



Health & Safety: Tenant's Handbook



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Introduction

This handbook has been designed to raise awareness of accident prevention in the home, enabling tenants to make changes to ensure it is a safe environment for everyone, including visitors.

The handbook has been created as a collaboration between our Health and Safety manager, who has many years experience in home and workplace safety, and a number of tenants, whose contribution to the contents have made this the most dynamic and relevant Tenants' Handbook that CCHA has produced to date.



Together
we do.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Introduction

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has had an impact on us all, and each of us must contribute to reducing the spread of the virus by following Government guidelines. These are as follows:

- Regularly wash hands for 20 seconds
- “Catch it, Bin it, Kill it”
- Keep 2 metres apart from persons outside of your household

Symptoms of Covid-19

The following are common symptoms of Covid-19:

- High temperature
- Persistent cough
- Loss of taste or smell

If you have any of these, you ***must*** self-isolate, including others in the same household, and call 111 or your GP. ***Do not*** go to your GP surgery or A&E as this increases the risk of transmission to other individuals.

Shielding

This terminology refers to a vulnerable person avoiding leaving their property and not allowing others to visit, which significantly reduces the risk of contracting Covid-19. Vulnerable groups include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Those of 70 years of age or older
- A person of any age with an underlying health condition
- Anyone who is pregnant

Self-isolation

This refers to when a member of the household shows signs and symptoms of Covid-19. The current Government guidelines are as follows:

- **Single person households** – Self-isolate for 7 days
- **Households with 2 or more people** – The person with the symptoms self-isolates for 7 days and the other members of the same household self-isolate for 14 days. The 14-day self-isolation does not restart if another member of the household begins showing symptoms.

Stay at Home guidance for households: current guidelines illustrated

Criteria and guidance applied as of 17/03/2020:

Incubation period = maximum 14 days

Day 1 is the first day of symptoms

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill

If you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus, then you must stay at home for 7 days

If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they stay at home for 7 days from when their symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14-day isolation period.

Household members who remain well stay in self isolation for 14 days due to maximum incubation period, calculated from day 1 of first symptomatic person

Household members do not need to restart the clock if other members become symptomatic during the 14 days self-isolation

DAY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Person in household																							
Example household 1	A	X							✓														
	B				X							✓											
	C																✓						
	D																✓						
Example household 2	A	X							✓														
	B				X							✓											
	C														X								
	D																✓						

Key: X = when illness started - first day of symptoms
✓ = allowed to go out again

Households that are neither shielding nor self-isolating

These households can go about their normal life in accordance Government restrictions.

Informing CCHA

If a repair or service is required and persons within the household are either shielding or self-isolating then you **must** inform CCHA, allowing us to put measures in place to protect you and our staff.

Easing of Lockdown

Lockdown restrictions were put in place by Central Government and in England some restrictions have now been lifted. The First Minister of Wales, however, has decided NOT to ease the same restrictions. Instead, the Welsh Government has implemented a traffic-light system to guide the lifting of restrictions.

The implementation of the traffic-light system will most likely follow the “R Factor”, which is designed to predict the number of people that may be infected by one individual carrying the virus. For example, if the “R” rate is 3, then a single person would be expected to infect three others. Using this example, if 100 people were infected with Covid-19 and did not follow social distancing rules, we would expect the virus to spread to a further 300 people.

The “R” rate is changing constantly, and is likely to be different in other areas of the UK. In order to manage the risk of spreading Covid 19 the “R” rate needs to be below 1, which can only be achieved if we, as a community:

- Regularly wash hands for 20 seconds
- “Catch it, Bin it, Kill it”
- Keep 2 metres apart
- Follow Government guidelines
- Self-isolate if you or anyone in your household shows signs and symptoms of Covid-19

Regular Tenant Tasks

During these difficult times our highest priority is the health and safety of our tenants, staff, and contractors. In order to keep each other safe it is essential that we minimise the number of visits we make to your homes. In light of this there are a series of checks and tests we ask that you carry out regularly to ensure that your utilities and the appliances connected to them are in good condition, and that you are able to alert us if any urgent repairs are required:

