

# News Release



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## BEWARE THE DANGERS OF USING BOGUS GAS FITTERS IF YOUR BOILER BREAKS DOWN THIS WINTER

*Winter is upon us and that means household boilers will again be working almost continuously. This is the time they can break down, but getting a heating engineer to come out "instantly" while you shiver with cold is not always possible. So it might be tempting to simply get the first person available. However B&ES (the Building & Engineering Services Association) who operate Heating Helpline, the free consumer advice service, urge caution.*

**2 December 2014** – Winter is upon us and that means household boilers will again be working almost continuously. This is the time they can break down, especially if it's been a long while since the boiler was last serviced. And if you have ever had your boiler break down in the middle of the winter you will know that it's no fun being in a house or flat

with no hot water and no heating. Winter is when reputable heating engineers are rushed off their feet – dealing with breakdowns and repairs – and getting one to come out “instantly” while you shiver with cold is not always possible, and it can take days before they can fit you in. So it might be tempting to simply get the first person available. However B&ES (the Building & Engineering Services Association) who operate Heating Helpline, the free consumer advice service, urge caution.

B&ES Chief Executive, Roderick Pettigrew, comments, “A quarter of a million illegal gas jobs are carried out each year but homeowners must remember that dangerous gas work can be deadly. Badly fitted and poorly serviced appliances can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions and carbon monoxide poisoning. Using an illegal gas fitter can put the lives of you and your loved ones in danger.

“In the UK it is against the law for anyone to do work on gas appliances unless they are Gas Safe registered. So if your boiler breaks down this winter, however tempting, don’t simply rely on the recommendation of a friend or use a plumber that has done work for you in the past; if the heating engineer you employ is not Gas Safe registered then they are illegal, and if they work for a Gas Safe registered firm during the week and are doing private work in their spare time on the side that is also illegal.

“Always ask to see their Gas Safe Register identity card and contact the Register immediately on 0800 408 5500 if you have any concerns or if you think the gas fitter is using a falsified ID card. That is also the number to call to check if the engineer on your doorstep is Gas Safe registered”.

An easy way to locate a qualified, reputable gas installer is to use the Heating Helpline website at [www.heatinghelpline.org.uk](http://www.heatinghelpline.org.uk) or call them on 0800 810 8303. Operated by B&ES, the Heating Helpline provides essential information on where homeowners can find a local, reputable Gas Safe registered installer, how to employ them, how to get

the best from them and what to do in the unlikely event that things do go wrong.

*Ends*

**Issued on behalf of B&ES (the Building & Engineering Services Association) by Next Step Marketing Ltd**

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Notes to editors

Since its formation in 1904, B&ES, the Building & Engineering Services Association (formerly the HVCA) has represented the interests of companies engaged in a wide range of building and engineering services including domestic heating and renewable technologies.

B&ES members are subject to regular, third-party inspection and assessment of their technical competence and commercial capability, carried out by an independent certification body at least every three years.

B&ES members who undertake gas installations are registered with Gas Safe – the gas safety watchdog body – and are also members of TrustMark, the Government-endorsed scheme designed to direct customers towards reliable tradespeople.

B&ES operates the *Heating Helpline* ([www.heatinghelpline.org.uk](http://www.heatinghelpline.org.uk)) to provide consumers with free, impartial advice on every aspect of home heating.

**Caption for Picture:**

*“If your boiler breaks down this winter don’t get just anyone; to stay safe make sure the engineer is Gas Safe registered or you could be putting your family’s lives at risk.”*