

Continuing to work safely together during COVID-19

08 SEPTEMBER 2020

As governments across the UK and Ireland manage regional lockdowns, ease restrictions with more people returning to the workplace, and consider the possibility of a resurgence of COVID-19, Energy Networks Association and Energy UK members have reaffirmed their commitments to protect those most in need, keep colleagues and customers safe and their energy flowing.

From the outset of the pandemic, companies across the energy industry have implemented safe working practices in consultation with colleagues, contractors, and trades unions. As the governments' responses to the coronavirus pandemic develops, companies and unions are continuing to keep their approach under careful watch and carry out regular reviews of their practices to make sure they operate as safely as possible.

Energy companies will always take an approach which safeguards the health and well-being of their customers and colleagues, while maintaining a safe and reliable supply of energy.

As lockdown restrictions ease in many parts of the country, companies and unions are mindful of the possibility of more local lockdowns and a resurgence that will require continued vigilance. They continue to take appropriate safety measures, including:

- Revising and implementing procedures based on our joint learning from experience gained since the start of the pandemic.
- Continuing to ensure any new or revised procedures provide customers with the best possible service
- Working with the National HESAC and across the whole energy industry to pre-empt and prepare for any potential spikes in infections to ensure that colleagues and the public have confidence that the essential services they rely on will continue to be provided safely.
- Reviewing existing COVID-19 risk assessments with trades union health and safety representatives. Any changes to the assessments will be shared with energy industry and contractors, demonstrating transparency and ensuring they are easily accessible.

David Smith, Chief Executive of Energy Networks Association, which represents the UK and Ireland's energy networks businesses, said:

“The energy networks continue to put colleagues and customers at the heart of their COVID-19 response. We are constantly reviewing our plans to make sure we continue to provide the best possible service, especially to those who need extra help. We will carry on working with our colleagues and trades unions to keep people safe, protect those most in need and keep your energy flowing.”

Emma Pinchbeck, Chief Executive of Energy UK said:

“At the start of the pandemic our members responded quickly to make sure customers were supported and that we kept the lights on, maintaining the highest standards of health and safety in unprecedented circumstances while protecting the welfare of staff and customers. The experience gained over the last few months will help the industry rise to any future challenges and our sector will continue to work with staff and union representatives to protect essential energy workers and the customers they serve.”

Sue Ferns, Senior Deputy General Secretary of Prospect said:

“By working together and focusing on detailed changes to make work COVID-secure, the companies and unions have ensured that we have maintained high safety standards and service to customers. Trade union safety representatives have played a key role and their work will be even more vital during the challenging times ahead.”

