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Law change to tackle ‘silent killer’

Carbon monoxide alarms to be fitted.

A change in building regulations that requires the fitting of alarms warning against the presence of poisonous carbon monoxide gas will apply from October this year.

Carbon monoxide alarms that can detect and warn of the gas known as ‘the silent killer’ will be needed when new or replacement boilers, heaters, fires and stoves are installed in houses, hotels, guest houses and care homes.

Planning Minister Derek Mackay said:

“The Scottish Government recognises the devastating effect carbon monoxide poisoning can have on people’s lives.

“Not a year goes by where there isn’t an avoidable death in Scotland from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by faulty heating appliances in buildings.

“There are also a considerable number of incidents where people are treated in hospital for the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning.

“That is why, from 1 October, the Scottish building regulations will require carbon monoxide alarms to be fitted when a new or replacement boiler or other heating appliance is to be installed in a dwelling and other buildings with bedrooms.”

Louis Blake, from the Carbon Monoxide – Be Alarmed! campaign, said:

“In the UK, at least 50 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning every year and thousands more need hospital treatment. An audible carbon monoxide alarm is the only way to protect yourself and your family.

“This change to the Scottish building regulations will see more detectors in Scottish homes, which will save lives. However, we urge people to act now to protect themselves from carbon monoxide and buy an alarm today.”

Notes to Editors:

Carbon monoxide is known as ‘the silent killer’ because it is a poisonous gas that cannot be seen, smelt or tasted. Combustion appliances fuelled by solid fuel, oil or gas all have the potential to cause carbon monoxide poisoning if they are poorly installed or commissioned, inadequately maintained or incorrectly used.

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