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# National Grid on standby to keep West Midlands homes safe this Christmas

National Grid staff in the West Midlands working 24/7 over Christmas and New Year

20 Dec 2016

- **Staff gearing up for 75,000 calls to National Gas Emergency Service**
- **Call 0800 111 999 if you smell gas or suspect a carbon monoxide leak**
- **One in four homes inspected in the West Midlands have unsafe gas appliances**

Gas network company National Grid is urging people to stay safe this Christmas as staff gear up for 75,000 calls to its emergency hotline.

National Grid's engineers and call-handlers will be working around the clock to make sure homes stay warm and gas supplies are safe over the festive period.

But as householders in the West Midlands fire up their gas cookers, boilers and fires for a feast of festive food and family get-togethers, National Grid is urging people to be extra alert to gas leaks and carbon monoxide poisoning.

John Duckworth, Head of Operations, Emergency Response and Repair West, said: "Call 0800 111 999 immediately if you smell gas or suffer the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. They are: headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, collapse and loss of consciousness.

"Make a note of the number and keep it somewhere handy. Our engineers are working 24/7 to keep you safe - even on Christmas Day."

Last year National Grid engineers attended 2,452 emergency calls across the West Midlands during the festive period (see notes to editors for a breakdown by area). Some 60 of these were on Christmas Day.

Here's the number of calls National Grid will be dealing with while people enjoy these festive activities:

- Cooking the turkey – 291 calls\*
- Christmas children's blockbuster 'Frozen' – 150 calls
- Jools Holland's Annual Hootenanny on New Year's Eve – 368 calls

Faulty or badly maintained gas appliances can leak deadly carbon monoxide (CO) gas, causing death or serious injury. Figures show that a quarter of homes in the West Midlands inspected by Gas Safe Register – the official list of gas engineers registered to work legally on gas appliances – had unsafe appliances. National Grid has three simple life-saving tips:

- Ensure gas appliances are installed, maintained and fixed by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- Get your gas appliances checked annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- As a backup, buy and install an audible carbon monoxide detector. They can be bought for as little as £15, are simple to install and could save your life

A list of Gas Safe Registered engineers, who are qualified to work legally and safely on gas appliances, is available on the [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk) website. Further information about the National Gas Emergency Service, along with advice about gas safety and helpful videos, can be found on at [www.nationalgrid.com](http://www.nationalgrid.com)

Ends

\*based on an average 5.5kg turkey – information from the British Turkey Information Service

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Notes for editors

**Notes to editors:**

Breakdown of the number of calls attended by emergency engineers over the Christmas and New Year period last year:

**East Anglia**

Norwich	263
Peterborough	146
Bury St Edmunds & Ipswich	158
Cambridge	123
Luton/Bedford	302
Watford/Hemel	321
Harlow/Bishops Stortford	116
Chelmsford/Braintree	105
Chelmsford/Clacton	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,606</b>

**East Midlands**

Scunthorpe/Grimsby	129
Barnsley/rotherham	274
Sheffield	283
Mansfield/Chesterfield	289
Derby	318
Leicester	367
Northamptonshire	268
Lincoln/Grantham	167
Nottingham	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,287</b>

**North London**            **3,616**

**North West**

Urmaston/Manchester	331
Manchester Centre	229
Macclesfield	262
Oldham	286
Wirral	156
Southport/Bootle	201
Liverpool Centre	213
Garston	200
Ellesmere Port	117
Crewe	92
St Helens	272
Accrington	210
Blackpool	137
Kirby Lonsdale	102
Barrow in Furness	49
Longbridge	254
Honwich	306
Wigan	181
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,668</b>

**West Midlands**

Dudley/Kingswinford	382
Walsall	371
Stoke/Stafford	128
Stoke	140
Telford	160
Worcester/Malvern/Hereford/Redditch	124
Birmingham Centre	391
Tamworth/Sutton/Great Barr/Kingstanding	401
Coventry/Nuneaton/Hinckley	251
Leamington/Rugby	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,452</b>

**Notes to Editors:**

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

**National Grid in the UK:**

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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