

Wales & West Utilities Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

RoSPA Carbon Monoxide Hub

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

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Updated November 2024

Eligibility criteria for company specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)

In order to qualify as a VCMA Project, a project must:

- a) have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project;
- b) either:
 - i. provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or
 - ii. provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or
 - iii. reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;
- c) have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;
- d) go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and
- e) not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.¹

Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing, repair, and replacement

In order to qualify as a VCMA Project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance² servicing, repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:

- a) a GDN has to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role;
- b) the household cannot afford to service, repair or replace unsafe pipework or the essential gas appliance; and
- c) sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including national, devolved or local government funding) to fund the unsafe pipework or the essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement.

¹ If part, but not full, funding is available through an external funding source for an eligible project, VCMA funding can be used for the remaining amount.

² Essential gas appliances are gas fuelled heating systems (including gas boilers and gas fires), and gas cookers.

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Information required for the registration of VCMA projects

Information required	Description
Project title	RoSPA Carbon Monoxide Hub
Funding GDN(s)	Wales & West Utilities
New/ Updated PEA	Updated November 2024
VCMA Project contact name, email and number	Sophie Stone Sophie.Stone@wwutilities.co.uk 07977 804612
Total Cost (£)	£100,000
Total VCMA funding required (£)	£100,000
Problem(s)	<p>This decade has witnessed major changes in the ways in which we live, work, and use our homes. Many of us are now spending more time there than ever before as boundaries between home, work and leisure become merged. However, the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis adds uncertainty to the mix as we seek to heat, light, cook and live more economically. New research from the Gas Safe register has found nearly 31% of people will skip booking their annual gas safety check this year, due to the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning kills 50 people a year in England & Wales and hospitalises many more. In the UK, there are more than 4,000 visits to Accident and & Emergency for treatment of CO poisoning – which can often lead to lasting neurological damage.</p> <p>Whilst online resources do exist to help educate and raise awareness of carbon monoxide, currently there is not an easily accessible information hub which can disseminate key information via creative resources and that are engaging and easily accessible for a variety of audiences.</p>
Scope and Objectives	<p>RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) are a well-known organisation. RoSPA’s website received over 2.3 million visits in 2022. Previously they have run successful campaigns to reduce the cases of slips and falls in the home, and of the dangers of washing tablets and other chemicals for young children.</p> <p>RoSPA – The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents – RoSPA</p>

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	<p>This project seeks to build on the trusted preexisting relationship RoSPA has with its large audience to raise awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide through the creation of a CO hub. This hub will be an appendage to their current website and will have a landing page from which you can browse two distinct areas which will focus on (1) families and tenants and (2) landlords.</p> <p>Along with the creation of this hub, RoSPA will plan a targeted communications campaign to promote and signpost the target audience to these engaging and credible resources. In addition, RoSPA operates a Business to Business (B2B) model and therefore will utilise their specialist reach of being able to influence organisations and their employees via their Partner, Award winners and Membership networks.</p> <p>The objectives of the hub are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sell - Position WWU and RoSPA as the go to place for carbon monoxide advice and information.2. Serve - Create a web hub that educates families, tenants, and landlords with all the information they require to manage the risk of carbon monoxide within their homes.3. Speak - Produce and distribute relevant content through this web hub. We will continue to develop this as the hub grows in popularity by asking families, tenants & landlords what information they would want to help them manage carbon monoxide.4. Save – Change the opinion of families, tenants, and landlords on carbon monoxide and for them to spread the message throughout their network and social circles.5. Sizzle - Engage with the target market by gaining 30,000 views to this hub in the first 12 months. By creating a positive online experience for families, tenants, and landlords we will educate them on this issue, and they will spread the message within their network/social circles via the ripple effect. <p>To ensure this project can achieve its aims, research will be conducted at the start of this project to identify the target market’s perceptions and attitudes towards carbon</p>
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	<p>monoxide. This research will be conducted again at the end of the 12-month campaign to see if this has changed.</p>
<p>Why the Project is being funded through the VCMA, and how this aligns to GDN's VCMA Strategy</p>	<p>CO awareness and our work to minimise risk and prevent harm is explicit in the definition of the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA).</p> <p>The VCMA supports the GDNs individual business plans and ambitions and can be utilised for VCMA projects focusing on supporting vulnerability and carbon monoxide safety initiatives. The requirements are stipulated as to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or • Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or • Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO; <p>How does our project meet the criteria? By providing CO safety information we are both providing awareness of the dangers of CO and reducing the risk of harm caused by CO with the intention that people take this messaging on board and take further action to prevent it.</p> <p>Updated November 2024:</p> <p>All GDNs have committed to spending VCMA money within four strategic pillars:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fuel Poverty & Energy Affordability 2. Services Beyond the Meter 3. Supporting Priority Customer Groups 4. Carbon Monoxide Awareness <p>This project aligns to strategic pillar four.</p>
<p>Evidence of Stakeholder/ Customer support</p>	<p>In our business plan, we provided extensive evidence of support from stakeholder for us to continue to raise awareness of CO.</p> <p>At a stakeholder prioritisation and value for money workshop, attendees ranked investment in CO awareness raising, alongside other vulnerability support as their top priority.</p> <p>During discussions between our 30-strong representative Citizens' Panel on supporting people living in vulnerable situations, participants commented on the significant</p>

