

Council Housing Gas & Heating Services

Responsibilities & Winter Preparations

Housing Division - Preparations for Winter

- The Housing Division already has an “Extreme Weather Policy” linked to our Council owned properties
- This Policy covers all extreme weather events
- The decision to implement the extreme weather policy will be made by the Head of Service lead for adverse weather. (Ian Craig)
- This decision will be based on 3 factors:
 - Weather forecasts and warnings, received from the Met office.
 - Increase in emergency repair requests from customers
 - Increase in calls to Customer Services

Housing Division - Preparations for Winter

- If invoked daily meetings are held and decisions made on the following:
 - Movement of resources
 - Suspension of non urgent work
 - Vulnerable customers prioritised
 - Communication officer appointed
- Annual review of this policy which includes taking on board lessons learnt from previous year.
- Meeting already held 2nd October with HOS and the section leads from all areas of the housing division ensuring preparations are in place should the policy be invoked.

Responsibilities

The Primary role of the Gas & Heating Services Section is to ensure the Authority adequately discharges it's responsibility with the law, specifically the:

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended

- Regulation 36 “Duties of Landlords” states that as a landlord we have a duty to ensure all properties receive a gas safety inspection every 12 months.
- Other areas of the sections responsibilities are as follows:
 - Repairs to gas boilers and other LCC owned gas appliances & associated controls
 - Repairs to Radiators, heating pipework, hot water cylinders and associated water tanks.
 - Communal Heating / District heating – heating and hot water repairs within these properties.

All our customers heating & hot water repairs under one section

The Numbers!

Total Jobs Completed between April 2018 to March 19

• Annual Gas Safety Checks	21,138
• Boiler & Heating Repair Visits	18,595
• Communal / District Heating Repairs	2,498
Total Jobs	42,231

