

Save energy, save money, save your life!

The aim of this year's Energy Saving Week (October 24-30) is for everyone to save 20% on their current energy costs. But one of the most important energy saving measures you can make this week may not be so obvious as fitting lower wattage light bulbs and could even save your life! Keeping your boiler serviced regularly, says gas-elec, the national safety inspection company, will not only keep your energy consumption down – it will also keep you and your family safe!

Not having your boiler serviced, says gas-elec, can damage it or, in a worst case scenario, cause you and your family to lose their lives. “Many people think that if a boiler is working it doesn't need any attention,” says John Davidson, gas-elec managing director. “But nothing could be further from the truth. Properly maintained, today's new condensing boilers will run at 96% efficiency. Older style boilers such as room sealed boilers will run about 86% efficiency and open flue boilers about 84-85%.

“But if a boiler's not serviced annually, what happens is that it and the flue will gradually start to get blocked and become less efficient. The boiler will have to work harder and harder to produce the same heat and the gas rate will increase. The result is higher gas consumption – and bills.

“You will actually save money by having an annual service – not the other way round. And you will be able to sleep easy in your bed knowing your family is safe. In the lettings industry an annual service is compulsory, but currently homeowners can endanger the lives of their family with impunity!”

gas-elec, who inspect over 100,000 domestic households throughout the UK every year, visit many properties where a regular inspection would have saved the householder hundreds of pounds in running costs – and even thousands, in some cases, for a new boiler.

One gas-elec engineer came across a staggering example of the cost of such neglect shown in our photo! When he removed the front cover of the boiler the top sprang open. A long-term water leak had rusted the top of the boiler compartment. The gas supply had to be capped off because the leak had effectively destroyed the boiler, which had to be replaced.



“Regular servicing would have picked up this problem earlier,” said the engineer, “and it would have cost a few pennies for a new washer instead of hundreds of pounds for a complete boiler! And, of course, that’s without the extra money that the householder was paying for fuel because the damaged boiler was using so much more fuel.”

But the worst cases, says gas-elec, are in the homes they never visit – until it’s too late. The distressing cases that hit the headlines when badly maintained boilers emit poisonous carbon monoxide fumes. Deadly and unseen they can injure or even kill whole families whilst they’re asleep in bed or just relaxing on the sofa. And it could all be prevented with regular maintenance.

“You have an annual service on your car,” says Davidson. “It runs better, uses less fuel and, more importantly, you know it’s safe. It’s no different with your

gas boiler. If it's not maintained properly, it is also potentially a very lethal machine.”

Editor's Notes

Gas-elec Safety Systems is an independent organisation, whose remit is safety, providing impartial inspections without any vested interest (e.g. selling boilers) although the company does carry out remedial works on request. Its unique inspection service enables it to provide property professionals and householders with multiple inspections of gas, electrics, plumbing and central heating in just one visit.