

If you still have any concerns about your home heading into winter, please contact our Customer Service Centre. We are here to help you.



**T:** 0300 123 6000

**E:** [customerservices@emh.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@emh.co.uk)

**W:** [www.emh.co.uk](http://www.emh.co.uk)



Get ready  
for winter



We want you to be safe and warm over the winter. We have produced this guidance in advance of the cold weather season so that you can be better prepared.

- ❄ **BOILER FAILURES**
- ❄ **EMERGENCY REPAIRS**
- ❄ **PREVENTING FROZEN OR BURST PIPES**
- ❄ **CONTROLLING DAMP AND BLACK MOULD IN YOUR HOME**
- ❄ **FIRE SAFETY**
- ❄ **OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICE**
- ❄ **MONEY ADVICE**

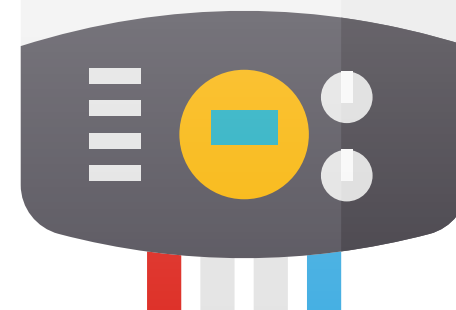


If you need to contact us, you can find all the details on the back page.

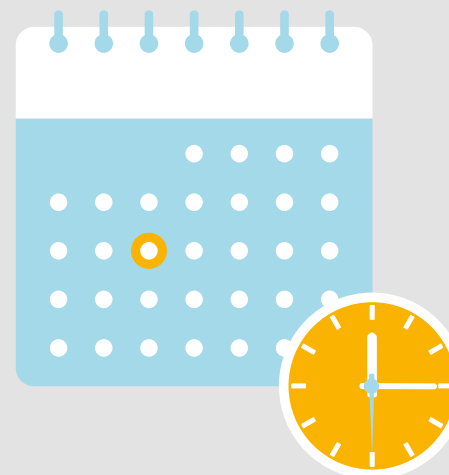
## **BOILER FAILURES**

Last winter we received a much higher number of calls regarding boiler failures than we did the previous year. This was due to several reasons, and we acknowledge that it caused distress to residents who experienced difficulties as a result. (You can read more about this in the Annual Report to Residents 2021 on our website.) Please be reassured that we listened to your feedback and ahead of this winter have made some improvements to our service.

When we were closed during the Christmas break last year, there were delays in ordering parts for boilers as we needed to raise a new job reference. We have now removed this requirement and operatives are able to get the necessary parts more quickly.



## **EMERGENCY REPAIRS**



From October to March we have categorised total loss of heating and hot water as an emergency for everyone. From April to September it is only considered an emergency for vulnerable households (e.g. for elderly or disabled residents).

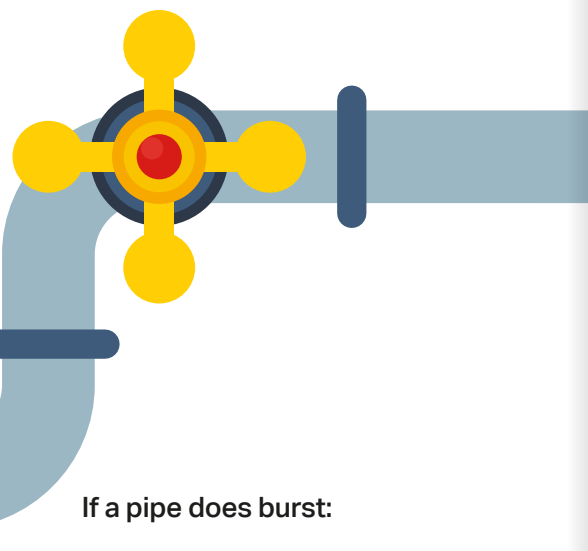
We will attend within 24 hours. You should make yourself available during this time to ensure our contractors can gain access.

## PREVENTING FROZEN OR BURST PIPES

To help prevent pipes freezing or bursting in cold weather, you should open the doors on kitchen cupboards that are on exterior walls to allow warm air to circulate around any pipes inside the cupboards.

You should also know where your stop tap is so you can turn off the water quickly. The stop tap is a valve on your cold-water system.

**Turn it clockwise to shut it off and anti-clockwise to turn it back on.**



### If a pipe does burst:

- ▶ Turn off the water at the stop tap
- ▶ Try and block the escaping water with thick cloths or towels
- ▶ Open all taps to reduce flooding

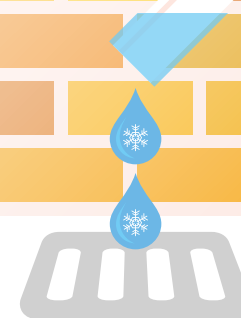
Do not forget to turn off your taps once the problem is fixed.

If you have a combination boiler (also known as a combi boiler), the condensate pipe – which drains the small amount of water produced by the boiler and runs outside your home into a drain – can freeze in cold weather, preventing the waste water from draining away. When this happens, the boiler will shut down and the frozen water will need to be cleared.

