

# Domestic Flammable Gas Detectors

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**GAS**  
HAZARDS

**GAS**  
DETECTION

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# Domestic Flammable Gas Detectors

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In Europe, I believe we have a common view regarding the safety and safe use of domestic gas appliances! - the prime safety measures will always be with the installation - - approved appliances, installed correctly and regularly maintained by competent registered gas fitters. Incorrect installation, misuse of appliances and lack of maintenance still continue however to cause major incidents and whilst these deficiencies must be addressed with urgency in our drive for reducing gas related accidents in the home, other safety measures can also be applied, which will include the use of gas detectors: these additional measures must be regarded however as secondary measures.

Within the UK there are specific locations where domestic gas detectors are more widely used. In old-people's homes and sheltered accommodation, in University Halls of Residence and in rented premises where new UK legislation applies, property owners are looking for additional safety measures to protect both their tenants and their property: recent legislation in the U.K. requires every owner of rented property with installed gas appliances to have these appliances maintained annually by qualified gas fitters.

With all our good intentions however, people are still being killed and injured in their homes as a result of fire, explosion and asphyxia and for a number of years it has been thought by many that a more widespread use of domestic gas detectors may significantly reduce these incidents - until relatively recently however, the quality and reliability of the available gas detectors was poor.

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**CENELEC is one of many harmonising Standards bodies within Europe and one of its tasks is to produce Performance Standards for application throughout Europe and Scandinavia to assist the production of safe, good quality electrical products.**

As a background to the development of a better quality domestic gas detector: in the UK we need to go back to June 1977 and the publication following Government enquiry of the Report of the enquiry into serious gas explosions: this identified the extent of the hazard and initiated further technical research and development. In parallel, a study of the experiences of Tokyo and Osaka Gas in Japan, and the millions of detectors in use there, re-kindled an interest in preparing a British performance standard for domestic gas detectors and in 1990, BS7348 was published.

Other Countries in mainland Europe were also undertaking similar work, Italy in particular and in early 1992, the British Standard and Italian document Gastrado 192 were submitted to CENELEC in Brussels with the request that work starts in Europe to produce a harmonised performance standard for domestic flammable gas detectors.

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To undertake this work, Technical Committee 216 was formed and for the past 5 years we have been working diligently to prepare Standards that will assist the production and installation of domestic gas detectors having a specification that should help to reduce the number of these tragic occurrences.

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## Domestic Flammable Gas Detectors

**I spend much of my time working with the oil, gas, power and shipping industries training engineers how to make best use of the gas detection technologies that are now available - exciting new technologies, which when applied correctly, will reduce gas related incidents in the workplace.**

From a personal viewpoint, I have been involved with preparing Performance Standards for flammable and toxic gas detectors in industry for more than 20 years and during this time with the help of an enthusiastic European Group, we have produced detailed and specific industrial standards for gas detectors, both portable and fixed. In industry, particularly the oil and gas industry, flammable gas detectors have been used for many years and the value of their use is seen that in both the mining and offshore oil industry the use of flammable gas detectors is mandatory.

For example, on an offshore oil platform you will usually find several hundred flammable gas detectors installed and maintained by a strict regime. I spend much of my time working with the oil, gas, power and shipping industries training engineers how to make best use of the gas detection technologies that are now available - exciting new technologies, which when applied correctly, will reduce gas related incidents in the workplace.

The CENELEC Committee dealing with industrial gas detectors has played a major role in improving the quality of these detectors and the same skills and resources have now been applied to the domestic gas detector. Flammable gas detectors of good quality and at a price that will be attractive to the domestic consumer are now available! - providing you buy the ones that meet the performance requirements we have worked to specify in our Standards - and that you have them installed correctly, following the manufacturers recommendations, - they will do their job and they will help to reduce the number of gas related incidents and in so doing, will help to save injuries and lives!