- Test Smoke, CO, and Heat Detectors weekly. Press the test button to ensure that the alarm sounds. If your alarms are beeping intermittently this means the battery needs to be replaced. If you are unable to test your alarms yourself, or the alarms do not sound on testing, please contact us
- If you live in a flat, visually check your front door. The door should close snugly into its frame under the power of the door closer, with the smoke seals on each side of the door touching the frame
- Lint and debris can build up in tumble dryers, posing a fire risk. Ensure that your tumble dryer extraction hose is kept clean
- Switch off any unused electrical appliances
- Check the flexes of electrical appliances to ensure they are not damaged
- Do not overload electrical sockets
- Check that any window restrictors are in good condition and are secure in place
- Regularly perform a visual check on any asbestos containing materials within the property, such as textured ceiling and wall coatings to ensure there is no damage

- Should you have any adaptations within your home, such as stair lifts or hoists, visually check these to ensure safety features (e.g. seatbelts) are fully functional
- Flush through all water outlets, such as taps and showers, on a weekly basis if they are not generally used more frequently
- Ensure that hot water cylinders are set to 60°C to keep your water at a safe temperature
- Keep your home well ventilated. In the event of a build-up of condensation wipe down windows, reveals, walls, and other surfaces to prevent the mould forming

Cost of Home Accidents: Facts & Figures

More accidents happen at home than anywhere else. Approximately 2.7 million people each year suffer an injury requiring medical treatment, with the most vulnerable age groups being children aged under 15 years and adults aged over 65 years.

The most common hazards that result in incidents in the home are:

- Fire
- Cooking and food preparation
- Medicines, cleaning products, and other hazardous substances
- Electrical shocks
- Slips, trips, and falls
- DIY and gardening
- Lifting objects

The likelihood of incidents occurring will depend on one or more of the following:

- The risk being present
- A lack of risk awareness and risk control
- Your age
- Your health and physical condition
- Your ability to do the task

The annual cost to society of UK home accident injuries has been estimated at **£45.63 billion**.

This figure does not take into account costs associated with aftercare treatment, long-term care, the welfare system, and other support services.

Typical Hazards Found in the Home

Fire

Following a report by the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service during 2008-2013, they found that age, health, and lifestyle issues are the most common causes of fatalities following a fire in the home.

To help our tenants to be fire aware, CCHA has joined forces with the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service to take a more proactive approach, particularly to keeping vulnerable people safe.

CCHA officers and staff have been trained by fire safety consultants to identify fire safety hazards and to warn tenants if a hazard is noticed within their property.

We can arrange a joint visit with your Housing Officer and a representative from the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service to assess your property for fire risks and provide advice on fire prevention. Alternatively, you can arrange the visit yourself by calling the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service on 01443 232000.



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub

De Cymru

South Wales

Fire and Rescue Service

1. Fire Prevention

Fires can start suddenly and spread quickly, damaging your home and furniture, and putting lives in danger. They are caused in a variety of ways, but there are a few simple steps you can take to prevent the likelihood of one starting:



Furniture

Ensure your furniture is fire-resistant and clear from a heat source.

Electrical items

- Follow the manufacturer's safety guidance for use and, where applicable, any changes to safety guidelines.
- Do not overload sockets, and ensure there is ventilation around the equipment.
- Use the correct rating of fuse.
- Check electrical items and cables to ensure they are in good condition.
- Never leave electrical items in the standby mode and always unplug them when not in use.
- Do not turn on washing machines, tumble dryers, etc. when you are leaving your property.
- Beware of counterfeit goods. Ensure any electrical equipment you own or purchase, comes from a reputable supplier. Check that the equipment has a CE marking but do not rely on this as they can be copied. Some white-goods manufacturers have raised concerns around a number of fires caused by a safety fault. If you have concerns, please access the following link - <https://productrecall.campaign.gov.uk/#G5KBACmljFlc58dG.97> - to determine if your appliance is safe and not included on this list.

