



Safety radiators



radiators to choose? Standard gas central heating radiators – and in particular their pipework – can reach temperatures as high as 70°C – hot enough to cause serious burns within seconds. For disabled residents living alone in sheltered housing or even in managed residential accommodation, falling unnoticed onto a hot surface could have disastrous consequences. Similarly, gas central heating needs to be carefully considered when housing vulnerable residents. The implication of a gas leak might be too big a risk to take for multiple occupancy properties where residents have limited mobility and an evacuation would be difficult.

It is imperative therefore that when choosing a heating system, vulnerable users have a safe heating provision, cannot come into contact with a hot surface, risk danger from gas leakages and have an easy to control, cost effective solution.

It may also be necessary to protect against tampering and vandalism. Radiators therefore need to be resistant to physical abuse and have tamper-resistant fixings so the casings can be removed only using special tools.

The most practical way to prevent people from coming into direct contact with hot surfaces is to use radiators that are designed to eliminate the risk. While traditional radiator casings can provide a cover for the radiator itself, additional boxing is also required for hot,

exposed pipes making the casings option costly and time consuming.

Purpose-built Low Surface Temperature radiators are designed to provide a safe, cool-touch solution to heating a building where the occupants may have special needs. In particular, LST radiators that provide a strong visual presence in a room will easily be seen by visually impaired residents or building users. David Garrity is Managing Director of Heat Electric, the Yorkshire-based manufacturer of Heat Electric and Easy Heat electric water filled radiators. Specialising in easy to use, energy efficient and controllable heating solutions and having just launched an even more energy efficient version of their water filled electric radiator range, he explains: "Not all Low Surface Temperature radiators are the same. Our LST models are perfect for a disabled living environment because they are pipe-free individual units which look and work just like a conventional gas central heating system. However, each Heat Electric radiator works independently of the rest and by containing its own mini boiler and pump, requires no external pipework which immediately eradicates a further potential burn hazard."

The Heat Electric LST radiators are differentiated from the other models in the Heat Electric range by their specialist, impact resistant steel casing which prevents the

surface temperature exceeding 43°C. This makes the radiators particularly suitable for use in hospitals, nursing homes, schools and nurseries.

David continued: "Another important consideration when specifying heating systems for disabled or elderly use is the risk of people falling onto a radiator and injuring themselves from the impact. Conventional radiators tend to have sharp edges that can cause serious injury so it is important when selecting LST models to opt for those, like the Heat Electric LST models, where the outer casing has safer, radiused edges to minimise the risk of injury in the event of a fall.

"While the surface temperature never exceeds 43°C the LST still provides 95% of the heat output of our standard system by relying more on convection to heat the room to the desired temperature than other models," David continued. "The radiators are fully programmable and thermostatically controlled, allowing residents or users to set the room temperature they are happy with. And as the LST radiators are water filled they also emit comfortable heat."

100% efficient - as all electrical energy is delivered into the room as useful heat – Heat Electric's intelligent control system ensures heat is only ever delivered when and where it is needed which ensures optimum controllability which enhances energy and cost

efficiencies.

Adding to the controllability and ease of use of the Heat Electric LST radiators, each unit can be programmed to achieve a specific room temperature for its location. While a number of radiators can be set to come on and off together, each one will only activate if the room it is in is too warm or too cold. This avoids cold spots, overheating and eliminates energy wastage.

The built in air thermostat also enables the temperature to be adjusted as required and, when not in use, the LST radiator can be switched off completely so rooms are not unnecessarily heated. By not constantly drawing electricity and with the facility to be powered under the low cost energy tariff Economy 10, users can benefit from all important lower energy bills.

David Garrity added: "A practical and cost effective solution, our LST radiators can be fitted either throughout a property or solely in high risk areas." "Easy to install, they ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are not only protected from a very real danger to their health, but also have the most efficient, responsive and effective form of heating at their fingertips 24 hours a day, ensuring their optimum well being."

For more information on the Heat Electric LST radiator range, call 01422 231943

Specifying heating for properties which house disabled or elderly residents requires careful consideration of their needs, the functionality and ease of use of the heating system and cost efficiencies of installation and longer term fuel bills. While at first glance a standard radiator may not be an obvious health hazard, for the most vulnerable members of society it represents a dangerous and potentially harmful feature of any room. Optimum safety – including minimising the risk of injury from a fall - controllability and energy efficient warmth are key priorities when supplying heat for disabled or elderly users. Whether it's a new build project or whether modifications are being made to an existing property to make it more user friendly, heating is a primary concern. Those with thin, delicate skin can suffer

superficial burns from even a glancing touch of a conventional radiator – the surface temperature of which can reach up to 70°C – while contact burns to those over 65 can prove to be fatal.

According to the annual Home Accident Surveillance System (funded by the Department of Trade and Industry and managed by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) 27,429 people were injured in their home in 2002 (the last year the data was collected and published) by either a radiator or hot pipework.

So what steps can be taken to prevent such accidents?

For spaces with high ceilings, underfloor heating may be the best solution, but in all other areas, radiators are considered the most cost effective and efficient option. But which

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