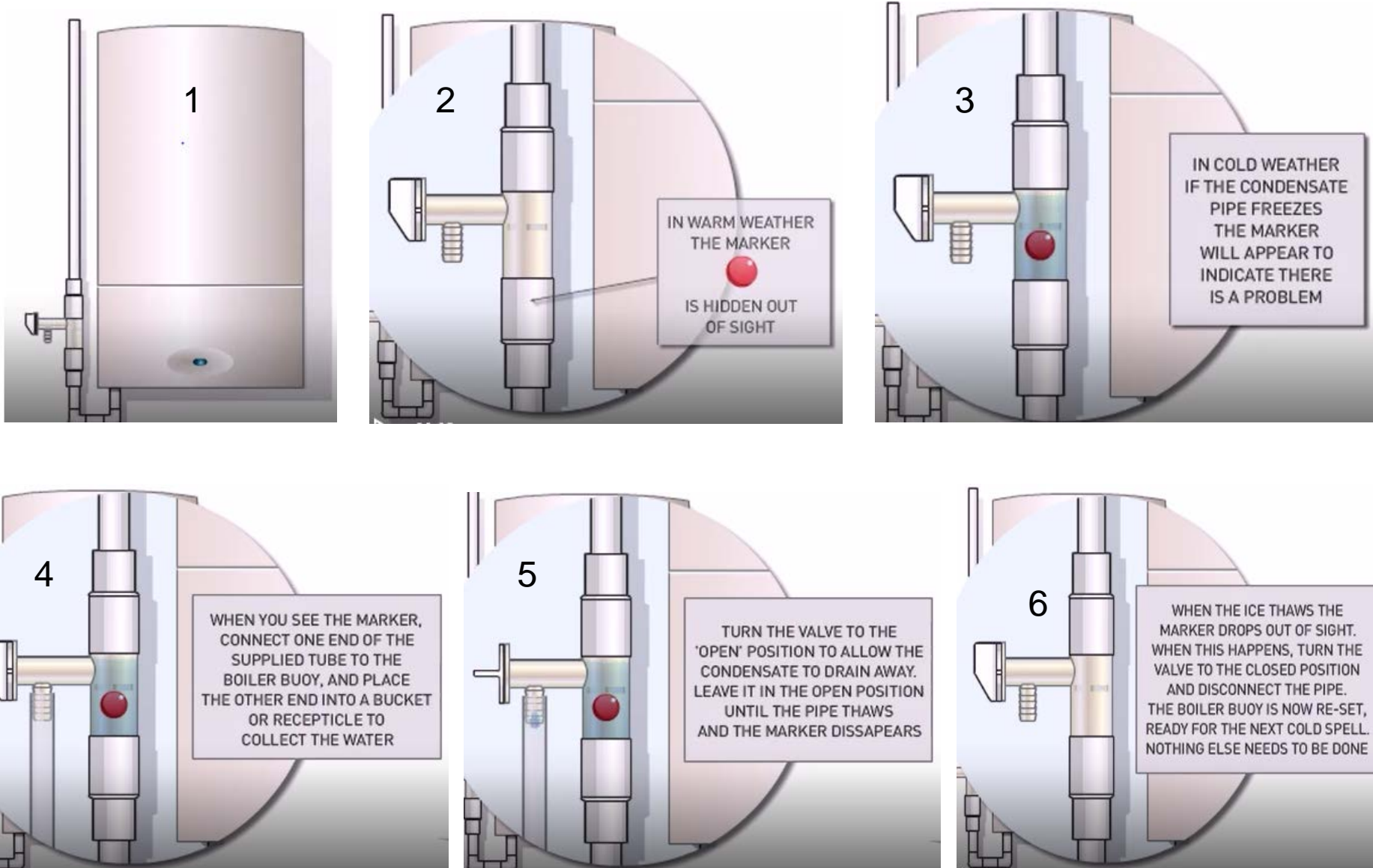
Gas Services - Preparations for Winter

- Recruited additional direct labour Gas Service & Heating Engineers
 - October 2019 = 51 x FTE's
 - February 2018 = 43 x FTE's (Prior to Beast from the east)
- Emergency out of hours cover increased from 1 x Engineer to 2 x Engineers over the winter months October to April.
- We have throughout this summer pulled forward the volume of Annual Gas Safety Inspections. Effectively allowing us a window to suspend this type of work should we experience another cold snap.
- Gas trained staff from within our voids section will be drafted in to bolster the workforce if required (approximately x 8)
- We have increased our engagement this year with a number of local contractors who could assist if required.

Gas Services - Preparations for winter – Cont;

- All other non essential repair works would be suspended.
- Boiler Buoys were installed to those properties which were immediately affected during the Beast from the East.
- To date over 3500 Boiler Buoys installed where the condensate pipe is externally fitted and therefore prone to freezing.
- No boiler buoys fitted between November and end of January 2019 due to supply shortage.
- The programme of installing a boiler buoy at all properties with an external condensate pipe continues. Works undertaken where possible during the routine Annual Gas Safety Inspection. Van Stock increased to 15 x per van.

The boiler buoy – what does it do



Gas Services - Preparations for winter – Cont;

- Stores hold a stock of 200 fan heaters and have a number of suppliers where additional heaters can be obtained at short notice.
- Following the “Beast from the East” specific guidance is now provided to tenants on how to unblock a frozen condensate pipe.
- In support of this advice there is also a web link for tenants to watch a video produced by Worcester Bosch.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-community/housing/council-tenants/housing-repairs/emergency-housing-repairs/>

Customer Support – Preparations for Winter

- During the BFTE we had a 225% increase in calls. We see increases even during lesser cold snaps. Call filtering now in place to stop the system getting overloaded, to make sure everyone can get through to us.
- Emergency staffing arrangements and communications plan in place following lessons learned
- Easy to access information for customers about online resources

Customer Support – Preparations for Winter Cont;

- Communications plan in place enabling quick response and pre-agreed messaging/advice
- Call handlers trained to issue Worcester Bosch initial advice
- We are prepared!

Any Questions