



Office of **Energy**

Office of **ENERGY WA**

Gas FOCUS

Preliminary and Compliance Notices

In June 1997, the Director of Energy Safety advised the gas industry that the newly designed Preliminary Notices and Notices of Compliance are the only forms that may be used for notification of gasfitting work in Western Australia (please refer to Gas Focus issued with Energy Bulletin No. 8 in August 1997).

The new Notices have been extensively distributed through gas supplier networks and are available from the Office of Energy.

Significantly, with the introduction of these new Notices, the use of incorrectly completed forms has fallen from 10% to about 1.5% of all notices received.

This is an excellent result. It generally reflects the efforts being made by gas fitters to take a little extra care when completing the Notices. Correctly completed paperwork is particularly important. LPG cylinders will not be supplied and/or gas will not be connected to an installation, unless the gas supplier or an agent of the supplier, has received a correct and completed Notice of Compliance.

Only the new Notices will be accepted by the gas supplier. The Notices can be identified by the form numbers TSD G020 0697 or TSD G021 0697 in the bottom right hand corner of the form.



Are You Experiencing Difficulties in Obtaining LPG Cylinders?

There have been concerns about difficulties in obtaining LPG cylinders for homes in country areas. Gas suppliers are correctly demanding a signed Notice of Compliance (NOC) before the release of gas cylinders for new installations.

This is not a new requirement or change to gas supplier's procedures. There has always been a requirement for gas suppliers to receive a NOC before the initial supply of LPG cylinders for new installations.

Gas suppliers are required to submit their consumers' Inspection Plans to the Office of Energy, pursuant to application of Section 13 of the *Gas Standards Act 1972*. These inspection plans reinforce the need for a signed NOC from the gas fitter before the gas supplier can release the gas cylinders.

In other words, gas suppliers are ensuring that the gas fitter has complied with the requirements of the *Gas Standards Regulations 1983*. A signed NOC demonstrates to a gas supplier that an installation is complete and complies with requirements.

Also, all gas suppliers are required to inspect a sample of gas installations. This means that if a gas fitter fails to ensure that an installation complies with the *Gas Standards Regulations 1983*, (eg: a lack of ventilation or the placement of a water heater too close to the gas cylinders), there is a high probability that a Notice of Defects (NOD) will be issued. Any further work undertaken by the same gas fitter is likely to be scrutinised more closely, under the gas suppliers' Inspection Plans.

NODs are to be avoided by gas fitters, since they signify that a breach of the regulations has taken place. Such breaches may result in prosecution.

Gas fitters working with gas supplied by AlintaGas may already be familiar with Attention Tags or a NOD for work that is not in compliance with the *Gas Standards Regulations 1983*. Similar action will be taken by LPG suppliers whenever necessary.

Under the reporting requirements of the gas supplier inspection plans, a quarterly report is forwarded to the Office of Energy. This report identifies gas fitters failing to meet the requirements of the *Gas Standards Regulations 1983*. If it is found that a gas fitter continues to receive NODs, the competency of that person may come into question. The person may therefore be dealt with through processes such as reviewing his or her ability to hold a gas fitter's certificate, authorisation or permit. The Director of Energy Safety of the Office of Energy can conduct such disciplinary proceedings.

Customer Service - LPG

In instances where there may be delays experienced between when the gas fitter completes a gas installation and when the home owner moves into the house, the gas fitter can assist in the process.

When completing a gas installation, ie. after the appliances have been set up, the gas fitter should provide a useful and important customer service by leaving clear instructions as to how an LPG installation works. This includes information on the initial lighting sequence and gas cylinder replacement.

Gas suppliers provide information brochures that are useful for consumers on such matters. The gas fitter can arrange for this information to be given as part of a package to the builder to pass onto the new home owner.



Care and Maintenance of a Caravan's Gas Installation

This is the time of the year when many people travel north to enjoy the warmer climate offered in those parts of the State.

It is also the time of the year when mobile homes, caravans and the like are checked for roadworthiness, by checking the wheels, bearings, brakes, hitches, etc. However, the gas installation is often overlooked.

Earlier in the year, a gas inspector was travelling between Karratha and Port Hedland when he came across a motor vehicle and the remains of what was a caravan.

The driver of the vehicle had travelled from Victoria towing this caravan. Each morning he religiously swapped the supply to the refrigerator from gas to the 12 volt vehicle supply.

