

Fire safety advice for customers living in flats

When you move in to your new home you should make and agree with your family a Home Fire Action Plan and practice your escape plan so everybody knows what to do, how to get out and where to go and assemble in the event of a fire.

Here's some important things to remember:

Smoke alarms

- Remember to test your fire alarms weekly. If they are battery operated, change the battery at least once per year, with a good quality one. If mains-powered and it's faulty or broken, call us immediately on 0300 123 3999 and report it

Smoking

- It is safer not to smoke indoors
- Smoke outside in the open air and make sure cigarettes are put right out
- Never smoke in bed, or anywhere else if you think you might fall asleep
- Do not leave a lit cigarette or pipe unattended
- Use proper ashtrays and never throw hot ash into the bin
- Keep matches and lighters well out of the reach of children

Candles

- Candles, tea lights and incense burners should only be placed in stable, heat-resistant holders
- Keep candles well away from curtains, furniture and clothes
- Never leave candles unattended

Heating and electrics

- Keep heaters at least a meter (three feet) away from you
- Keep heaters well away from anything that can catch alight
- Don't overload electrical sockets or use multiple adaptors in outlet sockets

Kitchen

- Never leave pans unattended when cooking
- Don't cook if you are tired, been drinking alcohol or taking medication that might make you drowsy
- If the pan does catch fire don't tackle the fire yourself or try to move the pan
- Never throw water onto it, or try to contain fire with a wet cloth as this can create a fireball
- If you can do so safely – turn off the heat
- Leave the room and close the door. Warn others to get out, stay out and call the fire service on 999
- Close all doors as this helps to prevent fire and smoke spreading

Things to remember when you go to bed:

- Switch off and unplug electrical items such as TVs and avoid charging devices like mobile phones when you sleep
- Only leave essential appliances switched on such as the fridge or freezer, turn all others off.
- Make sure all candles are out before you go to bed
- Check your cooker and heaters are turned off

What to do in the event of a fire in your flat:

Here is an extract from advice from the Fire Brigade for residents living in purpose built flats:

Escape route

- Be aware of where your fire exits are
- Have an escape plan
- Practice the escape plan and make sure all members of your household know what it is
- The best route is normally the way in and out but have a plan B in case it is blocked
- Keep communal areas and balconies clear so they don't block your escape and cause risk
- Always keep door and window keys where everyone can find them

If your flat is affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is clear:

- Get everyone out, close the door and leave calmly
- Don't use the lift
- Call the fire service on 999, give them your address details and tell them what floor the fire is on

If your flat is affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is not clear:

- It may be safer to stay in your home until the fire service arrives
- Find a safe room, close the door and block any gaps with soft materials to stop the smoke
- Go to a window and shout "HELP FIRE" and call 999
- Be ready to explain where you are and the quickest way to reach you

If there is a fire in another part of the building:

- Your home should give you protection from fire – walls, floors and doors can hold back flames and smoke for 30 to 60 minutes
- You are usually safer staying in your home, call 999, and tell the fire service where you are and the best way to reach you
- If you are in the communal parts of the building leave and call the fire service on 999
- However if you feel unsure, unsafe, can see flames or smell smoke then leave your flat and exit the building

It's vitally important to make sure that all hallways, landings, corridors and paths immediately outside the fire exit are kept clear of obstructions. A fire could very quickly fill an area with smoke, causing reduced visibility for yourself and the fire service. So you won't be able to see what obstructions are in the way. If there is an issue with obstructions and items left inside your block, please report it to us as soon as you can.

And don't forget to test your smoke alarm weekly!

If it's faulty call us on 0300 123 3399. Further fire safety information can be found on the London Fire Brigade's website: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/>