

Media Update No. 4

Tuesday 12 May 2020: 1030 hours

GasNet Response to COVID-19 moving to Alert Level 2 at 11:59 pm on 13 May 2020. Until then Alert Level 3 applies (refer to Media Update No. 3 of 23 April 2020)

The distribution of natural gas is deemed an Essential Service by Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) which has confirmed that businesses in the sector are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, Alert Level 3 and soon in Alert Level 2, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains.

GasNet has determined the activities that are essential to ensure continuation of a safe and reliable supply of natural gas to consumers through our gas network and metering systems. These activities and systems will be maintained throughout the period Alert Level 4, Alert Level 3 and soon in Alert Level 2.

Our offices in Cook Street, Whanganui will be open to the public from Thursday 14 May 2020, with personnel being present during normal business hours each working day, while the balance of the team will continue working from home. Our office systems are operating at improved capacity and remain effective, telephone and email communications are unaffected.

All personnel have been trained in aspects of Control of Infectious Diseases and been provided with specific information relating to minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19. In the performance of activities our personnel will limit their physical interaction with other staff and the public, principally by personal distancing. All field operatives have a range of PPE and sanitising and cleaning products to ensure they have protection and provide the same level of protection to the public. The corporate function of the business remains operational but is limited to a mix of local and remote locations.

The company's planning ensures that arrangements are in place for alternative cover for each key role. It is advisable that if contact cannot be made with a specific GasNet person that an enquiry is made via the GasNet contact number 0800 349 2050 to provide an alternative contact or use www.gasnet.co.nz/contact-us/.

Services that have been requested and/or offers made by GasNet prior to the Level 4 Alert coming into force, will be prioritised and those affected will be contacted in regard to the offer. A service such as a new gas connection, meter relocation, meter removal or meter reinstallation may be provided during Alert Level 2 if the work is necessary, and especially for reasons of public health and/or safety. Please note that due to the restrictions placed on our business over the past 7 weeks there will be increased lead times for provision of services until this backlog has been cleared.

Please note that this does not impact on GasNet's ability to respond to emergencies. If you smell or hear gas, or have any concerns about the safety of your gas supply contact GasNet immediately on 0800 349 2050 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you are concerned or if there is an immediate threat to persons or property call Fire and Emergency NZ on 111.

The following table lists the Network activities that have been deemed essential to the continuation of a safe and reliable supply of natural gas to consumers; and assist specific business activity to recommence in Alert Level 2.

Table 1
Essential and specific business activity related to Network Activities

Networks – Essential Activities	Details
Emergency/Fault response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas leaks – smell of gas • High/Low/ Fluctuating gas pressure • No gas • Network damage • Network alarm monitoring (Pressure & CP) 	24/7 Emergency Response
Odorant concentration and odour level monitoring and reporting	Key safety control
District Regulator Station and Network Pressure monitoring and inspections	Ensure system reliability
Leakage Monitoring and Survey	Safety monitoring
Network plan issue service	Key safety control
Network on site locations	On request
Service disconnections	On request
New service connections	On request
Mains replacement/renewal projects	Where required for public safety or where possible while complying with Alert level 2 requirements
Network extensions – new developments	Pipe drops only, commissioning where required for public safety or where possible while complying with Alert level 2 requirements
Other work	Where required for public safety only

The following table lists the metering system activities that have been deemed essential to the continuation of a safe and reliable supply of natural gas to consumers; and assist specific business activity to recommence in Alert Level 2.

Table 2
Essential and specific business activity related to Metering System Activities

Gas Metering Systems – Essential Activities	Details
Emergency/Fault response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas leaks – smell of gas • High/Low/ Fluctuating gas pressure • No gas • Metering system damage 	24/7 Emergency Response
Odorant concentration and odour level monitoring and reporting	Key safety control
Metering system disconnections and reconnections	On request
New metering system installations	On request
Other work	Where required for public safety only

The following table lists the Network activities that have not been deemed as essential to the continuation of a safe and reliable supply of natural gas to consumers and/or assist specific business activity to recommence in Alert Level 2, these have been deferred. These activities such as mains renewals are safety related but each has been assessed and their short term deferral is not likely to result in an immediate increased risk to public safety.

Table 3
Network - Non Essential Activities

Networks – Annual Plan Activities	Details
Tawa Street, Rata Street to Kings Avenue Mains Pipe Replacement	Deferred to 2020-21
Alma Road, Moore Avenue to York Street Mains Pipe Replacement	Now possible
Aramoho Rail Bridge Crossing Upgrade	Deferred to 2020-21

The following table lists the Metering System activities that have not been deemed as essential to the continuation of a safe and reliable supply of natural gas to consumers, these activities have been deferred. The deferral of these activities is not considered likely to result in an immediate increased risk to public safety

Table 4
Gas Metering System - Non Essential Activities

Metering System – Non Essential Activities	Details
Planned Meter Replacements – Sampling program	Now possible
Commercial & Industrial Metering Systems Planned Overhauls	On request

We regret that we are unable to provide the full level of service during this Pandemic event but will make every effort to restore all services to normal levels as soon as we are able.

If you have any questions please contact GasNet on 06 349 2050.

All updates are available from GasNet’s website www.gasnet.co.nz and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/gasnetwhanganui/>

About GasNet

Based in Whanganui, GasNet Limited is a company dedicated to the ownership and management of natural gas networks and meters, predominantly in the Whanganui-Manawatu region. Its Whanganui network has operated since the late 1800’s when the city became established. The management of its gas infrastructure a core activity within the GasNet business.

GasNet Limited is 100% owned by Whanganui District Council Holdings Limited, a Council Controlled Trading Organisation of the Whanganui District Council.

Contact:

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