



Fire safety advice

Helping to keep you safe
in your home

Emh's approach to fire safety

Our aim is to provide and maintain healthy, safe and warm homes for residents. 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 & Rescue makes sure that our fire safety procedures across all our homes meet the highest standards.

In addition, our preventative measures include:

- ✓ Gas safety checks on all properties undertaken annually.
- ✓ Fire risk assessments carried out on blocks.
- ✓ Emergency light servicing in schemes every six months.
- ✓ An ongoing programme of electrical safety tests on communal areas.
- ✓ Regular checks in communal areas within schemes.
- ✓ Sprinkler systems installed in designated properties/sheltered schemes and for vulnerable residents where appropriate.
- ✓ Staff trained and qualified in fire safety.

Escape plans



Whatever type of property you live in, it's helpful to have a plan or know what procedures to follow in the event of a fire or an emergency. Make sure everyone in your home, including children or elderly people, knows what to do.



If you live in a flat, block or shared accommodation, familiarise yourself with the fire safety arrangements for your building. You will usually be able to find these on noticeboards and in stairwells. If you are unsure of the evacuation procedures, please ask us.

The best exit is usually the nearest one but have a back-up plan in case it is blocked.

You could include any ground floor windows in your plan. Smoke makes it almost impossible to see when you are trying to escape, so plan how you would escape if a fire did break out, and then practise it with your family.

- ▶ Take a few minutes to practise the plan with everyone in your household.
- ▶ Make sure all fire exits are clear.
- ▶ Keep fire doors closed.
- ▶ Keep keys near windows and doors so it is quicker to get out (for security reasons, do not keep them within reach from outside).
- ▶ If you have an emergency pendant, make sure you wear it and have it close by when you go to bed.
- ▶ Think of a second escape route in case the first one is blocked.

What to do if a fire breaks out



If you discover a fire – raise the alarm!

- ▶ Only press a fire alarm if there is one along your exit route.
- ▶ Dial 999 immediately if it is safe to do so.
- ▶ **NEVER** assume someone else has called 999.
- ▶ Leave the building by the nearest and safest route.
- ▶ If there is smoke in the area, keep as low as possible as the air is clearer closer to the ground.
- ▶ Check doors before you open them. If they are hot, there is fire on the other side so use an alternative exit.
- ▶ If you are the last one out, close the door behind you to slow the progress of the fire.

Fire doors

Fire doors are specialist doors that have been designed and tested to withstand fire for as long as possible. They create compartments and delay the spread of fire from one area to another, so it's important that they are kept closed and not wedged or propped open at any time. In blocks of flats, these doors will be those that open in communal areas, and on stairwells and corridors.

There are simple things you can check to make sure any fire doors in your property are in good working order.

These include checking:

- ▶ The gaps around doors, and making sure you can't see light coming through these gaps.
- ▶ That the seals running around the edges of doors or the frame are intact with no signs of damage.

- ▶ That the self-closing device on the door closes the door fully onto the latch without sticking on the door or frame.

- ▶ There is no damage to the door, its hinges, the frame or any glass or glazing in the door. This includes holes or drilling.

If you spot any signs of damage or you're concerned about the door, it's important you let us know about this urgently.

Communal areas

We take a zero-tolerance approach to any actions which may put you or your neighbours in danger.



If you live in a building with communal areas, including stairs, it is essential that they are kept clear at all times. If a fire were to break out, any obstruction may block your escape route, add fuel to the fire, and prevent the Fire Service from getting in to put out the fire.

- ▶ Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a stairway. Sometimes these items can become the target of an arson attack.
- ▶ Non-flammable items become a barrier to you getting out of the building or allowing others to get in to help.
- ▶ In a smoke-filled environment, your vision becomes severely impeded, and you may need to feel your way out.

Communal areas

- ▶ Stored items add time to you getting out safely.
- ▶ Exits must be kept clear at all times.
- ▶ Do not prop open fire doors – they are there to stop the spread of a fire. If you notice any damage or faults to a fire door or self-closing door fixings, please let us know immediately.

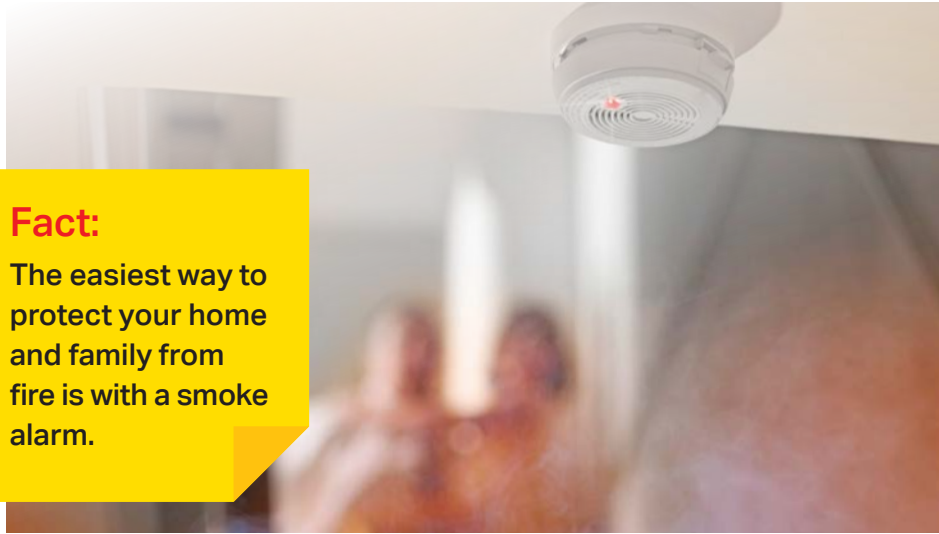
For these reasons we do not allow the storage of any items in communal areas, including bikes, buggies and mobility scooters.