CE

- White-goods manufacturer, Beko, had a number of fires caused by a safety fault with some fridges in 2011. Again, if you have a Beko fridge or fridge freezer, seek advice from the manufacturer.

Portable heaters/fires

- Secure portable heaters to a wall to stop them falling over, and keep them clear from curtains and furniture. Never place clothing, etc. over them to dry
- Only use a portable heater or fire if it has a safety switch which cuts power to the appliance should it fall over

Chip-pan fires

- Avoid using chip-pans, or use those that have a thermostatic control
- Never leave a chip-pan unattended

In the event of a chip-pan fire, follow these steps:

- Turn off the heat if it's safe to do so
- Place a damp tea towel over the chip-pan or, better still, use a fire blanket
- If the fire is out of control, leave the kitchen and close the door, then raise the alarm and get everyone out of the building
- Do not re-enter the building until help arrives and it is safe to do so

Never use water to extinguish a chip pan fire

Smoking

- If you smoke, make sure you use an ashtray, and position it so that it cannot fall over
- Using a little water in the ashtray will help to extinguish the cigarette
- Never leave a lit cigarette unattended, and never place a lit cigarette end into a waste bin
- Take extra care if you smoke when you are tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you have been drinking alcohol
- Never smoke in bed

Candles

- It is best to avoid using candles
- Put candles out when you leave the room, and make sure they are put out completely at night
- Use a snuffer or a spoon to put out candles; it is safer than blowing them out as sparks can be produced
- Children should not be left alone with lit candles



Combustible materials and general household items

- Avoid a build-up of waste; clear it out on a regular basis and remove it from the building
- Avoid storing flammable substances in the building and near naked flames, sparks, or heat
- Store combustible items away from any source of heat and/or ignition
- Better still, remove combustible items completely
- Do not store flammable substances if there is no requirement to do so. If you do have flammable substances, store them in an external building in the correctly labelled container and keep them away from children, sources of heat and/or ignition, and keep the quantities to a minimum.

Make a plan to evacuate in the event of emergency

- Plan your escape route and make sure everyone in the home knows how to escape. The best route is the normal way in and out of your home
- Make sure your escape route is kept clear at all times and think of a second route, in case the first one is blocked
- Take a few minutes to practice your escape plan with your family, and keep door and window keys where everyone can find them. Make sure doors on your escape route can be opened without a key.

In the case of a fire or alarm sounding within your home

- Keep calm and act quickly. Get everyone out as soon as possible. Raise the alarm to let others know there is a fire. Do not waste time investigating what has happened or rescuing valuables
- If there is smoke, keep low to the ground where the air is clearer
- Call 999 as soon as you are clear of the building
- If you cannot get out, or your route is blocked by smoke, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and a phone. Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out smoke, then open the window and call “HELP, FIRE!”
- If you are on the ground or first floor, you may be able to escape through a window. If you cannot open the window, break the glass in the bottom corner

What to do if there's a fire within your block

- Follow the guidance on your block's fire action notice in the common area.
- You should try to evacuate the building if any of the following apply:
 - An alarm is sounding directly within your home
 - Your home is affected by fire or smoke
 - You are instructed to evacuate by the fire service

How to make sure your smoke alarm works

- Test the smoke alarm every week by pressing the “test” button until it sounds. If it fails to sound then contact us immediately
- If you hear an intermittent bleeping sound coming from the smoke alarm it is warning you that the battery needs to be replaced. If you are unable to do this yourself then please contact us
- Never remove the battery
- Never disconnect the alarm if it goes off by mistake
- Vacuum the grill area of the smoke alarm every 12 months
- Never cover smoke alarms

These are examples of the different smoke detectors we use

Standard (or “Part 6”) smoke detector—If you have these in your home, please carry out a weekly test by pressing the “Test” button—These detectors are serviced annually by our gas servicing contractor.



