



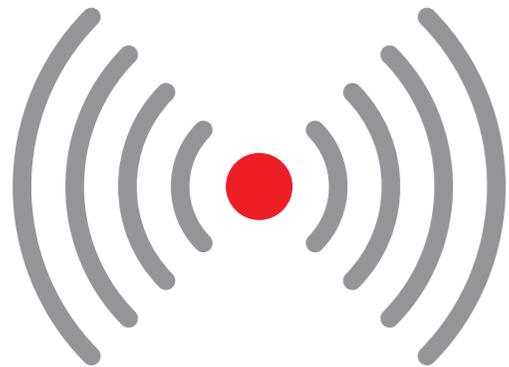
DEVON &
SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Advice for renters and sharers



www.dsfire.gov.uk

Acting to Protect & Save



SMOKE ALARMS
SAVE
LIVES

Fire safety in shared or rented accommodation

Did you know that people who live in rented or shared accommodation are seven times more likely to have a fire?

The most important action you can take is to ensure you have a working smoke alarm on each level of your home. Your landlord may have already fitted them but is not legally obliged to.

If you need to obtain one yourself they are cheap to buy and easy to fit.

Landlord's obligations to keep your home safe from fire

If you live in privately rented accommodation, your landlord has to meet certain safety obligations under the law. This includes making sure all gas and any electrical appliances they provide are safe to use and in good working order.

- Gas appliances must be checked by a registered Gas Safe engineer every year.
- Electrical appliances must carry the British Safety Standard sign.
- Your landlord must ensure furnishings are fire resistant and meet safety regulations.
- Your landlord must show you safety certificates so that you can see when gas and electrical appliances were last checked.
- Under the 2004 Housing Act, your landlord must ensure there are adequate escape routes in the property.



Tenant questions to ask your landlord

- Has the electrical wiring in the property been checked lately?
- Are sockets, switches, light fittings and so on checked every year?
- Is there a regular maintenance programme for gas heaters and appliances?
- Are the chimneys and flues cleaned and checked regularly?
- Is the house registered with the local authority as being lived in by more than one household (multiple occupation)?



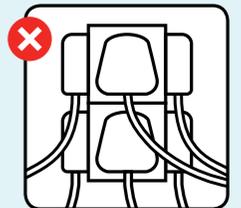
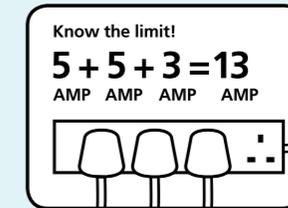
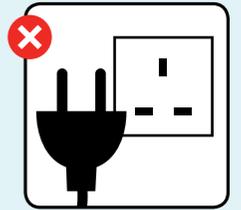
You can ask your landlord to fit and maintain carbon monoxide detectors - although these are not legal requirements, it is in the landlord's best interests to do this.

If you are worried your landlord isn't doing enough to ensure your safety contact the environmental health officer at your local council for advice. You can find their contact details at www.direct.gov.uk

Be extra careful with electrics

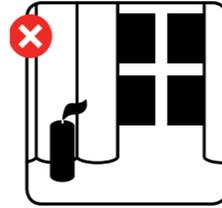
- Avoid overloading sockets; keep to one plug per socket.
- Use a proper adaptor if using a non UK electrical appliance. Never put two prong plugs into three prong sockets.
- Don't use heaters for drying clothes and keep them a safe distance away from curtains and furnishings.
- Inform your landlord immediately if you are concerned about the electrics in your property. If you notice burn marks around plugs or cables for example.
- Don't fix faulty electrics yourself. Inform your landlord or call a qualified electrician.
- An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take, so be careful not to overload them to reduce the risk of fire.

- Appliances use different amounts of power – a television may use a 3 amp plug and vacuum cleaner a 5 amp plug for example.



Stay safe with candles and cigarettes

- Make sure cigarettes are out properly after you have finished with them and always use a proper ashtray.
- Be extra careful if you have been drinking alcohol or taking medication which may make you drowsy.
- Be careful with candles and tea lights. Avoid placing them on or near materials that could burn or catch fire – like curtains. Never leave a burning candle unattended.



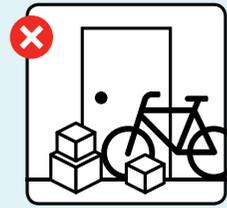
Smoke alarms save lives

- Ensure there is a working smoke alarm fitted on each level of your home.
- Test the batteries every week, change them every year and never remove them.



Plan an escape route

- Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows how to escape. It could save your life.
- Establish where the fire exits and alarms are if you live in a large or high level building.
- If you live in a high level building and a fire breaks out never use the lifts, take the stairs instead.
- Count how many doors you might need to go through to escape. It can be hard to see in smoke and you might become confused about where you are.
- Keep all exits clear, even communal areas.
- Keep fire doors closed. They help to slow down the spread of fire and will give you extra time to get out.
- Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.





Contact us

 01392 872200

 firekills@dsfire.gov.uk

 www.dsfire.gov.uk

To request any information in this document in an alternative format or language please call **0800 731 1822** or email [**firesafety@dsfire.gov.uk**](mailto:firesafety@dsfire.gov.uk)