

News Release



March 2015



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GOOD NEWS FOR TENANTS IN OLDER PROPERTIES

30 March 2015 – Households living in the least efficient, privately-rented homes already need to spend on average around £1,000 more to keep warm compared to the average home. The Building & Engineering Services Association (B&ES) say that good news has arrived for these tenants with new regulations coming into force that will compel landlords to upgrade the energy efficiency of hundreds of thousands of homes currently rated F and G to a minimum of E by 1 April 2018 – or face being unable to let them until they improve the rating.

Almost 10% of England and Wales' 4.2 million privately rented homes currently fall below the E rating. The new regulations will drive bills down in some of the worst insulated homes where up to 1 million tenants are

paying as much as £1,000 a year more than the average annual dual fuel bill of £1,265 because of poorly insulated homes. Estimates suggest that on average the difference in a heating bill from the least energy efficient properties and those with an energy rating Band "E" is a substantial £880.

Announcing the introduction of the regulations, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Edward Davey, said, "These new laws will plug the gaps in draughty homes – helping households to keep warm and drive down bills.

"Many of the poorest tenants will benefit and, with government support, landlords can improve their properties at no upfront cost.

"It's good news all round and yet another way we're taking action to ensure that cold homes with bloated energy bills become a thing of the past."

Commenting, Mark Oakes, Head of Specialist Group Services at B&ES, said, "This is one of the most significant pieces of legislation to impact the housing sector in a very long time and potentially a step change in improving building stock in England and Wales, which is some of the most poorly insulated in Europe.

"If a tenant requests a more efficient home and a landlord fails to comply, the landlord could ultimately be forced to pay a penalty notice. Landlords will be able to let out F and G-rated properties beyond 1 April 2018 for the remainder of existing rental contracts but will not be able to renew a contract or let the property to someone else until it is brought up to an E rating.

"What's more, tenants won't have to wait for the April 2018 deadline to get their homes up to scratch. From April 2016 they will have the right to request consent for improvements to make their homes more comfortable, and easier and cheaper to keep warm, and the landlord cannot unreasonably refuse".

For information about the services offered by B&ES members in the residential sector visit: www.trustmark.org.uk.

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.

Picture Caption:

“Welcome news has arrived for tenants living in older, poorly insulated properties like these Victorian terrace houses with regulations coming into force that will compel landlords to improve their EPC rating, in turn reducing heating bills.”