If you have one of the following boilers then it is likely that a condensate pipe is fitted externally: *Glow-worm Energysaver 40, Glow-worm Energysaver 80, Glow-worm 30CXI, Ultracom 30CXI.*

If your boiler has stopped working because the water in the condensate pipe has frozen, the boiler will display an error code, normally one of the following although it is dependent on the manufacturer: F1, F4, or F9.

You will then need to check the condensate pipe. If it is not frozen, report the issue to our Customer Service Centre. If it is frozen and you feel able to defrost it and reset the boiler yourself, please follow these simple instructions:



Pour warm water on the outside of the pipe where the water has frozen. Never disconnect the condensate pipe or try to thaw one that cannot easily be reached. **Please remember to be careful.**

Once the pipe has defrosted, you can reset your boiler by turning it off at the mains, waiting five seconds, and then switching it back on. Some boilers go through an electronic checking cycle after being reset which can take up to 15 minutes.

Combination boilers work by heating water taken from the mains supply. In severe weather conditions, the mains water supply to your home can freeze. Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do to repair your boiler if your water supply has frozen.

## CONTROLLING DAMP AND BLACK MOULD IN YOUR HOME

Damp and black mould can make your home feel like an unpleasant place to be. Damp, which can lead to black mould, is most often caused by condensation which you can tackle or prevent by making some simple changes.

Condensation is formed when water droplets in warm air - which are created by daily activities such as cooking, bathing/showering, and washing and drying clothes - come into contact with colder surfaces (e.g. windows and external walls).

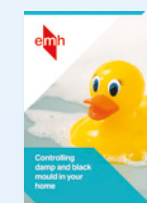
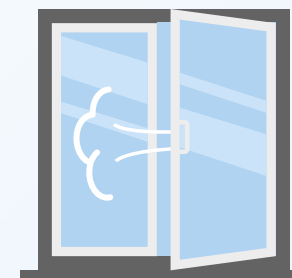
If not dealt with promptly, condensation can lead to black mould appearing, which looks unpleasant and can damage clothes and furniture.

Condensation is worse in winter when there are greater variations of air temperature between indoors and outdoors.

To reduce the amount of condensation, keep your home at a constant warm temperature and well-ventilated.

### Here are a few simple steps you can take:

- ▶ Open your windows as much as possible ✓
- ▶ Keep trickle-vents open (if they are fitted in your property) ✓
- ▶ Keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed to stop moisture escaping ✓
- ▶ Wipe condensation from windows and windowsills as soon as possible after it forms ✓
- ▶ Do NOT dry clothes on radiators ✗
- ▶ Do NOT use an unvented tumble dryer ✗
- ▶ Do NOT use your gas cooker to heat your kitchen ✗
- ▶ Do NOT block permanent fans or air bricks ✗



**For more information about preventing damp and black mould, you can download a leaflet from our website:**

[www.emhhomes.org.uk/cold\\_weather](http://www.emhhomes.org.uk/cold_weather)

If you do not have access to the internet, you can call our Customer Service Centre and they will send you a copy.



## FIRE SAFETY

The safety of our residents is our highest priority, and we have several stringent measures in place to keep you safe in your home. Our fire safety partnership with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue makes sure that our fire safety procedures across all our homes meet the highest standards.

**There are a few things that you can do to protect your home and your family:**

- ▶ Install a smoke alarm
- ▶ Check your electrical appliances for faults or loose/exposed wires
- ▶ Do not overload electrical sockets
- ▶ Do not leave candles unattended
- ▶ Keep soft furnishings away from anything that generates heat, including light bulbs
- ▶ If you smoke, make sure you stub out cigarettes completely

**You can find more information on our website:**

[www.emhhomes.org.uk/fire\\_safety](http://www.emhhomes.org.uk/fire_safety)



**In our communal areas we have adopted a zero-tolerance approach to any actions which may put you or your neighbours in danger.**

If you live in a scheme or a block with a communal area, it is essential that it is kept clear at all times. If a fire were to break out, any obstruction may block the escape route and prevent the Fire Service from getting in to put out the fire.

We do not allow the storage of any items in communal areas, including bikes, buggies and mobility scooters. Items left in communal areas will be removed and placed in storage or disposed of.



## FIRE SAFETY AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a special time for celebration and should not end in tragedy because of the extra hazards that are present at this time of year.

**The Fire Service offers lots of advice on how to stay safe in the festive season:**

[www.fireservice.co.uk/safety/christmas-safety/](http://www.fireservice.co.uk/safety/christmas-safety/)

## OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICE

Over the Christmas period last year our out-of-hours calls provider was challenged by an increased demand due to a colder than normal winter and the pandemic affecting staffing levels. Our Customer Service Centre now provides back-up cover during bank holidays so that additional demand can be handled more effectively.



## MONEY ADVICE

If you are experiencing money problems, our Financial Inclusion Officers can support you with claiming benefits and offer you advice on priority debts.

If you would like to speak to a member of the team, please e-mail us at [moneyadvice@emhhomes.org.uk](mailto:moneyadvice@emhhomes.org.uk) or call us on 0300 123 6000, select option 4, and leave your name, contact number, tenancy number and/or address along with brief details and we will respond accordingly.

Please note that due to staff working remotely, customers may be contacted by mobile phone.

