

Heat Meter Recalibration FAQ's

Ref: RHI Regulation to recalibrate heat meters after 10 years

Version 2.0

Ofgem has recently sent a communication to all Non-Domestic RHI participants to remind them that RHI Regulations require every participant to replace or recalibrate all payment meters at least every 10 years (or in line with manufacturer's instructions where available, whichever is sooner).

The regulation is written into secondary legislation, so must be complied with, but is open to interpretation. Together with the REA and other industry representatives, we are in active discussion with Ofgem to take a 'reasonable' interpretation of 'recalibration', but whilst we seek clarification, we have produced these FAQs to help answer any questions customers may have about the regulation, which sets out our current understanding.

What is the regulation in plain speak?

Since 2011, when the Renewable Heat Incentive Regulations were first enacted, they have stated "Participants must keep all meters and steam measuring equipment...recalibrated every 10 years or within such periods as may be specified in accordance with manufacturers instructions, whichever is the sooner"

However, the regulations do not provide any definition of "recalibration" and does not provide any guidance on what standard the meters should meet, when they are recalibrated.

What does all this mean in practice?

It is Ofgem's responsibility to interpret how the regulations should be applied. In their Guidance (volume 2), they state that "participants can choose to either recalibrate or replace their meter" and if recalibration is chosen, "Calibration should be carried out by the manufacturer or by organisations with relevant accreditation (applicable to Class 2 heat metering (of the Measuring Instruments Directive), steam metering and relevant temperature/pressure calibrations) from the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). They go on to say "Typically, we would expect that meters will be sent away for recalibration by the manufacturer or an independent testing laboratory."

However, the costs and effort associated with sending meters away for recalibrating to this standard, significantly outweigh the cost and effort of replacing meters, so many participants are choosing to replace their meters instead.

When does the 10 years start from?

As there doesn't appear to be any guidance on this matter either in the regulations or the Ofgem guidance, the safest option currently is to assume that the date starts from when the meter was first calibrated, which might be a year or so before the system was installed and first accredited.

What do I need to do to comply with regulation?

As the Ofgem guidance currently states, you need to replace or re-calibrate all heat and steam meters within 10 years. At the present time, Ofgem has confirmed to us that in situ calibration is not suitable, so the current situation is the meter will therefore need to be removed and sent back to the factory or in some cases the manufacturers' representatives will be able to check and recalibrate.

What is the estimated cost of each option?

Please get in touch to discuss the options, as the cost depends on how many meters you have, the sizes of those meters, where they are installed, how much of the system will need to be drained down and the location of your site.

Does Ofgem know when my meters are over 10 years old?

Yes, in most cases when your RHI application was submitted, a photo showing the meters' display unit would have been submitted, this often shows the date that the meter was manufactured or calibrated. Copies of the original calibration certificates are also sometimes submitted with the application.

Will my RHI payments be suspended if I do not replace or recalibrate my meters?

Yes, it is possible that Ofgem could suspend your RHI payments until you have recalibrated or replaced your meter(s).

Can AMP carry out replacement of my heat meter?

Yes, we can assist you to meet the requirements of this regulation, please get in touch.