If one of your neighbours regularly leaves items in a communal area and you would like us to speak to them, please let us know.

Items left in communal areas will be removed and placed in storage or disposed of.



Smoke alarms save lives



Fact:

The easiest way to protect your home and family from fire is with a smoke alarm.

Did you know?

- ▶ We must provide you with smoke alarms. However, it is your responsibility to make sure they continue to work once we have fitted them.
- ▶ You're **four times** more likely to die in a fire if you don't have a smoke alarm that works. Check you have one on each floor of your home and let us know if you don't.
- ▶ 90 people die each year because the battery in their smoke alarm is flat or missing.

Why not set a weekly reminder to test your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly, and report any issues to us?

- ▶ Never disconnect or take the battery out of your alarm unless it needs replacing.

Home Safety Checks

Your local fire and rescue service may be able to visit your home and check it for risks.

For further information, check their website or contact them on their non-emergency number (not 999).

Fire safety in the kitchen



Did you know?

Almost half of all home fires are caused by cooking accidents.

We spend a lot of time in our kitchens cooking delicious meals, but keep yourself safe by remembering these tips:

- ▶ Never leave cooking unattended on a hob, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk.
- ▶ If you have children, keep them away from any handles and heat.
- ▶ Don't cook after drinking alcohol.
- ▶ Take care with loose materials which may catch fire.
- ▶ Always turn the oven off when you have finished cooking.

- ▶ Be careful when cooking with hot oil as it sets alight easily.
- ▶ Keep any electrical appliances and leads away from water.
- ▶ If you are having a BBQ never leave it unattended and keep it away from children and pets. Keep a bucket of water or sand nearby in case of a fire. Ensure the BBQ is completely cool before disposing of the embers.

Gas safety



Your gas appliances must be checked by a Gas Safe registered installer every year.

We will do the following:

- ▶ Annual gas safety checks by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- ▶ Ensure the engineer has relevant ID that they will present on appointments.
- ▶ Provide a *Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR)* certificate to you following the service and keep an electronic copy on our database. If you require a copy of your LGSR certificate, please let us know.

An unsafe gas appliance can lead to gas leaks, fires, explosions or Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning.

If you smell gas or suspect a gas leak:

- ▶ Call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately on 0800 111 999.
- ▶ Open all doors and windows.
- ▶ Turn off the gas supply (usually next to your gas meter unless in a cellar or basement).
- ▶ Avoid the use of any naked flames, mobile phones or electrical switches.

Carbon monoxide



Around 50 people in the UK die each year due to accidental carbon monoxide poisoning caused by defective gas appliances. So, it is vital that you allow us access to carry out the annual safety inspection.

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning can happen when a gas appliance has been incorrectly fitted, repaired or maintained. Look out for flu-like symptoms, sickness or fatigue, including:

- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Dizziness
- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Breathlessness
- ▶ Collapse

If you suspect CO poisoning don't delay. Get fresh air, ventilate the room, seek medical help and report it to us!

Signs of a possible carbon monoxide leak, include:

- ▶ Floppy yellow or orange flame on your gas hob, rather than crisp blue
- ▶ Dark, sooty staining on or around gas appliances
- ▶ Pilot lights that frequently blow out
- ▶ Increased condensation inside windows

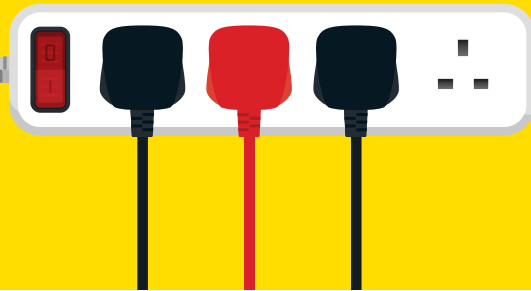
During your annual gas service we will be checking that you have a working CO alarm in every room containing a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers). If you have any concerns, please get in touch and remember to allow us access to your home for your annual gas service.

Electrical safety

Appliances use different amounts of power. For example, a television may use a 3 amp plug and vacuum cleaner a 5 amp plug.

KNOW THE LIMIT!

