

Built Over Low-Pressure Gas Service Pipes

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to:

- Explain what is a built over gas service
- Explain why it is dangerous
- Explain the process to correct the installation and how this may lead to your gas service being disconnected
- Explain what work is required to make the installation safe
- How to contact us for more information
- Confirm Legislation and standards associated with Built Over Gas Service Pipes

What is a built over service?

When the gas service was installed into your property it was installed to the relevant gas industry standards. For your information the relevant standards are listed at the end of this document.

The gas service pipe connecting your meter to the gas main in the street is made from polyethylene (PE). This is a standard construction technique applied by the UK gas industry for meter positions terminating externally.

Over time alterations or extensions can be made to the property which could result in the PE gas service pipe being underneath part of the building. This is shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.

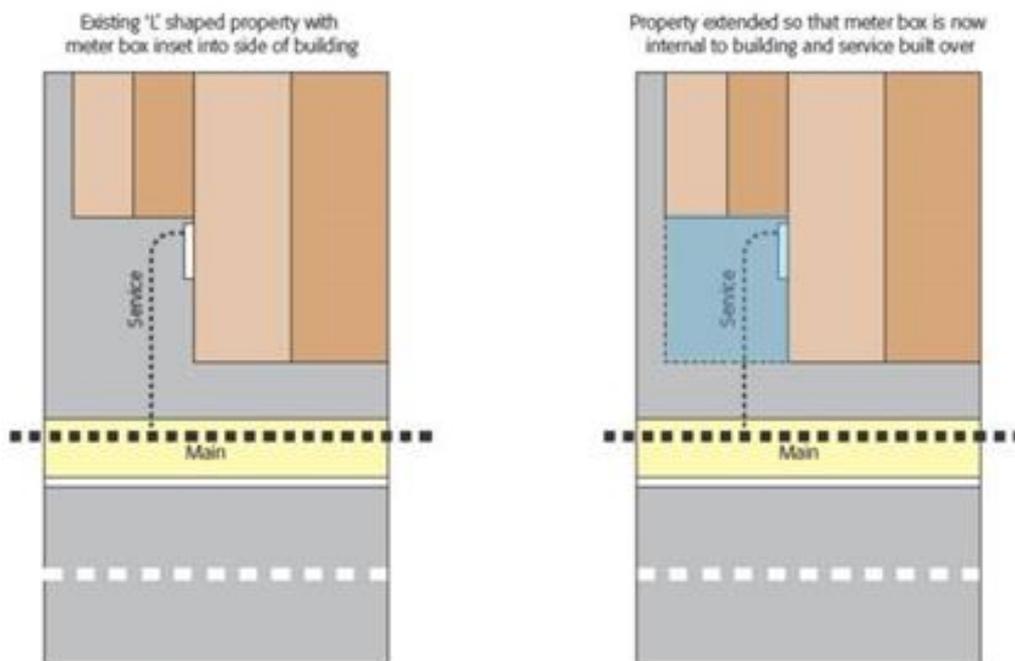


Figure 1 – Before extension built

Figure 2 – After extension built

Why is it dangerous?

PE gas service pipes are not designed to be installed underneath or within a building for the following reasons.

- Where there is a wall, footing or foundation built over a PE gas service pipe this causes a potential weak spot, and PE pipe may not have adequate integral strength to support these loadings or any building movement that may happen over time.
- PE pipe is built to be used underground with an adequate amount of ground cover, where the PE pipe does not have adequate ground cover this may be susceptible to damage from other external forces, corrosive chemicals or changes in temperature.
- PE gas pipe has no fire resistance and therefore if there was a fire the PE pipe can melt.

All the above situations can lead to a gas escape within the property and/or fuel a fire, which may result in serious damage to the property and put the occupant in danger.

What next?

We want to work with property owners to rectify the unsafe asset, as quickly as possible, to safeguard the occupants and the property. We do understand this may have come as a surprise to the you and therefore ask for the early engagement to arrange for the asset to be made safe and to enable us to answer any questions you may have regarding this. We will make the asset safe regardless of if we are able to move the meter or not.

If the built over service effects a Medium Pressure supply, the supply will need to be switched off and resolved immediately. However, if the built over service effects a Low-pressure supply, the below process gives you visibility of how we rectify a built over service:

Emergency Service Provider or Smart Meter Installer identifies possible built over gas service pipe and notifies GTC as the Gas Transporter.

GTC arrange Technical Inspection to confirm if the gas service has been built over and determine a location where the meter can be moved to make the installation safe.

Stage 1: First letter, giving advice on why the gas service is unsafe and options for the work to make the installation safe.

Stage 2: After 2 weeks of sending the first letter and if we receive no response, a second reminder letter is sent explaining that the service position is unsafe and if one of the options is not accepted then the service will be disconnected.

Stage 3: After 3 weeks of sending the first letter and if we receive no response, a third letter will be sent and if no contact is made within 14days, we will be making arrangements for the gas service to be disconnected, with immediate effect.

Stage 4: A warrant will be issued, we will attend site, turn off your supply and carry out the disconnection to the service.

For the property not to be disconnected and to be left with a gas supply that is safe we advise you to accept one of the options as early as possible. Once the alteration is agreed then we will look to schedule the work to complete the meter move.

What work will we complete?