Communal (or “Part 1”) smoke detector—If you have these in your home there is no need to test them yourself—Testing and servicing will be completed by our fire services contractor.



Bedtime checklist

- Close inside doors at night to stop fire from spreading
- Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on, such as your fridge/freezer
- Check your cooker is turned off
- Do not leave the washing machine on
- Turn heaters off
- Put candles and cigarettes out properly
- Make sure exits are kept clear
- Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them
- Ensure that your smoke alarm is working
- Do not smoke in bed



2. Cooking & Food Preparation

The kitchen is often referred to as the heart of the home. However, it is also the room in which accidents most commonly occur, due to the hazards associated with cooking and the presence of cleaning products. Teaching and encouraging children to cook is an essential life skill, but this needs to be under controlled circumstances. Here are some tips to help manage the risks:

- Do not leave children alone in the kitchen when cooking
- Keep knives sharp, in good condition, and out of reach of children
- Keep pan handles turned inward so that they cannot be knocked off or grabbed by children
- If you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down
- Keep towels, cloths, and curtains away from fryers, toasters, and the cooker
- Use spark devices as they are safer than matches or lighters
- Avoid any build up of fat and grease in the cooker or grill
- Do not put anything metal in the microwave
- Take extra care if you cook when you are tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you have been drinking alcohol



Cooking also presents a fire risk which has been covered in section 1 (page 11)

Please also refer to section 3 (page 17) for advice on cleaning-product safety.

3. Medicines, cleaning-products, & hazardous substances

Medicines, cleaning products, and hazardous substances should always be treated with caution.

Medicines

- Keep medicines in their original containers, clearly labelled, and out of reach of children
- Do not take other people's medicine, or let them take yours
- Return leftover medicines to the pharmacist for destruction – do not hoard them



Cleaning-products & hazardous substances

- Consider substituting hazardous substances with less hazardous alternatives
- Use protective clothing as directed by the manufacturer
- Reduce the amount of hazardous substances you have
- Keep cleaning products and other chemicals in their original containers, clearly labelled, and out of reach of children
- Store and use cleaning-products and hazardous substances as guided by the manufacture's instructions
- Keep flammable substances away from sources of heat and ignition
- Dispose of any unwanted cleaning products or chemicals safely
- Think about the environmental impact if you allow hazardous substances to contaminate the land, air, or water

4. Electrical

The fire risks associated with electricity can be found in Section 1 of Typical Hazards Found in the Home. The other risk of a poorly maintained electrical installation or appliance is electric shock.

To manage the risk:

- Do not carry out any repairs or alterations to the wiring in your home
- Do not use electrical equipment in wet areas, and never attempt to change light bulbs, plug in, or unplug electrical appliances with wet hands
- When changing light bulbs, make sure the light is unplugged or, for fixed lights, ensure that the electrical supply is turned off at the consumer unit
- If an appliance appears faulty stop using it and have it checked at once
- Consider using a RCD (residual current device) when using electrical garden equipment
- Always ensure that any appliance you buy comes fitted with a plug or, if you need to fit a plug yourself, ensure that you are competent to do so or consult a qualified electrician

5. Slips, trips, & falls

More than 3,500 people in England and Wales die every year as a result of a fall, and nearly a third of a million people need hospital treatment.

The cause of a fall is often multi-factorial, involving both environmental hazards and an underlying medical condition.

Strength, balance and gait,

decline in vision, mental health problems, and deficiencies in diet are all contributory risk factors. Although prescription medicines are seldom the cause of falls, they may also be a major risk factor.