On this particular morning, he had forgotten to swap the gas over. He had been driving for about an hour when a passing motorist alerted him to smoke billowing from the caravan. By the time he had slowed down and pulled to the side of the road, the caravan had burst into flames. With assistance, he unhitched the burning caravan and moved his vehicle away. The caravan was destroyed within minutes.



It is important to regularly check the gas installation on a caravan. Copper gas fitting lines are run from the gas cylinders on the "A" frame to the gas cooker and, in most cases, the refrigerator. The lines are supported, clipped and usually sleeved. Whenever they pass through the floor of the van, the lines should also be protected with flexible grommets.

Whilst a caravan is travelling along the road, the gas fitting lines are subjected to twisting and flexing in sympathy with the continual movement of the caravan. Chafing or work hardening may occur, causing the gas leaks we so often hear about.

It is recommended that the gas installation in a caravan be checked annually. If the compliance sticker is illegible, it is also time to check the installation.

A gas fitter checking the gas installation in a caravan is required to:

- pressure test the whole of the gas installation;
- ensure gas cylinders are within test date (ie: that the current year is within 10 years of the test date stamped on the cylinder collar) and that they are properly secured;
- check that high and low level ventilation is serviceable and clear;
- confirm that gas fitting lines are secure and grommets are in place;
- service all the gas appliances and affix service sticker; and
- ensure the gas refrigerator flue is sealed from inside the van and is vented to outside.

In some instances, a caravan may need to be re-licensed whilst the owner is on an extended trip away from their home state. If a caravan is presented to a gas fitter for inspection, the above checks must be carried out. If it is necessary to fix a new compliance label, then a Notice of Compliance must be completed and submitted.

Caravans are often left on a permanent site in a caravan park. In the interests of gas safety, it is worthwhile speaking to the owners of these caravans to arrange safety checks of their gas installations. If left unattended for extended time, the smallest of gas leaks can accumulate and eventually reach an explosive concentration with dire consequences.

Safety brochures are available from the Office of Energy to assist the caravan owner understand the gas installation. These brochures should be placed in the caravan for future reference.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the gas installation of a caravan, please contact your local gas supplier or the Office of Energy.



**PROSECUTIONS FOR BREACHES OF
THE GAS STANDARDS ACT (1972) AND GAS STANDARDS REGULATIONS (1983)
1 February 1998 to 30 June 1998**

<i>Breach</i>	<i>Name (and Suburb/Town of Residence at Time of Offence)</i>	<i>Licence No.</i>	<i>Fine \$</i>	<i>Costs \$</i>
<i>Carried out gas fitting work without certificate of competency, permit or authorisation Section 13A GSA</i>	<i>N Reid (Leonora)</i>	<i>NLH</i>	<i>800.00</i>	<i>369.00</i>
	<i>P Wynch (Brentwood)</i>	<i>NLH</i>	<i>400.00</i>	<i>200.00</i>
<i>Failed to install permanent ventilation openings adjacent to the outlet plug of a bayonet fitting Regulation 19(1) GSR</i>	<i>J Hudson (Mindarie)</i>	<i>GF 007692</i>	<i>150.00</i>	<i>122.00</i>
	<i>M Wynne (Woodlands)</i>	<i>GF 000272</i>	<i>200.00</i>	<i>77.00</i>
<i>Failed to complete and issue Notice of Compliance within 48 hours of completing gas fitting work Regulation 21(1) GSR</i>	<i>R Stone (Gosnells)</i>	<i>GF 000163</i>	<i>150.00</i>	<i>79.00</i>
<i>Failed to make the consumers gas installation comply within seven days Regulation 22(1) GSR</i>	<i>J Hudson (Mindarie)</i>	<i>GF 007692</i>	<i>250.00</i>	<i>122.00</i>
	<i>M Wynne (Woodlands)</i>	<i>GF 000272</i>	<i>400.00</i>	<i>77.00</i>
<i>Failed to pressure test an installation to ensure the system was gas-tight Regulation 26(1)(a) GSR</i>	<i>R Stone (Gosnells)</i>	<i>GF 000163</i>	<i>75.00</i>	<i>79.00</i>
	<i>I Heyder (Warwick)</i>	<i>GF 002828</i>	<i>400.00</i>	<i>198.00</i>
<i>Failed to install a part of an installation in a safe and workmanlike manner Regulation 27(c) GSR</i>	<i>R Stone (Gosnells)</i>	<i>GF 000163</i>	<i>75.00</i>	<i>79.00</i>
	<i>S Clarke (Doubleview)</i>	<i>NLH</i>	<i>75.00</i>	<i>145.00</i>

NLH No Licence Held