

# Technical Bulletin 025

Developed with HSE in Great Britain



**Title: Contractor responsibilities when disconnecting and/or reconnecting gas cooking appliances utilising bayonet fitting, or other self-sealing connectors**

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*Note: This version of Technical Bulletin (TB) 025 replaces the version originally published 10 December 2010, which is now withdrawn. This version has been reviewed and where appropriate revised to ensure that it remains both current and relevant.*

***This Technical Bulletin provides guidance to trades people in respect to their responsibilities when undertaking work activities which could affect gas safety, for example clarification on who is permitted to disconnect and reconnect a self-sealing connector (or bayonet fitting) serving a gas cooker, where for example, appliances are disconnected and reconnected by other trades as part of a property refurbishment, or by a removal and/or storage company***

## Introduction

The debate around who is permitted to disconnect and reconnect a self-sealing connector (or bayonet fitting) serving a gas cooker has led to different opinions being offered e.g. where appliances are disconnected and reconnected by other trades as part of a property refurbishment, or by a removal and/or storage company. The aim of this Technical Bulletin (TB) is to clarify the requirements of the relevant legislation, to ensure that any person involved in any kitchen refurbishment process or similar activities, is working within the requirements of the law (see also [Appendix 1](#) at the end of this TB for details of relevant Regulations and guidance).

## Legislation

The primary legislation relevant to the safe installation, maintenance and use of gas systems and appliances in Great Britain (GB) is the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (GSIUR) (see [Note 1](#)). This legislation, along with the Approved Code of Practice and Guidance – *Safety in the installation and use of gas systems and appliances (ACoP)*<sup>(1)</sup> – published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), describes what is considered ‘work in relation to a gas fitting’ (‘gas work’) and provides guidance on what needs to be considered when disconnecting and/or reconnecting any self-sealing appliance connector (see also [Appendix 1](#) at the end of this TB for relevant Regulations and guidance).

**Note 1:** *Similar legislative requirements apply in other geographical areas covered by Gas Safe Register. For details of current gas safety legislation, building legislation and industry standards for the geographical areas covered by Gas Safe Register, see the [Legislative, Normative & Informative Document List \(LNIDL\)](#)<sup>(2)</sup> at: <https://engineers.gassaferegister.co.uk> - login and visit the Technical Information area.*

**Note 2:** *for further guidance on what is regarded as ‘gas work’ when undertaking ‘Work’ as defined in GSIUR see [TB 014](#)<sup>(3)</sup> (see also [Note 1](#)).*

Where a gas cooker is installed for the first time or repositioned permanently, it is considered ‘gas work’ within the meaning of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

(GSIUR) and must therefore be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer who holds the appropriate proof of competence.

The temporary disconnection/reconnection (at the same location) of a self-sealing appliance connector where a gas cooker is not being installed for the first time or repositioned permanently is **not** deemed 'gas work' and therefore may be carried out by a non-registered person(s), for example, when a home owner temporarily removes the cooker when cleaning. The alteration of any gas installation pipework to allow the cooker to be permanently repositioned is considered gas work. However, whenever **any** person when **at work** disconnects or re-connects a self-sealing connector must be competent to a level that will ensure that the action of doing so does not cause gas to escape.

**Note 3:** *In most cases when the cooker hose is disconnected from the self-sealing connector, there will be a residual smell of gas. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that as a minimum, an appropriate leak detection fluid (LDF), or gas detector is used to confirm that there is no gas escaping from the self-sealing fitting. For added security, proprietary bayonet blanking fittings are also available and can be fitted to the bayonet opening.*

Circumstances may dictate that it would be a safer option to undertake a more permanent method of sealing off a cooker connection point which is intended to no longer be used, for example, where it is known that the cooker connection will not be reused, or the cooker moved to an alternative location or property e.g. by using a screwed plug, cap or compression fitting in place of the bayonet fitting. This option would involve gas work and must only be carried out by a suitably qualified registered gas engineer.

Uncertainty can arise where the position of the cooker remains unchanged, but the environment around the cooker is being affected by refurbishment work. Examples of this would be the installation of new kitchen cabinets/furniture or a replacement floor covering beneath the appliance. In these situations, it is likely that the cooker will need to be removed and re-connected on one or more occasion(s), possibly by a person who is not Gas Safe registered but who will be subject to other legislative requirements and should be competent in undertaking this work.