Prevention

- Avoid leaving items on the stairs
- Ensure that you have a firm grip of the banister whilst going up or down the stairs
- Keep things at low level to prevent the use of step ladders, etc.
- Avoid jobs where there is a risk of a fall. If this cannot be avoided, use equipment that provides a handrail, and never stand on chairs or tables, etc. Better still, arrange for a qualified person to carry out the works on your behalf
- Avoid sudden movements that might cause you to lose your balance
- Ensure that floor coverings are in good condition and do not present a trip hazard
- Keep floor areas clear of obstructions and trailing cables
- Wear suitable, properly-fitting footwear

- Ensure that there is adequate lighting throughout your home
- If you are prone to falling, ensure that you have the ability to raise the alarm. Carrying alarm pendants, etc. before you get up and walk is important
- Have a slip-resistant mat in the bottom of the bath when showering (if installed)
- Look out for your pets. Many falls can be attributed to people tripping over them
- Do not place rugs on slippery surfaces unless they have a slip resistant backing
- Have grab rails installed in high risk areas
- Spills on the floor should be cleaned up immediately to prevent slipping on them

6. DIY & Gardening

DIY

Over-ambition and lack of knowledge are two of the biggest factors in DIY accidents causing death and injury.



- Be realistic and do not tackle a job unless you have the ability and skills
- Keep tools clean and in good repair. Give each one a quick check over before using it and keep them out of reach of children
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear when doing DIY jobs
- Stop and disconnect power tools before maintaining or cleaning them

Gardening

- Ensure that garden toys are used in a safe manner
- Net ponds and keep children clear of them. Better still, fill them in
- Do not burn any waste in the garden. Take it to the household recycling centre. Not only is this method safe but it will also reduce the environmental impact
- Keep recycling boxes containing glass away from children
- Check trees for signs of dead wood with the potential to fall
- Check for slip, trip, and fall hazards, and take measures to prevent people from being exposed to them

- Use circuit breakers (RCDs) on electrically-powered garden tools and jet-wash systems
- Beware of any poisonous plants and berries that can cause an allergic reaction
- Keep gardening tools and chemicals away from children when in use, and ensure that they are stored safely when not in use
- Secure furniture, pots, etc. to prevent them falling over and causing harm
- Look for signs of damage to the external area of your property that could cause harm whilst in the garden
- Check on children playing in the garden regularly, and ensure that they cannot leave unsupervised
- Beware of any harmful insects, etc., and avoid them where possible
- Be mindful of the harmful effects of the sun, and ensure you are protected against them

Barbeques

- Keep children away from barbecues
- Keep barbecues clear of trees, dry vegetation, combustible materials, flammable substances, buildings, sheds, and fences
- Never pour flammable substances on a barbecue
- Store gas bottles safely
- Ensure food is cooked thoroughly before eating



7. Manual handling

Manual handling is any task requiring an object to be moved by the use of bodily force (e.g. lifting, lowering, pushing or pulling).

The best way to avoid a manual handling injury is to avoid manual handling altogether. We carry out manual handling tasks every day, however, including cleaning, DIY, gardening, moving furniture, etc.

With that in mind, consider the following:

- Can I avoid the manual handling?
- Am I capable of moving the load?
- Am I injury free?
- Is the route clear of hazards?
- Can I reduce the weight of the load?
- Can I get help with moving the load?

If you have answered “Yes” to all of the above and/or taken any appropriate actions, the risk of a manual handling injury has been minimised.

Heating Systems

Safety is especially important with heating systems using gas, solid fuel, and oil burning appliances, as they give off toxic waste gases when burning their fuel.

These hazardous gases are removed from the appliance via a chimney or vent, from which the gases are dispersed safely into the atmosphere. It is vital that the chimney or venting system from the appliance is not tampered with, and that these outlets remain clear of any obstruction.

The flame on a gas appliance should burn blue. If the flame is yellow or orange in colour, this indicates that there is a safety concern, and the appliance should be turned off and reported to CCHA's Customer Service Team immediately. The appliance must remain out of use until such time the fault has been rectified.



CCHA is required by law to ensure that gas appliances belonging to them have an annual safety inspection. To help us meet this legal requirement, and for your safety, you must allow our engineers into your property when arranged by our Assets & Compliance Team.

