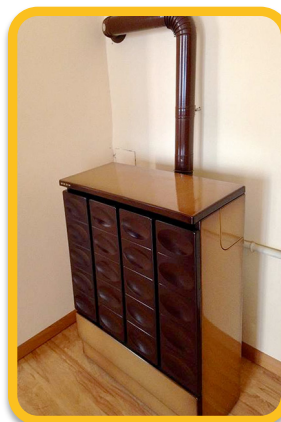


Servicing the Gas Heater

All heating and hot water systems powered by gas must be serviced regularly. A plumber (in German: *Installateur*) cleans the device, checks if it operates correctly and carries out minor repairs. It is probably a part of your lease agreement that you are **obliged** to organise this service. This means, you have to call a **plumber once every year**. In addition, a special check of the exhaust fumes has to be made every few years. This is needed to ensure that environmental laws are complied with. After both assessments, a sticker (in Austrian German: *Pickerl*) is placed on your heater.



How to find a business that services your gas heater:

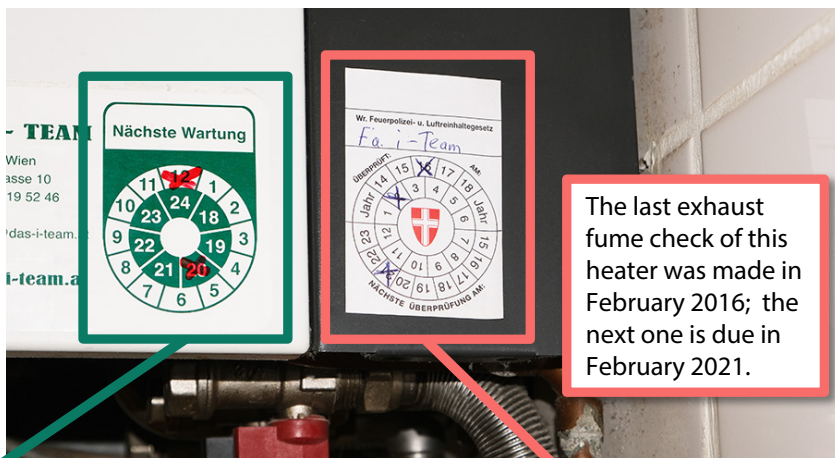
Perhaps your neighbours or friends can recommend a good plumber. Otherwise you will find one near the place you live using an Internet search engine like *Ecosia* or *Google*. Simply enter the word "Installateur", your postcode and town/city.

Example: Search for a plumber in Vienna's 16th district:

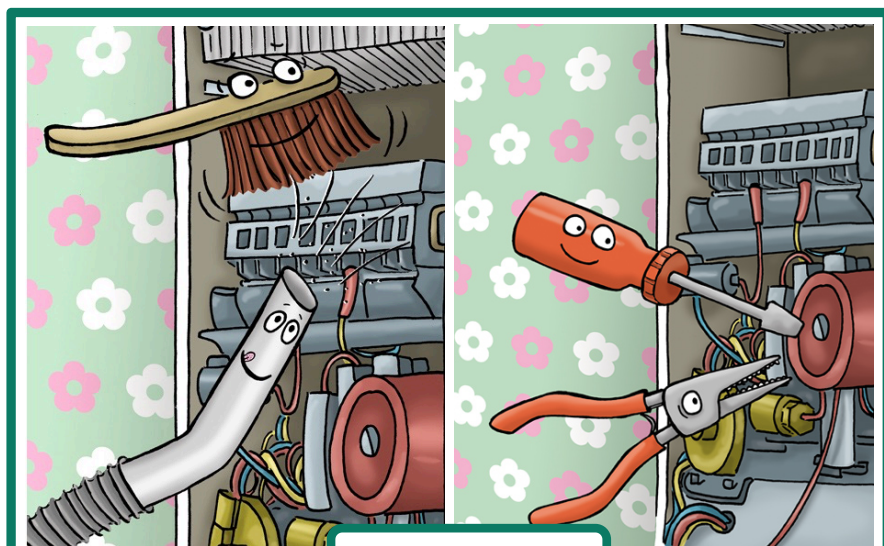
The „Pickerl“

In most cases the sticker shows you when the next service is due. In some rare cases it shows when the last service was made (that is, when the sticker was put on).

