

I'm not the electrician, why are you telling me?

Gas Bulletin #15

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"I'm not the electrician, why are you telling me?"

This is the response that we often receive after we send a warning letter to the contractor who performed the gas installation where the electrical requirements for a gas appliance have not been met.

It is a common problem with the installation of gas upright cookers, hotplates and under bench ovens, for the electrician to install the power point (inaccessibly) behind or below the installed appliance. This requires the removal of the appliance before the power supply can be isolated. (Sometimes an access hole or panel can be provided to solve this problem)

In most new home installations the power point is installed before the gas appliance is second fixed and may even be evident by the cable terminations at the first fix stage. This should be the time to have the power point location altered.

Sometimes in the case of an existing installation, the power point may be in the wrong location. In a kitchen renovation job, check the proposed layout and if this is the case, the matter should be brought to the attention of the customer and the electrician to make the necessary alterations before the gas appliance is installed.

So then, if the electrician installed the power point, why do we contact the gasfitter about the matter?

We do not know who the electrician is from the information supplied on the audit request form, and he will not be aware of the requirements of the Gas Standard. The gas fitter on the other hand, should have a copy of the AS/NZS 5601.1 and be aware of the requirements of that Standard.

We will therefore use the gas fitter to facilitate the contact to have the non-compliance rectified.

AS/NZS 5601.1:2022 Clause 6.2.8 – Electrical Requirements) states that;

A gas appliance connected to the electricity supply shall have a suitable means of electrical isolation which is adjacent to the gas appliance location and accessible with the gas appliance installed. The means of isolation shall be—

- a) a plug to a fixed switched socket-outlet;
- b) a plug to a socket-outlet that may be located in an inaccessible position but has a separate switch operating in all live (active and neutral) conductors located in an accessible position; or

- c) a switch operating in all live (active and neutral) conductors. For commercial or industrial gas appliances, the isolating switch may be mounted on the outside of the control panel or, where the panel is not lockable, on the inside of the panel.

Where the appliance is installed in a location that is exposed to the weather, the electrical isolation shall be either a weatherproof type, or located in a position that is not exposed to the weather.

- This clause has now been aligned directly with AS/NZS 3000 - Wiring Rules - so that electricians know what is required of them.
- The term double pole switch has been removed and replaced with the term a switch 'operating on all live conductors'.
- Where the gas appliance is installed in a location exposed to the weather the electrical isolation must be weatherproof or not exposed to the weather.
- Dual fuel gas / electrical **hotplates** with both gas burners and electric elements a 'functional isolation switch' on the bench top is mandatory.



- Dual fuel **upright cookers** with both gas burners and electric elements on the hotplate a 'functional isolation switch' on the bench top is mandatory.
- For **dual fuel upright cookers** with a gas hotplate and an electric – oven / grill, an accessible isolation switch, e.g., under the bench-top in an adjacent cupboard is acceptable.

Previous Regulation Roundup articles have provided information on the problem of non-compliant power points and their locations. Please see Issue 6, front page article, entitled "A shocking gas experience" and Issue 7, page 5, regarding functional switches for gas cooking appliances.

Contact the Office of the Technical Regulator for more information

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