If you suspect a gas leak, extinguish all naked flames, open the windows, and immediately turn off the gas supply to the property (the ECV, or emergency control valve, can be found in the same location as your meter), then immediately telephone Transco on 0800 111 999 and CCHA's Customer Service Team. The gas supply must remain isolated until the leak has been rectified.

If your carbon monoxide alarm activates, you must open the windows, turn off the gas appliance, and report the incident to CCHA's Customer Service Team immediately.

Solid fuel systems with either a chimney or flue will be swept annually. Any chimney that has been decommissioned must not be brought back into use.

Safety Glass

Ordinary glass is dangerous – particularly at low level – because it breaks into large, jagged pieces which can cause serious injury. Building Regulations require safety glass to be fitted in glazed doors, side panels, and areas below 800mm in new buildings.

Safety glass is specially made. There are two main types: laminated glass and toughened glass. When it breaks, it breaks safely; in a way that is designed to reduce injury.

If ordinary glass is in use, you can help reduce the risks by:

- Making sure people know the glass is there, and ensuring that the area is well lit
- Never let children play near glass – they could easily crash through it and receive a serious injury

Window Restrictors

CCHA has a duty to keep our tenants safe, which includes minimising the risk of falling from windows. All of our tenants are required to report repair defects to windows, including restrictors, as part of their tenancy agreement. It is the responsibility of the responsible adult living in or managing the property to report defects to window restrictors promptly to CCHA so they can be fixed.

Following our new policy (published on 1st April 2020) window restrictors are not maintained or inspected regularly by CCHA, except where:

- a risk assessment has been conducted and restrictors are deemed necessary;
- the property is being prepared for new tenants to move in;
- a stock condition survey is being carried out;
- or a tenant has requested a repair.



Please note - appointments to inspect window restrictors will no longer be carried out except where a repair is required.

Your window restrictors will be inspected by our contractor, Westward, as part of your annual central heating service. Always report broken or missing window restrictors to CCHA's Customer Service Team as soon as you become aware of them.

The fitting of any additional window restrictors (in addition to primary restrictors) must only be carried out by CCHA, following an assessment by one of our officers.

All of our assessments take into account the height from which there is a risk of falling and persons who are at risk of falling from height (e.g. vulnerable service users or children).

Please contact us before removing or replacing any restrictors, or if you are thinking about installing any additional restrictors.

Never override your restrictors unless you are cleaning them.

Please ensure that the restrictor is back in place when you have finished.

Burns & Scalds

Every day 21 people are admitted to hospital following a serious burn or scald. The age groups most at risk from burns and scalds in the home are the very young and older people. The majority of heat injuries in the home are caused by contact with radiators, electric fires, cookers, and kettles.

Prevention

Here are some tips that can be followed to reduce the likelihood of a burn or scald:

- Use a cordless kettle and do not over-fill it
- Only boil the amount of water required
- Try not to carry hot liquids further than necessary
- Check the temperature of the bath before getting into it. For an adult the water should be no more than 46°C. For a child it should be no more than 37°C
- Always use the rear hobs on a stove, where possible, and turn the panhandles away from the front of the cooker
- Use oven gloves when handling hot items
- Ensure that hot water bottles are of good quality and do not show signs of wear
- Use guards around fires
- Keep children clear of the cooker and other hot objects



Treatment

If someone receives a burn or a scald it is important to reduce the high heat in the affected area immediately by keeping the burned/scalded area under cold running water for at least 10 minutes. If a blister appears, do not pierce it and do not remove any clothing as it may be stuck to the blister (removing it may pierce the blister). After the 10 minutes, apply a layer of cling film over the burn/scald and report to A&E.

Do not apply any creams.

Security

Security is an important part of your safety. CCHA has provided you with a home which is capable of being secure at all times. However, there are times when visitors will come to your door, expectedly or unexpectedly.