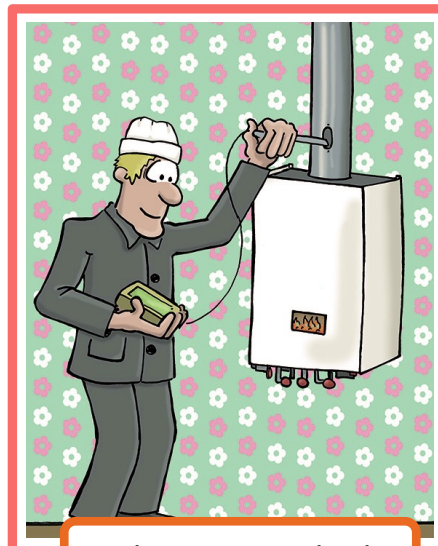
One ring shows the year, the other the month. This heater should be serviced again in December 2020.



The last exhaust fume check of this heater was made in February 2016; the next one is due in February 2021.



Annual Service



Exhaust Fume Check

How much is the service?

There are bargain offers of 70 Euros or less but you should be very cautious of these! Often such businesses leave flyers in the hallway or put them into the postbox. Some cheap plumbers do a good job but there have been very many cases of heaters not being serviced properly for discount prices. Expect to pay **130 to 170 Euro** for a good service. Payment is usually in cash at the door.

The exhaust fume check is unfortunately charged for separately and is usually done by the chimney sweeper. When the exhaust fume check is due you should inform the chimney sweeper at her/his next visit (see next paragraph). It may also be possible, however, that the plumber can do the exhaust fume check her/himself when carrying out the annual check. S/he should let you know about this option.



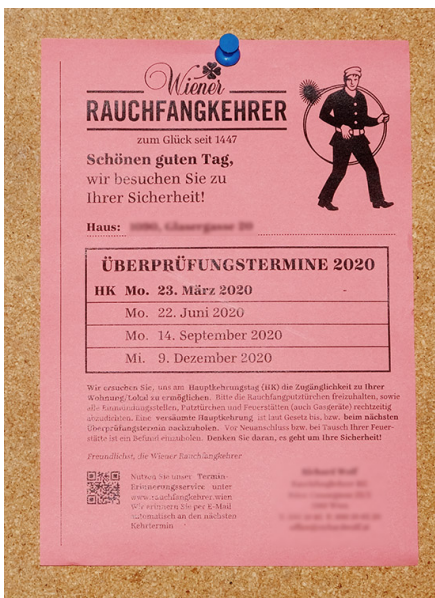
The chimney sweeper does not service heaters!

A plumber to service gas heaters must be organised by yourself.

The **chimney sweeper** (in Austrian German: *Rauchfangkehrer*) usually puts up a note with several appointments in the hallway of apartment houses. You should be at home at one of these times! The chimney sweeper also looks at your heater but – as the name suggests – especially at the chimney. When the chimney sweeper comes, you do not pay her/him. **Both – plumber and chimney sweeper** – should come to your place once every year.

How can I prove that my gas heater has been serviced?

1. You receive a protocol from the plumber listing everything that s/he did when servicing the heater. Keep this protocol! If there are any problems with the heater at some point you should have it ready for your landlord and the firm that repairs it!
2. The sticker (*Pickerl*) on the heater tells you when the next service is due. From that you can easily calculate when the last one was made (one year earlier).



Why do gas heaters have to be serviced?

To save energy and heating costs. Only if the heater operates properly it does not burn too much gas.



Security. If something does not work as it should in a heater, this can be dangerous.



Regulations. Only if the heater has been serviced regularly, the landlord pays for certain repairs. Furthermore, you may not get back (all of) your deposit when moving out of the flat should the heater not have been checked every year.



An opportunity to ask questions. You want to know how to adjust your heating? Your radiators make funny noises? Something puzzles you about the heating? When it is serviced, you can ask questions! For example: The water pressure must be right in any heating system. Therefore radiators must be vented and water has to be refilled sometimes. **Ask how this works in your case!**

When you smell gas: Dial the gas emergency number 128