

Minister for Local Government and Planning
Ministear airson Riaghaltas Ionadail agus Dealbhadh
Derek Mackay MSP
Derek MacAoidh BPA

F/T: 0845 774 1741
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Kevin Stewart MSP
Convener
Local Government and Regeneration Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP



5 August 2013

Dear Kevin

I am writing to advise the Local Government and Regeneration Committee of a forthcoming change to building standards that will require the installation of carbon monoxide alarms in buildings.

Carbon monoxide, known as the 'silent killer' is a toxic gas that can result from incomplete combustion of various fuels such as gas, solid fuel and oil. In buildings this can occur due to faulty or poorly maintained combustion appliances such as boilers and their associated flues.

Following a review and public consultation, I agreed that building standards officials should draft the changes ready for implementation on 1 October this year. A press release (embargoed copy attached) has been prepared to bring this information to the attention of all concerned including industry, householders and occupants of dwellings and other residential buildings.

The amended standards will require the installation of carbon monoxide alarms whenever new combustion appliances, such as boilers, are installed. Additionally alarms will also require to be fitted where any existing appliance is replaced.

Implementation through our national building standards system will ensure that carbon monoxides alarms will be installed to protect people in their homes and other buildings.

I have copied this letter to the Conveners of the Infrastructure & Capital Investment and Health & Sport Committees for their awareness.

DEREK MACKAY

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
Cidhe Bhictòria, Dùn Èideann, EH6 6QQ
www.scotland.gov.uk



6 August, 2013

Law change to tackle 'silent killer'

Carbon monoxide alarms to be fitted

A change in building regulations that requires the fitting of alarms warning against the presence of poisonous carbon monoxide gas will apply from October this year.

Carbon monoxide alarms that can detect and warn of the gas known as 'the silent killer' will be needed when new or replacement boilers, heaters, fires and stoves are installed in houses, hotels, guest houses and care homes.

Planning Minister Derek Mackay said:

"The Scottish Government recognises the devastating effect carbon monoxide poisoning can have on people's lives.

"Not a year goes by where there isn't an avoidable death in Scotland from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by faulty heating appliances in buildings.

"There are also a considerable number of incidents where people are treated in hospital for the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning.

"That is why, from 1 October, the Scottish building regulations will require carbon monoxide alarms to be fitted when a new or replacement boiler or other heating appliance is to be installed in a dwelling and other buildings with bedrooms."

Louis Blake, from the Carbon Monoxide – Be Alarmed! campaign, said:

"In the UK, at least 50 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning every year and thousands more need hospital treatment. An audible carbon monoxide alarm is the only way to protect yourself and your family.

"This change to the Scottish building regulations will see more detectors in Scottish homes, which will save lives. However, we urge people to act now to protect themselves from carbon monoxide and buy an alarm today."

Background

Carbon monoxide is known as 'the silent killer' because it is a poisonous gas that cannot be seen, smelt or tasted. Combustion appliances fuelled by solid fuel, oil or gas all have the potential to cause carbon monoxide poisoning if they are poorly installed or commissioned, inadequately maintained or incorrectly used.

Contact: Suzanne Hart 0131 244 2797/ 07837061358