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Unplug appliances when you're not using them or when you go to bed. Don't leave devices charging overnight.

Avoid overloading sockets and keep to one plug per socket.

Never dry clothes on heaters.

Don't leave your washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher running overnight or while you are out. They are a fire risk because of their high wattage, friction and motors.

Tumble dryer safety:

- ▶ Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- ▶ Never use overnight or unattended.
- ▶ Clean filters after use and don't block any vents.
- ▶ Only vent warm air outside.

Be aware of any recalls for white goods

Please let us know if you are concerned about the electrics in your property and don't fix faulty electrics yourself.

Candles and tea lights

Did you know?

More than 15,000 candle fires are reported annually.



Avoid placing candles on or near materials that could burn or catch fire – like blankets and curtains.

- ▶ Keep candles out of the reach of children or pets and do not place lit candles where they can be knocked over.
- ▶ Don't burn a candle all the way down. Extinguish the flame if it comes too close to the holder or container.

- ▶ Make sure candles are always placed in a holder that is non-flammable.
- ▶ Don't place candles in direct sunlight.



Have you considered using a battery operated flameless candle instead?

Smoking safely

Did you know?

Smoking related fires are the biggest killers in accidental home fires.



REMEMBER:

- ▶ Always put out cigarettes properly after you have finished with them.
- ▶ Never smoke in bed.
- ▶ Use a proper ashtray.
- ▶ Take extra care if you're tired or on prescription drugs.
- ▶ It is safer to smoke outdoors.



If using e-cigarettes, always use the charger supplied with it.

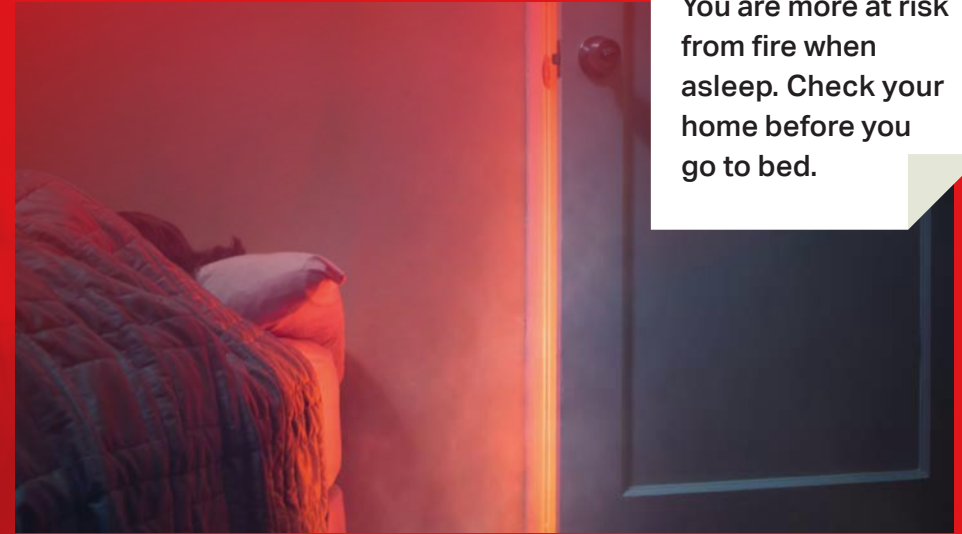
If you need to buy a replacement, always choose a branded, genuine product from a supplier you can trust. There are lots of fakes out there, and it can be difficult to spot the difference.

Counterfeit electrical chargers can be deadly – many fail to meet UK safety regulations leading to fires and injury. What may seem like a bargain at the market isn't worth the risk when you consider that it could cost a family member's life.

Bedtime checklist

Did you know?

You are more at risk from fire when asleep. Check your home before you go to bed.



Run through the following checklist before going to bed to reduce the risk of a fire breaking out overnight:

- ▶ Close internal doors to stop a fire from spreading.
- ▶ Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on – like your freezer. Check your cooker is turned off.
- ▶ Don't leave the washing machine on.
- ▶ Turn heaters off and use fireguards.

- ▶ Put candles and cigarettes out properly.
- ▶ Make sure exits are kept clear.
- ▶ Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.

If your entrance door is a fire door, please do not disconnect the self-closer as this prevents a fire from spreading. All flat entrance fire doors are legally required to have a self-closer.

If you have any concerns
about fire safety in your home
please let us know.



Contact emh on:

T: 0300 123 6000

E: customerservices@emh.co.uk

W: www.emh.co.uk

**Manage your account, report a repair
and change your contact details
online via myhomeonline:**



For further advice on fire safety you can visit the websites below, call us or your local fire service on the non-emergency number (not 999).

<https://www.derbys-fire.gov.uk/safety/at-home>

<https://leics-fire.gov.uk/your-safety/at-home/>

<https://www.northantsfire.gov.uk/safety/avoiding-fires-in-the-home-rb/>



Derbyshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Our partnership with Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service enables us to enhance fire safety procedures across all our properties.

You can report any known information about deliberate fire starting anonymously to your local fire service.