

press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY 26 April 2011

NFB RUNS 4TH ANNUAL SURVEY TO SEE HOW UTILITIES ARE MEASURING UP

The National Federation of Builders (NFB) is conducting its fourth survey into the standard of service received when construction companies and developers request electricity, gas or water connections to a property.

The previous survey highlighted that problems with utilities were experienced on 88% of sites and more than half (54%) of sites experienced problems that were caused by delays in utilities issuing quotations for work.

Because the developers had to bear the financial cost of delays to projects, the NFB called for financial penalties when levels of service were not met. In October 2010, Ofgem, the regulator for the electricity and gas industries introduced financial penalties for companies that failed to meet agreed guaranteed levels of service.

The NFB's chief executive, Julia Evans, said: "Would you willingly pay thousands of pounds in advance for a service that has a reputation for being poorly delivered with no guarantee that you would even get what you paid for? For too long with utilities, that practice has been seen as an acceptable way of doing business. Utility companies have to place a greater focus on service and, like everyone else, deliver greater value for money. I hope that the measures introduced by Ofgem will have made a difference in service, and I look forward to learning of developers' experience once the survey is completed."

The survey is for all housebuilders and developers establishing utilities connections to properties and is open at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NFB-utilities-2011> until Friday 29 July 2011. Participants may complete one survey for each property they connect to a utility service.

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