

## Media Update No. 3

Thursday 23 April 2020: 1600 hours

### GasNet Response to COVID-19

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, 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 and Level 3.

Although our offices in Cook Street, Whanganui are closed to the public, personnel will access the building to perform tasks that are critical and cannot be performed remotely otherwise all staff are working from home. Our office systems are operating at a reduced capacity but 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 essential activities our personnel will limit their physical interaction with other staff and the public, principally by personal distancing, through working remotely and exclusion of others from work sites. 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 remote communications.

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.

Services that have been requested and/or offer made by GasNet prior to the Level 4 Alert coming into force, if not deemed essential are unlikely to be provided within the timeframes specified in the offer. A service such as a new gas connection, meter relocation, meter removal or meter reinstallation may only be provided during Alert Level 4 and Level 3 if the work is necessary for reasons of public health and/or safety.

**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 3.

**Table 1**  
**Essential and specific business activity related to Network Activities**

<b>Networks – Essential Activities</b>	<b>Details</b>
Emergency/Fault response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas leaks – smell of gas</li> <li>• High/Low/ Fluctuating gas pressure</li> <li>• No gas</li> <li>• Network damage</li> <li>• Network alarm monitoring (Pressure &amp; CP)</li> </ul>	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	Special circumstances only
Service disconnections	Where required for public safety only
New service connections	Where required for public safety only
Mains replacement/renewal projects	Where required for public safety only
Network extensions – new developments	Pipe drops only, commissioning only where required for public safety
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 3.

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

<b>Gas Metering Systems – Essential Activities</b>	<b>Details</b>
Emergency/Fault response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas leaks – smell of gas</li> <li>• High/Low/ Fluctuating gas pressure</li> <li>• No gas</li> <li>• Metering system damage</li> </ul>	24/7 Emergency Response
Odorant concentration and odour level monitoring and reporting	Key safety control
Metering system disconnections and reconnections	Where required for public safety only
New metering system installations	Where required for public safety only
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 3, 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**

<b>Networks – Annual Plan Activities</b>	<b>Details</b>
Tawa Street, Rata Street to Kings Avenue Mains Pipe Replacement	Deferred to 2020-21
Alma Road, Moore Avenue to York Street Mains Pipe Replacement	Deferred to post Alert level 3
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**

<b>Metering System – Non Essential Activities</b>	<b>Details</b>
Planned Meter Replacements – Sampling program	Deferred to post level 3
Commercial & Industrial Metering Systems Planned Overhauls	Deferred to post level 3

The deferral of some routine planned maintenance activities across both Network and Metering System businesses has been done so on the basis that Alert level 4 will remain in place for four weeks. As Alert Level 4 remains in place for a longer period, the activities deemed essential at this time will change with commencement of Alert Level 3, and the range and scope of activities that will become essential will increase.

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](http://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:**

Mr Geoff Evans, General Manager, GasNet Limited to midnight Sunday, 26 April 2020  
Mr Jim Coe, General Manager, GasNet Limited from Monday, 27 April 2020  
(06) 349 2050

ENDS