



21 Dec 2015

It's not just Santa who will be working on Christmas Eve. Whilst many of us are making last minute plans, watching Christmas TV and wrapping presents, National Grid engineers will be working around the clock make sure our gas supplies are safe over the festive period.

Throughout the year, engineers are on hand day and night to tackle potentially dangerous gas leaks. So, as we fire up our ovens to cook the festive feast and enjoy all the traditional seasonal activities, safety-conscious National Grid is urging people to be extra alert to potential gas leaks over the holidays.

It is estimated that around 63,000 calls will be made to the 24 hour National Gas Emergency Service number - 0800 111 999 - over the holiday period. Last year 2,900 emergency calls were received from the West Midlands region.

So, while you're enjoying the Christmas TV specials, here's an idea of how busy the engineers will be:

- During Doctor Who (1 hour), 179 calls
- Strictly Come Dancing (1 hour 15 minutes), 224 calls
- Downton Abbey (2 hours), 358 calls

Stephen Murray, head of operations in the Midlands said: "Our engineers play a vital role at this time of year in making sure homes, shops and business have a safe and reliable gas supply throughout the festive season."

For us it's business as usual. Our staff will be ready to answer calls and deal with any gas related problems that might arise on Christmas Day just as they would on any other day of the year."

The call centre team will be responding to calls of gas escapes and dispatching engineers. If you smell gas follow these simple safety steps:

- Call the National Gas Emergency 0800 111 999
- Do not smoke or light matches
- Do not turn electrical switches on or off
- Open doors and windows
- Turn off the meter at the control valve unless the meter is in the cellar

Ends

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Notes for editors

The breakdown by area of calls over the Christmas period last year:

West Midlands

Dudley/Kingswinford	461
Walsall	446
Stoke/Stafford	151
Stoke	155
Telford	185
Worcester/Malvern/Hereford/Redditch	165
Birmingham Centre	466
Tamworth/Sutton/Great Barr/Kingstanding	446
Coventry/Nuneaton/Hinckley	265
Leamington/Rugby	160
Total	2,900

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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