## **General Health and Safety Requirements**

It is important that non gas registered contractors e.g. kitchen installers, builders etc., carrying out kitchen refurbishment work or similar, understand that they also have certain responsibilities under primary health and safety legislation, e.g. in GB the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (HSWA) (also see [Note 1](#)).

HSWA places duties on everyone concerned with work activities including employers, the self-employed and employees. It also includes provisions to protect members of the public. The duties apply both to individual people and to corporations, companies, partnerships, local authorities, etc.

The duties of HSWA are expressed in general terms and apply to a wide range of work activities and work situations.

Both employers and the self-employed are required to carry out their work so as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable that they do not expose people who are not their employees to health and safety risks (in GB, see section 3(1) and 3(2) of HSWA).

**Note 4:** *In some areas, the general duties of HSWA have been supplemented by specific requirements in regulations made under the Act e.g. GSIUR. Failure to comply with the general requirements of the Act, or with the specific requirements found elsewhere, may result in legal proceedings (also see [Note 1](#)).*

**Note 5:** *Important factors to consider during a risk assessment of this type of work include for example, the duration of disconnection, the likelihood of the contractor leaving the area unattended, the risk of mechanical damage to the connector and the likelihood of others having access to the connector or work area.*

With the above legislation in mind, contractors carrying out refurbishment work, will need to have appropriate systems of work in place to manage and ensure the health, safety and welfare of any

employees, including sub-contractors and the consumer, during both the refurbishment and once the work has been completed. This should include ensuring the environment is safe whilst any work is undertaken, such as, from slips, trips and falls, but also that the work undertaken does not affect the on-going safety of any gas appliance or installation.

This places a responsibility on the person responsible for the overall control of the work e.g. a principal contractor, foreman, site manager or other person, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, compliance with **all** legislation is achieved.

Any decisions made by contractors with regard to refurbishment of a kitchen (or premises) must not affect the safe operation of any existing gas appliances or the installation as a whole.

An example of this would be when kitchen cabinets are to be replaced but the existing gas cooker and its position is to be retained. Although the gas cooker location is not to be altered, the new kitchen cabinets located either side and above the cooker will need to comply with either the gas cooker manufacturer's installation instructions or the current BS 6172: 2010<sup>(4)</sup>.

**Note 6:** *If an extractor fan is also to be installed, the possible impact on any open-flued appliances also needs to be considered. For further guidance relating to the effect of extract fans, see TB 026<sup>(5)</sup>.*

Therefore, it is the responsibility of any contractors to ensure that where any work is to be undertaken that may affect the safe operation of a gas appliance that they liaise closely with a Gas Safe registered business to ensure that during the entire refurbishment process, the safe operation of any gas appliance will not be compromised.

## Conclusion

Where any alteration is to be made to a premise that involves gas work as defined under GSIUR or where it may affect the safe operation of a gas appliance/installation, the responsible person for that work needs to ensure that a registered gas engineer is consulted. Such consultation is essential before any refurbishment work starts and may be required both during and after its completion. This will help to ensure that the gas appliance(s)/installation remain safe to be used.

**Note 7:** *For general information about the process behind the development of Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletins and the expectations for all Stakeholders, see TB 1000<sup>(6)</sup>.*

## Bibliography

- (1). *Safety in the installation and use of gas systems and appliances - Gas safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 Approved Code of Practice and Guidance – L56 (Forth Edition) 2013 - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l56.pdf>*
- (2). *LNIDL - Gas Safe Register Legislative, Normative & Informative Document List*
- (3). *TB 014 - Gas Work*
- (4). *BS 6172 - Specification for installation, servicing and maintenance of domestic gas cooking appliances (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup> family gases)*
- (5). *TB 026 - Effect of fans on open-flued gas appliances – Advice for non-gas contractors*
- (6). *TB 1000 - An introduction to Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletins*

**Note:** *Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletins and the Legislative, Normative & Informative Document List can be viewed at: <https://engineers.gassaferegister.co.uk> - login and visit the Technical Information area.*

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## Appendix 1

### Legislation

The following requirements/guidance is taken from the GSIUR and the ACoP to the GSIUR in Great Britain (GB) (see **Legislation** in the main part of this Technical Bulletin (TB)).

