

The complaint

Miss T complains about the service she received from British Gas Insurance Limited when an engineer serviced her appliances.

What happened

In July 2019 a British Gas engineer completed an annual service on Miss T's appliances. Miss T says that she was contacted unexpectedly in December 2019 by an engineer from a different company completing gas repairs in her street. He told her that she had a gas leak in her property and he went on to shut off her gas supply. Miss T reported this to British Gas and they sent out an engineer to fix the fault. The engineer found that the valve on Miss T's fire hadn't been tightened when the service was completed.

Miss T complained to British Gas and her complaint was upheld. It apologised for the service it had provided, assured Miss T that it would provide feedback to the engineer and offered Miss T £50 for the trouble and upset caused. Miss T remained unhappy, so she brought her complaint to our service.

Our investigator looked into the complaint but thought British Gas had resolved the complaint fairly. He said British Gas fixed the fault at the earliest opportunity and Miss T was asking for compensation for something that might have happened but hadn't. He didn't think it was fair to increase the compensation offered in these circumstances.

As Miss T didn't agree with the investigators view, the complaint has been passed to me to issue a final decision.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

There is no doubt that the engineer completing the service in July 2019 made a mistake when he serviced Miss T's fire - both parties agree to this. So what I need to decide is whether the compensation British Gas offered is fair in the circumstances of the complaint.

Having considered the information provided by both parties carefully, I agree with the investigators findings, for much the same reasons. I have no doubts that Miss T was very concerned when she found out about the gas leak, but the third party engineer shut off the gas supply, minimising any risk to Miss T. I appreciate Miss T's view that the leak left her in a vulnerable position up to the point it was found, but as the investigator has rightly said, we wouldn't look to compensate someone for an event that might have happened but didn't.

I can see when British gas were notified of the fault, they sent an engineer out the next day. I find this is reasonable and that it couldn't have done any more in the circumstances. The fault was also fixed on this visit, leaving Miss T without gas for just the one night.

Miss T has highlighted that she would have lost gas during the period of the leak - but has been unable to provide anything that would show exactly how much extra this may have

cost. In the absence of this information and considering the length of time Miss T was made to wait once she notified British Gas of the fault, I find the £50 compensation amount offered by British Gas fair in the circumstances of this complaint.

My final decision

Based on the above, I don't uphold this complaint or ask British Gas Insurance Limited to increase their offer.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss T to accept or reject my decision before 25 May 2020.

Tom Wagstaff
Ombudsman