

CO-Gas Safety Unintentional Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Case Study

KIMBERLEY JONES, Deceased in 2013



Kimberley Jones

Age: 25

Fuel: Solid

Appliance & location: Multi-fuel burner in her new home

Notes by CO-Gas Safety: The Trianco multi-fuel heater in this property was emitting carbon monoxide as its flueways had not been cleaned before being used.

Kimberley Jones, a 25-year old care worker, needed somewhere to live with her baby son. Kimberley's father, Andrew, found a house nearby which he bought for Kimberley to use as a home for her and her son. Andrew bought this from a family friend of some 25 years standing.

Preparing her first home

Andrew went in to the house in early August 2013 and did some decorating. He slept over in the house to keep it secure. On the 8th August Andrew woke up cold and lit a fire in the multi-fuel burner. Kimberley was due to move in on the 10th but was allowed to move in on the evening of the 8th. As the house was still quite bare and empty, Kimberley left her son Ieuan with her mother Helen for the night.

Andrew told Kimberley to keep a window open as he didn't want her to die of carbon monoxide. He said that this will haunt him to the end of his days. At her inquest, the coroner stated that 'Sometime that night she closed the kitchen window which until then had provided the only source of ventilation.'

Tragic discovery

Mr Jones said his wife called him the following morning, which was the 9th, as she could not contact their daughter. Kimberley's body was found by a paramedic at the house in Cwmbach, Aberdare on 9th August 2013. Her post mortem revealed that she had 64% carboxyhaemoglobin (the marker indicative of carbon monoxide poisoning) in her blood.

Gas expert inspector Howard Reed told the coroner the fire was dirty with a lot of soot and debris. It took him around 30 minutes to remove the throat plate from it – a job that should take around 30 seconds. The throat plate was so jammed with debris that it had prevented gases from escaping up the chimney and instead they had leaked into the living room, where Kimberley was sleeping.

Tests showed the appliance window and door leaked smoke, and carbon monoxide tests found that after two hours there were 829 parts per million (ppm) of the gas in the room.

A domestic carbon monoxide alarm would sound at about 50 ppm and levels of between 600 and 750ppm are likely to cause fatalities, the hearing was told.

Helen and Andrew, Kimberley's parents, are bringing up Ieuan.

Thanks to Kimberley's family

CO-Gas Safety is incredibly grateful to the family and particularly to Jessica Jones, Kimberley's sister, who organised a sponsored walk up Pen-y-fan in 2014 to raise money for CO-Gas Safety.



We are also extremely grateful to Mark Aylett, a member of the Guild of Master Sweeps, who very kindly dressed up in his sweep's gear (complete with chimney brush) and encouraged Stephanie all the way up to the summit. Without his help she would never have made it.