Regulation 2 of GSIUR defines work as:

*“work” in relation to a gas fitting includes any of the following activities carried out by any person, whether an employee or not, that is to say –*

- a) installing or re-connecting the fitting;*
- b) maintaining, servicing, permanently adjusting, disconnecting, repairing, altering or renewing the fitting or purging it of air or gas;*
- c) where the fitting is not readily movable, changing its position; and removing the fitting.*

*but the expression does not include the connection or disconnection of a bayonet fitting or other self-sealing connector.”*

Guidance Note 56 to regulation 2 states:

*“For the purpose of the definition of ‘work’, readily movable appliances include appliances such as laboratory Bunsen burners and mobile barbecues, which are readily portable. Other appliances, e.g. free-standing cookers connected by standard flexible hose, are not considered to be ‘readily movable’, but can be moved temporarily, e.g. to clean the space they normally occupy; this type of activity is not regarded as ‘work’ within the meaning of these Regulations. (Where an appliance is connected by means of a bayonet fitting, this will need to be disconnected before moving the appliance – such disconnection is also excluded from the definition of ‘work’, as is the connection or re-connection of this type of fitting. It may be necessary to detach a stability bracket; if so, this needs to be refitted when the appliance is returned to its original position). Where an appliance which is not readily movable is repositioned permanently, this is regarded as ‘work’ for the purpose of the Regulations.”*

Regulation 6(3) of GSIUR states:

*“Any person who disconnects a gas fitting shall, with the appropriate fitting, seal off every outlet of every pipe to which it is connected.”*

Guidance Note 118 to regulation 6(3) of GSIUR states:

*“This regulation is largely intended to deal with situations in which gas appliances are removed, for instance because they are no longer needed or are being taken away when owners moved home. When an appliance is disconnected and open-ended pipework is left, the pipework should always be left sealed with an appropriate fitting”.*

Regulation 6(5) of GSIUR states:

*“No person searching for an escape of gas shall use any source of ignition.”*

Guidance Notes 120 and 121 to regulation 6(5) of GSIUR state:

*“This prohibition extends to householders and other members of the general public.*

*The source of leaks should be located by sense of smell, gas detection instruments approved for use in flammable atmospheres, leak detection fluids, pressure test equipment or a combination of these methods.”*

Regulation 8(1) of GSIUR states:

*“No person shall make any alteration to any premises in which a gas fitting or gas storage vessel is fitted if that alteration would adversely affect the safety of the fitting or vessel in such a manner that, if the fitting or the vessel had been installed after the alteration, there would have been a contravention of, or failure to comply with, these Regulations.”*

Guidance Note 82 to regulation 8(1) states:

*“This regulation embraces a wide range of physical alterations to premises that might affect the safety of an existing gas fitting or gas storage vessel installed in the premises where the alteration is to be made (see paragraph 87). Before a significant alteration is made to premises where a gas appliance is installed, e.g. installation or removal of windows, air bricks, extractor fan units etc, any implications for gas appliance/fitting safety need to be properly addressed.”*

Regulation 8(2) of GSIUR states:

*“No person shall do anything which would affect a gas fitting or any flue or means of ventilation used in connection with the fitting in such a manner that the subsequent use of the fitting might constitute a danger to any person, except that this paragraph does not apply to an alteration to premises.”*

Guidance Note 138 to regulation 8(2) states:

*“This regulation applies to everyone, not just gas installers. It supplements regulation 8(1), by prohibiting other activities (i.e. except alteration to premises) which have the potential to compromise safety. This might for instance include modifications which cause blockage/obstruction of an air supply vent or flue, or incorrect installation of an air extraction or condensation control unit. As with regulation 8(1), it is essential for the implications of any such change or modification to be properly addressed, before work is commenced, to ensure that gas safety cannot be prejudiced in any way.”*

Guidance Note 147 to regulation 8(2) states:

*“Modification of any gas fitting should be made only by a competent person who is, or is employed by, a member of an HSE approved class of persons” (e.g. Gas Safe registered) “under regulation 3(3). Alterations not comprising ‘work’ on a gas fitting but which nevertheless may affect gas safety, (e.g. a change to the provision of ventilation in a room) should also be made only by a competent person. Similarly, any significant modification needs to be checked by a competent person before the gas fitting concerned is taken into use, to ensure that appropriate standards have been met and safety has not been compromised (see regulation 26(9)).”*

**Note A1:** Similar legislative requirements apply in other geographical areas covered by Gas Safe Register (see also **Note 1** in main part of this TB).

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