Gas on Boats (vessels)

There are many types of vessels that use gas for heating and/or cooking. It's a very convenient fuel but using gas is not without risk. This is why it's important to ensure any gas appliances on a vessel are properly installed and maintained correctly and safely. It is important to recognise that where any gas work is in-scope of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR), any person undertaking gas work must hold suitable competencies and be Gas Safe registered.

What does 'in scope' mean?

Where the person(s) vessel is hired out for business i.e. rental, made available for the public as part of business like a restaurant, or used primarily for domestic or residential purposes i.e. living accommodation, any person undertaking gas work would need to be Gas Safe registered.

Further details can be found at the Health and Safety Executive website.

What is gas work?

The definition of 'work' in relation to a gas fitting lists specific activities which are:

- maintaining, servicing, permanently adjusting, disconnecting, repairing, altering or renewing the fitting or purging it of air or gas;
- where the fitting is not readily movable, changing its position;
- removing the fitting

Therefore, anyone undertaking 'work' on an in-scope vessel that could affect the above would need to be competent and Gas Safe registered.

Note. This does not include the connection or disconnection of a bayonet fitting or other self-sealing connector or replacing an LPG cylinder from a regulator.

Can a Gas Safe registered business work on a boat that is not covered by GSIUR?

Anyone working on the gas installation will have to be competent and do the 'work' competently to comply with the general duties in sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

GAS safe REGISTER

What does a bubble tester do?

Having a bubble tester fitted means you'll be able to tell if there's a leak in your boat's gas system downstream of the bubble tester, as you'll see bubbles appearing in the glass sighting chamber.

To use your bubble tester, we recommend always following the manufacturer's instructions.

As a general guide the following may apply:

- Switch off all gas appliances on board your boat but leave the gas turned on.
- Press and hold the red button down for at least 60 seconds and check the glass sighting chamber for bubbles.
- If no bubbles appear, your gas system is safe and leak-free.

If bubbles appear this means you may have a gas leak. If LPG leakage is detected or suspected, the following actions shall be taken immediately:

- Shut of the LPG supply at the main supply valve(s)
- Extinguish all naked flames and other ignition sources (such as cooking appliances and pilot lights)
- Do not operate electrical switches (on or off)
- Evacuate the area if possible

For boats within the scope of GSIUR contact a Gas Safe registered engineer that has competency to work on boats as soon as possible.

Do I need a landlord's gas safety record for a boat that is rented out?

Yes, it is a legal requirement for a boat owner in the UK to provide a Gas Safety Record where rented, which details the latest inspection. Only Gas Safe registered engineers can provide a Gas Safety Record.

I was told that my flueless or open flued water heater should not be located in the bathroom?

Correct, only room-sealed appliances should be located in a room containing a bath or shower. Any open-flued or flueless appliance fitted in these locations would be considered a dangerous appliance. If you have any concerns call your Gas Safe registered engineer to inspect your appliance.

GAS safe REGISTER

What happens when a Gas Safe engineer finds an unsafe appliance or situation?

When a registered gas engineer identifies an unsafe situation on an in-scope boat, they will follow the guidance set out within IGEM/G/11 Gas industry unsafe situations procedure. This may involve them explaining what the fault is and try to find the cause and repair any fault to ensure your safety. If it can't be corrected immediately, they should make the installation safe, after first seeking your permission to do so. This is normally done by disconnecting or by turning off the gas to the affected part of the installation.

I have concerns about the gas work carried out by the business I employed, who can help?

If you have any concerns regarding gas work undertaken by a business you employed, please contact Gas Safe Register by following the link below or calling 0800 408 5500.

Report Gas Work Concerns

For further information regarding gas safety, please go to the Gas Safe Register website at gassaferegister.co.uk, or call Gas Safe Register on 0800 408 5500.