

FIRE SAFETY



Our approach to fire safety

We are committed to keeping residents safe in their homes by maintaining fire precautions in our properties and providing information and advice to residents.

What we mean by fire safety

Fire safety begins with precautions to minimise the risk of a fire, including limiting flammable material in your home and control of naked flames and other sources of ignition.

In the unlikely event that a fire happens your family's safety depends on your being ready, it is important that you and your family know what to do and can escape safely.

Fire prevention

The biggest fire risk to you and your family is from a fire inside your home. Here are precautions you can take to minimise the risks.

Check your Smoke Detectors

Working smoke alarms, also known as smoke detectors, are essential as they provide vital early warning and allow extra time to escape if there is a fire in your home. They can also alert neighbours to the danger of a fire.

Most of our homes have a mains-powered smoke detector installed. If the detector in your home is battery-powered it is your responsibility to replace the battery.



Test your smoke alarm every week to check that it is working and report any problems to our repairs team. More information can be found at www.london-fire.gov.uk/SmokeAlarms.asp

Strobe light and vibrating-pad smoke alarms are available for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Visit www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk for more information.

Smoking is the most common cause of fire death in the home

Fires caused by cigarettes and smoking result in more deaths than any other type of fire. 3 fires a day in London are linked to smoking.

- ▶ Never smoke in bed
- ▶ Don't smoke in a soft chair or sofa if you think you may fall asleep and take extra care when you're tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you've been drinking alcohol
- ▶ Use a proper ashtray that can't tip over and is made of a material that won't burn
- ▶ Don't leave a lit cigarette, cigar, or pipe lying around

Take care with candles and naked flames

Candles, incense and oil burners are one of the biggest causes of fire within homes. Always keep an eye on these items to keep you and your home safe.

- ▶ Always use a heat resistant holder on a stable surface, which won't be knocked over
- ▶ Tea lights can melt through plastic surfaces like a TV or bath
- ▶ Keep these items away from materials that may catch fire such as curtains, furniture, clothes and hair
- ▶ Make sure you put out any candles, incense and oil burners when you leave the room and especially before bed
- ▶ Keep out of reach of children and pets.

Visit www.london-fire.gov.uk/UsingCandles.asp for more advice.

Cooking

Around 60 per cent of accidental fires in the home start in the kitchen. Taking a few simple measures can make all the difference.

- ▶ Avoid leaving cooking unattended
- ▶ Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob
- ▶ Be careful to keep the oven, hob, cooker hood and grill clean to avoid a buildup of fat and grease, which could ignite and cause a fire
- ▶ Use spark devices to light gas cookers - they are much safer than matches or lighters
- ▶ Double check the cooker and hob are turned off when you've finished cooking

For more information, see our 'safety in the kitchen' section below.



Fire safety at night

Be extra careful to prevent fire when you and your family are sleeping.

- ▶ Make sure that cookers are turned off
- ▶ Switch off electrical appliances such as portable heaters, irons and other portable appliances
- ▶ Close all doors inside your home at night to prevent fire from spreading

Fire precautions

As your landlord, our top priority is your safety. We make sure that we:

- ▶ follow fire regulations
- ▶ assess the fire risks in every block
- ▶ maintain fire alarms and other safety equipment
- ▶ follow the recommendations of safety experts such as the London Fire Brigade.

You also have to take responsibility for safety in your home and in the shared areas of your building. In particular, your tenancy agreement says that you must keep shared areas clear, tidy and free from obstruction.

Emergency escape routes

Read the fire safety notice in your building and plan your emergency exit route. Make sure the exit route is kept clear at all times – never leave your belongings or rubbish in corridors, the lift lobby or on stairs, as it could prevent you and your neighbours from escaping quickly in the event of a fire.

Keep fire doors closed at all times

Never prop fire doors open, as this stops them from doing their job of preventing the spread of fire and smoke. You can also help to prevent fire from spreading by keeping other doors in your home closed at night and not altering or removing doors in your property.

Being ready in case of fire

Make sure that everyone in your home knows what to do if there is a fire.

Simple precautions can keep you and your family safe:

- ▶ Make sure you can quickly unlock your front door
- ▶ Keep a phone where you can find it in an emergency so you can call 999
- ▶ Decide where you and your family will meet up if you have to leave your home in an emergency

What you can expect from our service

We work hard to keep our properties safe for residents. We carry out risk assessments to identify safety concerns and complete improvement works to address them.

If Repairs are needed to your property then contact our repairs team. If you have concerns about

the safety of your home or wish to report an incident, please complete an on-line report at www.octaviahousing.org.uk/contact-us/report-a-fire-hazard or inform your resident service officer.

We will stay in regular contact with you to keep you updated on what we are doing to help resolve the problem and to get updates from you.

Making sure we are succeeding

We work with external regulators, including the London Fire Brigade, to check that we follow good practice for safety in our properties. We investigate accidents and incidents and review our health and safety performance with help from external experts.

How to contact us about fire safety

If you are concerned about fire safety or other safety issues in your home, please contact your resident service officer straight away.

If you need help disposing of large items, you can contact your local council to collect them. You can find their details on our website. Remember to tell us if you are leaving items outside for collection, so we do not think they have been abandoned.

You can also report any items you see left in shared areas on our website www.octaviahousing.org.uk or to our communal services and improvement officer on the number below.

Please contact us if you need any part of this information in Braille, on audio tape or explained in a different language.

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