To make the installation safe we will complete the following work:

- Determine a new compliant meter position on an external wall.
- Turn off all appliances and tightness test in accordance with BS6400-1.
- On completion of satisfactory test, disconnect and remove the gas meter.
- Excavate on the gas service and temporarily isolate the gas supply.
- Fit gas meter box at the location determined above.
- Install gas service into meter box.
- Re-fit meter and leave meter capped on the outlet.

What work will you need to complete?

The outlet installation pipework is the responsibility of the property owner and therefore a Gas Safe Registered Engineer is required to extend the outlet copper pipework from the new meter position to the existing copper pipework. The Gas Safe Engineer will then be responsible for restoration of appliances. GTC will only require access inside the property to disconnect the gas meter and relocate to outside should building works be completed.

If you chose to complete your own excavation and reinstatement, then we will require the following:

- 1.2m x 1.2m x 0.6m deep excavation just before the gas service goes under the building.
- 0.6m wide and 0.6m deep trench to the new meter position.

Figure 3 below shows an example of what excavations are required, but the exact requirements will be discussed when we visit site.

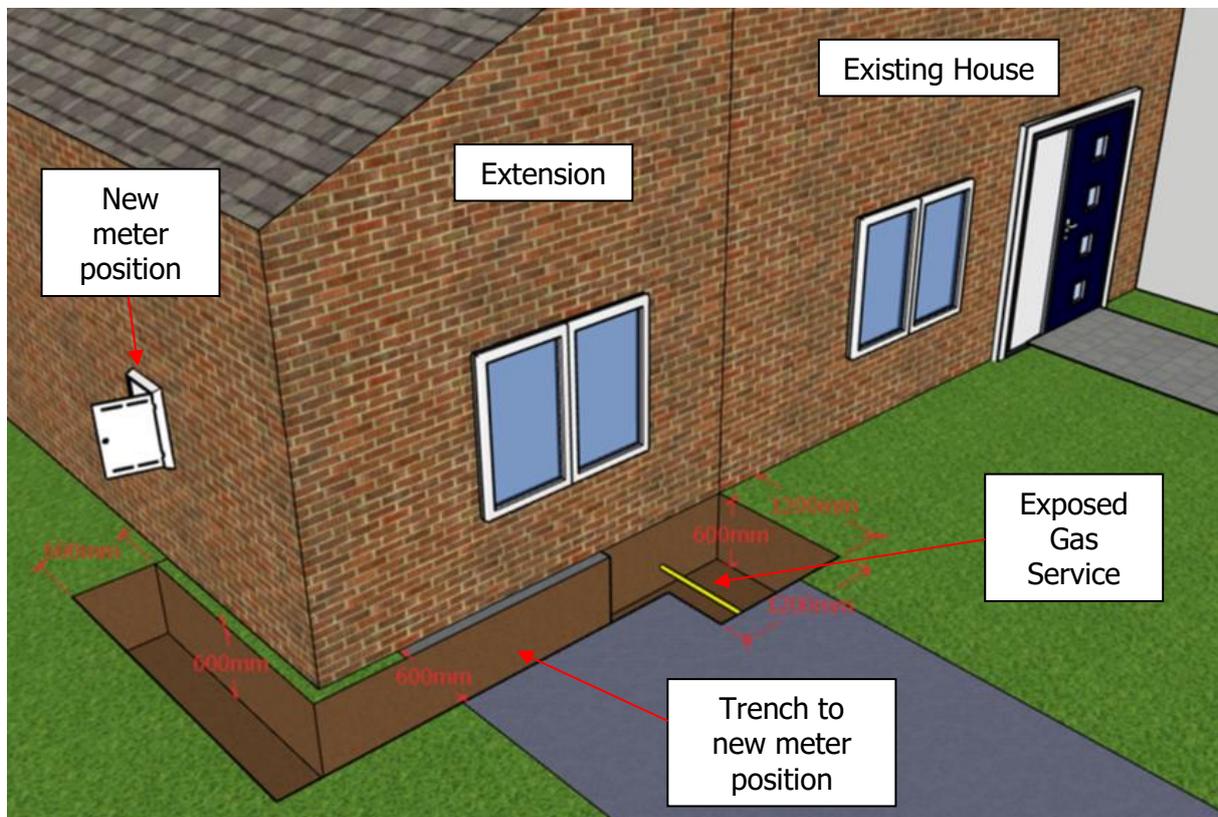


Figure 3 – Requirements for an excavation

Who needs to pay for the work?

As the property owner, you are responsible for the costs. You may wish to employ your own groundworkers to carry out the excavation and reinstatement following the meter move which will minimise our costs.

In some circumstances a payment plan can be arranged, please contact us if you would like to discuss this.

How to contact us?

Should further information be required for the alteration of the service and meter position, please contact our GTC Gas Operations team on telephone number **01359 240363, option 1** or **email:** ops.mailbox@gtc-uk.co.uk.

Relevant Standards

- Gas Act 1986 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/44/contents>
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
Regulation 5, 13 & 19 - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pUbns/priced/I56.pdf>
- The Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR) and supporting Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) published by the Health and Safety Commission.
- The Institution of Gas Engineers standard IGE/TD/4 PE and steel gas service pipework.
- Gas Safe Register – Technical Bulletin 003 - <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/42299/19-november-2010-tb-003-built-over-gas-services-service-pipework-safety-concern-pdf>
- British Standards - BS6400-2 6.1.13.