

***Safe working practices to ensure the
integrity of gas assets and associated
installations***



*Founded 1863
Royal Charter 1929
Patron: Her Majesty the Queen*



***IGEM/SR/18 Edition 3
Communication 1828***

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integrity of gas assets and associated
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Price Code: C2S
©Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers
IGEM House
26-28 High Street
Kegworth
Derbyshire, DE74 2DA
Tel: 0844 375 4436
Fax: 01509 678198
Email: technical@igem.org.uk

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ISBN 978 1 999674 74 8

ISSN 0367 7850

Published by the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers

Previous Publications:

Communication 1447 Part 1 (1990) – 1st Edition

Communication 1599 Part 2 (1994) – 1st Edition

Communication 1678 (2002) – 2nd Edition

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SECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Standard supersedes IGE/SR/18 edition 2, Communication 1678, which is now obsolete.

1.2 This Standard has been drafted by a Panel appointed by the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers' (IGEM's) Gas Transmission and Distribution Committee, was subsequently approved by that Committee and was published by the authority of the Council of the Institution.

1.3 This Standard provides guidance on safe working practices in the vicinity of gas assets and installations operating at all pressure tiers.

This Standard includes advice for both the operator/owner of the respective gas asset (hereafter referred to as the operator) and for the promoter/client responsible for the work (hereafter referred to as the promoter).

Usually, work will be carried out with respect to a service other than a gas asset, for example water pipes, but may on occasion be with respect to a different gas asset.

The requirements in this Standard are intended to ensure the continued integrity of gas assets.

1.4 This Standard makes use of the term "must", "shall" and "should" when prescribing particular requirements. Notwithstanding Sub-Section 1.6:

- the term "must" identifies a requirement by law in Great Britain (GB) at the time of publication
- the term "shall" prescribes a requirement which, it is intended, will be complied with in full and without deviation
- the term "should" prescribes a requirement which, it is intended, will be complied with unless, after prior consideration, deviation is considered to be acceptable.

Such a term may have different meanings when used in Legislation, or Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Approved Codes of Practice (ACoPs) or guidance, and reference needs to be made to such statutory Legislation or official guidance for information on legal obligations.

1.5 It is now widely accepted that the majority of accidents in industry are in some measure attributable to human as well as technical factors in the sense that actions by people initiated or contributed to the accidents, or people might have acted better to avert them.

It is therefore necessary to give proper consideration to the management of these human factors and the control of risk. To assist in this, it is recommended that due cognisance be taken of HSG48.

The primary responsibility for compliance with legal duties rests with the employer (of both promoter and operator). The fact that certain employees are allowed to exercise their professional judgement does not allow employers to abrogate their primary responsibilities. Employers must:

- (a) have done everything to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that there are no better protective measures that can be taken other than relying on the exercise of professional judgement by employees
- (b) have done everything to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees have the skills, training, experience and personal qualities necessary for the proper exercise of professional judgement

- (c) have systems and procedures in place to ensure that the exercise of professional judgement by employees is subject to appropriate monitoring and review
- (d) not require employees to undertake tasks which would necessitate the exercise of professional judgement that is beyond their competence. There should be written procedures defining the extent to which “responsible engineers” can exercise their judgement. When “responsible engineers” are asked to undertake tasks that deviate from this, they should refer the matter for higher review.

- 1.6 This Standard does not attempt to make the use of any method or specification obligatory against the judgement of the responsible engineer. Where new and better techniques are developed and proved, they should be adopted without waiting for modification of this Standard. Amendments to this Standard will be issued when necessary and their publication will be announced in the Journal of the Institution and other publications as appropriate.
- 1.7 Requests for interpretation of this Standard in relation to matters within its scope, but not precisely covered by the current text, are to be addressed to Technical Services, IGEM House, 28 High Street, Kegworth, DE74 2DA or emailed to; technical@igem.org.uk and will be submitted to the relevant Committee for consideration and advice, but in the context that the final responsibility is that of the engineer concerned. If any advice is given by or on behalf of IGEM, this does not relieve the responsible engineer of any of his or her obligations.
- 1.8 This Standard was published in March 2019.

SECTION 2 : SCOPE

- 2.1 This Standard outlines management procedures and safety precautions affecting the design, construction, maintenance and demolition of services, structures and other works in the vicinity of gas assets.

Note: HSG47 provides guidance on avoiding danger from underground services.

- 2.2 This Standard covers work in the vicinity of gas assets in easements, under highways and on private land.

- 2.3 This Standard applies to gas assets of all materials and at any maximum operating pressure (MOP).

Note 1: For working in the vicinity of an above ground installation (AGI) see Section 6.

Note 2: For working in the vicinity of a gas asset exceeding 7 bar see Section 7.

Note 3: For working in the vicinity of a gas asset not exceeding 7 bar see Section 8.

- 2.4 All pressures are gauge pressures unless otherwise stated.

- 2.5 Italicised text is informative and does not represent formal requirements.

- 2.6 Appendices are informative and do not represent formal requirements unless specifically referenced in the main sections via the prescriptive terms "must", "shall" or "should".