GT/IGT. Callers will be required to give the premise's post code and first line of the address in order to access the information required. Following receipt of the information, the relevant GT/IGT will need to be contacted in order to report the 'built over service' concern.

Note 4: *For guidance on natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)/Air supplies in other geographical areas covered by Gas Safe Register, contact should be made with the relevant Gas Transporter/Gas Supplier.*

Note 5: *In the case of LPG Networks/installations, reference should be made to the LPG supplier, the contact details of which will normally be found on the bulk storage vessel, cylinder, or at the meter.*

Note 6: *For details of current gas safety legislation, building legislation and industry standards for the geographical areas covered by Gas Safe Register, see [Technical Bulletin \(TB\) 999](#)⁽²⁾.*

Note 7: *For general information about the process behind the development of Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletins and the expectations for all Stakeholders, see [TB 1000](#)⁽³⁾.*

Bibliography

(1) [TB 001 – The Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure](#)

(2) [TB 999 – Gas Safe Register Normative Document List](#)

(3) [TB 1000 – An introduction to Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletins](#)

Note: Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletins can be viewed at: <https://engineers.gassaferegister.co.uk> - login and visit the Technical Information area.

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Figure 3: Process for registered engineers following identification of built-over service pipes (both medium pressure and low pressure fed meter installations)

