

# Fire safety

Keeping safe in your home





## This leaflet contains information about fire safety and how you can protect yourself and your family.

As your landlord, we have an obligation to ensure your home meets all relevant fire safety standards.

By law, we must carry out an annual service and safety check of all Sanctuary gas appliances in your home, this includes boilers, cookers and fires.

Our engineers will carry out safety checks on the appliances and service the boiler – it should only take about an hour. They carry identification and don't mind if you call us to check the engineer is genuine.

As part of your tenancy agreement, you must let our registered Gas Safe engineers into your home for these checks.

### What part do you play?

Your responsibility is to ensure you are aware of the fire hazards in your home, and work to reduce the risk of fire. Most fires in the home can be prevented by taking some basic precautions.

#### Smoke alarms:

- You are responsible for making sure your smoke alarms are in working order.
- Test your smoke alarms every month. If any of your smoke alarms have a one year battery, make sure it is changed every year. Only take the battery out when you need to replace it.

## In the kitchen:

- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob.
- Use a spark device to light a gas cooker. They are safer than matches or lighters because they don't have a naked flame.
- Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen while cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down.
- Double check the cooker is off when you've finished cooking.
- Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

## Electrical items:

- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water.
- Use an adaptor when using a non-UK electrical appliance. Never put two prong plugs into three prong sockets.
- Don't use portable heaters for drying laundry. If this cannot be avoided, make sure that the heat source and clothing are kept at a safe distance.
- Let us know immediately if you are concerned about the electrics in your property. For example, if you notice burn marks around plugs or cables.
- An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take, most are 13 amps, so be careful not to overload them to reduce the risk of fire.

Be particularly aware of electrical appliances that generate a lot of heat, these will need to be plugged into a socket by themselves, for example hair dryer or an iron.

## Around the house:

- Be careful with candles and tea lights. Avoid placing them on or near materials that could burn or catch fire – like curtains.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Never have a barbeque on your balcony if you have one.
- Check to make sure that your furniture has the fire-resistant permanent label.
- Familiarise yourself with the symbols below, which show that your appliances and furnishings are safe:



Electrical  
items



Gas fitting  
and repair



Soft  
furnishings

### **Before going to bed:**

- Make sure the cooker is turned off and the kitchen door shut.
- Switch off any portable heaters.
- Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like a fridge.
- Stub out all cigarettes and always empty ashtrays having ensured contents are completely extinguished.
- Close all doors – it can keep your escape route free from smoke and may stop a fire spreading. It's also advisable to close all of the doors in your home when you go out during the day.
- If you use an electric blanket, turn it off when you get into bed and never use an electric blanket and hot water bottle together.

### **Be prepared in case of fire:**

- Familiarise yourself with your fire escape routes.
- If you live in a shared property or high rise block, your building should have its own evacuation procedure in case of fire. If you do not know what it is for your building, please ask your Housing Officer or Scheme Manager.
- Keep all exit routes clear, including communal areas.
- Keep all fire doors closed, especially those in communal areas. They help to slow down the spread of fire and will give you extra time to get out.
- If you lock your doors at night, keep your house keys somewhere safe where everyone in your household can find them, just in case you need to get out quickly.

For more information or if you have a question about fire safety, please contact your Housing Officer or call us on **0800 131 3348** or **0300 123 3511**.

Thank you for your co-operation.

This leaflet can be translated into other languages, large print and Braille or recorded on to an audio CD. Please contact us for details.

If you need to speak to a Sanctuary member of staff in your own language, please contact your local office and they will arrange an interpreter for you.

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