

What to do if your Boiler breaks down

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Before organising a visit if your Boiler has broken down, you should first go through some basic and obvious checks.

Is your boiler at lockout?

If it is, it means the burner failed to light or went out when it was running. This can be a genuine fault, or a glitch caused by weather conditions or power fluctuations. First check that you have enough oil, even if your Watchman says you have plenty; if you have plenty of oil check your fire valve is open (see FACTSHEET 36) then press the lockout button. If the burner ignites as normal and continues to run, it was either a glitch or you may have an intermittent fault; either way there's no point in calling anyone until you know for sure whether it's working correctly or not.

If when pushing the lockout button, the burner tries to light but doesn't and then goes back to lockout, you need to wait a couple of minutes before trying again. If it fails to ignite again leave it and arrange a visit. You should never try to re-start the burner more than twice if it fails to ignite. However, if the burner did ignite and ran successfully for an hour or so, then you can keep re-starting the burner. This is only advisable if you are desperate and cannot survive without heat until someone can attend and rectify the problem.

Is the boiler at overheat/limit?

If the burner is not at lockout, and you have a pressurised system or combi you must check the water pressure (see FACTSHEET 26 for more detailed information) the boiler should be cold to do this, and the water pressure should usually be 1 bar when cold. If the pressure was low, the boiler may be at overheat or limit. After re-setting the pressure press the overheat/limit button and the boiler will hopefully fire up. If it runs for a while and does the same, turn off the power supply and call us, if it works OK keep a close eye on the pressure over the next week or so as you may have a leak.

If you don't have a pressurised system or a combi, the boiler could still be at overheat and this can be caused by a failure of the boiler control stat, failure of a circulating pump or possibly by a latent heat build-up in the boiler caused by sludge or scale in the system (see Fact sheet 28 Lime scale and system corrosion (sludge)).

If the boiler was at overheat and continues to go to overheat time and time again, investigation and repair will be required.

If there are no lights at the boiler or time clock, try changing the fuse in the fused spur (switch on the wall) or fuse box. This is usually a 5 amp fuse, but occasionally if you have an under floor heating system, it may be a 13 amp. Always replace with the correct size fuse.

If all of the above fail, you better give us a call.