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	<p>potential impacts of carbon monoxide poisoning and the need to ensure the safety of customers in relation to this issue.</p> <p>Further customer research carried out in 2020/21 to trend customers' prioritisation of GD2 delivery commitments and attitudinal profiling, showed that supporting investment in consumer vulnerability including raising awareness of CO risks, remained a highly-ranked customer priority – fourth in a ranking of 25 customer priorities.</p>
<p>Outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria</p>	<p>Wales & West Utilities will fund this project at a cost of £100,000 over a period of 20 months. We anticipate that this project will generate at least 30,000 page views during the first year of the hub's launch. To achieve this, it will be shared with RoSPA's 5,000 members who we anticipate will subsequently share it with their circa 6,000,000 employees.</p> <p>The project's benefits and outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An impartial, nationally recognised, high quality independent hub for practical safety advice on CO. • An increase in traffic generated, demonstrating that the key target groups are receiving the correct information and stakeholder groups are learning what needs to improve to further reduce CO poisonings and deaths. • A hub that will benefit those who are most at risk from CO poisoning and those who are in the best position to influence, advise and provide safer homes (including by promoting the dangers). These messages will be spread to friends and families of anyone who has had contact with the web hub. • An increase in the numbers of CO alarms installed and checked in the homes of anyone that has visited the hub, as well as businesses that incorporate key CO safety messages into activities with their staff and families. <p>By sharing easy to digest information and feeding back the results we will create better informed organisations, reduce the temptation for people to cut corners on safety and encourage them to make the right choices with their own safety.</p>

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Project Partners and third parties involved	This project will be delivered through a partnership of Wales & West Utilities, and RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents).
Potential for new learning	With the help of the research conducted before and after the campaign, we will be able to assess whether this project has found a unique way of targeting our carbon monoxide messaging to those who need it most. We will be able to look at the content, method and associated organisations to analyse how each segment of the campaign feeds into our overarching goal of raising carbon monoxide awareness to find out what has worked and what hasn't. This information can then feed into future campaigns to make sure that we are maximising our reach and accessibility.
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI calculations, including NPV	We have taken RoSPA's projected outcomes and input them into our SROI model. The output shows a £2.88 net benefit per £1 invested.
VCMA Project start and end date	<p>Project start date: 01/06/23 Project end date: 31/01/25</p> <p>Updated November 2024:</p> <p>Project end date has been extended until September 2025, to allow for a full 12-month campaign delivery period June 2024-June 2025, due an extended mobilisation.</p>
Geographical area	The project will include homes in Wales and southwest England.
Internal governance and project management evidence	<p>Updated November 2024:</p> <p>RoSPA's project proposal has been reviewed through various industry working groups including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GDN Vulnerability Working Group (monthly) - VCMA Steering Group <p>This project is also supported by stakeholders (as outlined above).</p> <p>The project will be managed and led by WWU and will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly project review meetings - Quarterly stakeholder review meetings - Stage gate review after 6 months of delivery

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	<p>- Ongoing reviews throughout the duration of the project regarding delivery of outcomes - this will feed into lessons learnt and shared best practice to ensure the project is successful in delivering value for money and maximising outcomes for customers and communities.</p>
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