

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

Information required	Description
Contact Name	Elizabeth Warwick
Contact Email	elizabeth.wawick@wwutilities.co.uk
Address	Wales & West House, Spooner Close, Celtic Springs, Coedkernew, Newport, NP10 8FZ
Project title	<i>South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Accessible Alarms Project</i>
Total VCMA funding required (£k)	£5,000
Problem	<p>The Problem:</p> <p>We are committed to raising awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) and educate customers on how to keep them and their family safe. We provide key gas safety information on how to safely maintain their appliances and how to reduce the risk of CO in their home.</p> <p>What is Carbon Monoxide (CO)?</p> <p>You can't see it. You can't smell it. You can't taste it. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas that is released when any fossil fuel doesn't burn properly.</p> <p>Breathing it in can make you unwell, and it can kill. Even low levels of exposure, over a long period, can cause serious health issues.</p> <p>Severe CO poisoning causes approximately 60 accidental deaths per year in England and Wales (NHS). Exposure to carbon monoxide at sub-lethal levels cause non-specific symptoms, (e.g., headaches, nausea, dizziness). This means exposure to carbon monoxide could be under-reported.</p> <p>Low awareness of CO</p> <p>Research has shown that awareness of CO remains low and is lowest in young adults, with only a quarter understanding the risks or what to do if they suspect the presence of CO.</p> <p>Our figures in 2021 revealed that those who we interacted with had an average awareness of 4.8/10 in relation to the dangers of CO.</p> <p>The lack of prevention</p> <p>With the rising cost of living, the servicing of gas appliances becomes a lower priority for people. New research from independent body, Gas Safe</p>

Criteria

	<p>Register, also shows one in three people (31%) have used excuses to get out of having their home gas appliances safety checked, despite over three quarters (79%) saying they would never make excuses if their loved ones' safety was at risk.</p> <p>Nearly 7 million homes in the UK – one in four – house potentially dangerous gas appliances, including boilers, cookers, and gas fires. If left unchecked, these faults can pose a threat to life from gas leaks, fires, carbon monoxide poisoning and explosions.</p> <p>Vulnerable groups most at risks</p> <p>As temperatures drop and people turn up their heating, new research from Energy UK's 'CO Be Alarmed!' campaign reveals that one in three Britons – over 17 million people – are at risk from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning as they don't have a CO alarm in their home – despite nine in ten (94%) saying they are aware of the risk.</p> <p>Research by Gas Safe Trust involving 2,001 people who care for or check in on an elderly or disabled loved one who doesn't live with them revealed that 75% said safety was a key reason for checking in on their vulnerable loved one. Yet 92% don't know at least one of the crucial signs that a gas appliance is unsafe.</p> <p>Lack of accessible alarms</p> <p>Standard CO alarms are not equipped with the functions needed to support those with hearing impairments. There are alarms on the market equipped with these adapted functions but they can be expensive and are not widely accessible for those who need them most.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p>Our Commitment</p> <p>In our Business Plan for RIIO GD2 we made a commitment to reach at least 10,000 people a year through either face-to-face contacts, or by providing educational materials; demonstrating success by a CO survey of understanding before and after the engagement. We will target all ages and demographics with our messages.</p> <p>In addition, we committed to reaching 250,000 homes a year with CO awareness messaging through our usual communications for connections, planned and emergency work, and through social media channels.</p> <p>Our Ambition</p> <p>To keep people safe by; raising awareness of the risks of CO arising from both appliances connected to the mains gas network and other sources, to effect behaviour change to safeguard all those at risk, and to provide access to suitable CO safety devices for people who may struggle to access one themselves.</p>

Criteria

	<p>To create alignment & consistency around PSR awareness and safeguarding service(s) messaging that supported priority customer needs. We set out to create sustainable community projects and partnerships, to deliver mutually beneficial and fair outcomes while maximising effective reach</p> <p>Objective:</p> <p>Actively look to reduce the number of households in our network without CO alarms and raise awareness of the dangers of CO.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with trusted partner South Wales Fire & Rescue Service by providing them with funding for 10 adapted CO alarms to provide free of charge to hard of hearing- and hearing-impaired customers • Utilise the fire services home visits who already offer customers smoke and heat alarms and add in the offering of an accessible alarm as part of their visits. • Record the awareness before and after the visit using our online form to demonstrate a % increase in awareness <p>Accepting referrals for the PSR, LCV and other free support measures during this visit</p>											
<p>Expected outcomes and the associated actions.</p>	<p>Outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="491 1171 1374 2018"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="491 1171 783 1317"> Anticipated Project outcomes (the difference it will make) </th> <th data-bbox="783 1171 1090 1317"> Associated Actions (what we will do to achieve the outcome) </th> <th data-bbox="1090 1171 1374 1317"> Success Criteria (How we know the outcome has been achieved) </th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="491 1317 783 1805"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers are provided with an accredited and accessible CO alarm that meets health and safety standards </td> <td data-bbox="783 1317 1090 1805"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist accessible CO alarms available for customers who need them • Provide funding for the adapted CO alarms to be provided to customers in vulnerable situations free of charge </td> <td data-bbox="1090 1317 1374 1805"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO awareness levels increase post CO alarm and advice provision. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="491 1805 783 2018"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People feel more in control knowing the dangers of CO to be able to keep them and their </td> <td data-bbox="783 1805 1090 2018"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the dangers of CO and what action to take to prevent and report it </td> <td data-bbox="1090 1805 1374 2018"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear increase in awareness measured through the CO questionnaire and customers </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Anticipated Project outcomes (the difference it will make)	Associated Actions (what we will do to achieve the outcome)	Success Criteria (How we know the outcome has been achieved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers are provided with an accredited and accessible CO alarm that meets health and safety standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist accessible CO alarms available for customers who need them • Provide funding for the adapted CO alarms to be provided to customers in vulnerable situations free of charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO awareness levels increase post CO alarm and advice provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People feel more in control knowing the dangers of CO to be able to keep them and their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the dangers of CO and what action to take to prevent and report it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear increase in awareness measured through the CO questionnaire and customers
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	<p>families safe and able to share that information in their community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers are better informed of the role that WWU play in keeping their communities safe and have a better awareness of who to contact if they suspect CO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide supporting literature with our alarms that contains key safety information and WWU referral details Collect data via our online forms around awareness before and after 	<p>pledging to take further CO mitigating actions – eg informing family and friends of the risks.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers are referred for additional support measures through one link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer qualifying and consenting customers to the PSR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the sign ups through these methods
<p>Following evaluation of performance and outcomes, SWFRS faced some challenges in distributing the adapted alarms as initially planned. To further support SWFRS, we agreed a 6-month extension to the project providing additional time but no additional cost. Further review and evaluation will take place during this period.</p>			
Scale of VCMA project and SROI calculations	<p>We have taken the forecast support measures from South Wales Fire and Rescue and used as the input to our SROI model. The output shows a £0.13 net benefit per £1 invested.</p>		
Project Partners and third parties involved	<p>South Wales Fire & Rescue Service</p>		
VCMA Project start and end date	<p>01/04/2022 – 31/10/2022 (Initial) 01/11/2022 – 31/03/2023 (Extension)</p>		
Geographical area	<p>South Wales</p>		

Please return all completed forms to: VCMA@wwutilities.co.uk

For further information on the VCMA please use the below link to the Ofgem guidance document:

[Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance \(VCMA\) Governance Document | Ofgem](#)