To improve your security, consider the following:

- Do not allow cold callers into your home
- Look through a window before opening the door, and do not open the door if you're unsure of the person on the other side
- If you are expecting a visitor but feel that there may be a security issue, ask a friend or family member to accompany the visitor
- Check the ID badges of contractors and CCHA staff
- Do not answer the door before 9am and after 5pm, unless you are expecting someone outside these times
- Keep your doors and windows secured, especially when going to bed or when you go out
- Consider using timer lights throughout the night
- Do not leave money or valuables on display
- Report any suspicious activity in your neighbourhood
- Consider setting up a neighbourhood watch scheme
- Make sure you have a telephone so that you can raise the alarm in the event of a security issue

Fireworks

Young people should watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance and follow the safety rules for using sparklers. Only adults should deal with firework displays and the lighting of fireworks. They should also take care of the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used.



Top ten safety tips for adults:

- Plan your firework display to make sure that it is safe and enjoyable
- Keep fireworks in a secure, closed box and use them one at a time
- Read and follow the instructions on each firework, using a torch if necessary
- Light the firework at an arms length with a taper and stand well back
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
- Never return to a firework once it has been lit
- Do not put fireworks in pockets, and never throw them
- Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
- Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire
- Make sure the fire is out and the surroundings are made safe before leaving

Sparklers

They are often viewed as being harmless, but sparklers burn at fierce temperatures. The heat from a sparkler is equivalent to the heat from a welding torch.



Safety rules for sparklers:

- Never give them to children under five years of age
- Always wear gloves when handling sparklers, preferably leather ones
- Children should hold their sparkler at arm's length, and only an adult should light it
- Use sparklers in a clear space, away from others
- Never hold a baby in your arms when you are holding a sparkler
- When the sparkler has finished, put it into a bucket of cold water straight away and leave it there overnight

Pets

Animals do not like bonfires or fireworks. The flames and noise frightens and upsets them. They should always be kept safely indoors. Make sure that they cannot get out through open windows and doors. It is best to keep the curtains closed, too, and it may be necessary to keep them indoors for several nights around 5th November. Fireworks are not only used on bonfire night but are also used to celebrate other occasions in the calendar.

Festive Hazards

Festive Lights

If you have old lights, please consider buying new ones, which will meet much higher safety standards.

Buying Festive lights:

- Look for safety marks (e.g. BS Kite-mark)
- Buy from a reputable store
- Avoid buying second-hand lights, unless you have them professionally checked first
- New lights are transformed down to 24 volts for improved safety, or they may be double insulated

Using Festive lights:

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Do not allow children to play with lights
- Use a RCD (residual current device) for added protection against electric shocks
- Always use lights in the environment for which they were designed (e.g. do not put up indoor lights outside)
- Do not run cables under carpets or where they can be damaged
- Avoid cables becoming a tripping hazard
- Keep lights clear of decorations and flammable materials
- Use a stable support when hanging the lights
- Remember to switch lights off when you go to bed, or when the house is empty

- Never insert or remove bulbs when switched on. Inspect cables and bulbs for damage and do not use lights which are damaged; dispose of them safely
- Take care when dismantling and packing the lights away in order not to damage them. Store lights safely out of the reach of children, and avoid damp or excessively hot conditions



Asbestos

Asbestos was a common building material during the 1950s, and until 1999. The UK banned the import of brown and blue asbestos in the mid 1980s, and banned white asbestos in the late 1990s.

There are many buildings in the UK where asbestos can be found today: domestic homes, factories, shops, offices, schools, leisure centres, and hospitals, to name just a few. Any buildings built or refurbished during the 1950s to mid 1980s are highly likely to contain one or more types of asbestos (blue, brown, or white).

Buildings refurbished or built after the mid 1980s may contain white asbestos, as the blue and brown asbestos types were banned products from this time onwards. The UK still allowed the use of white asbestos until 1999. Buildings built after late 1999 should be asbestos-free.

Asbestos only presents a health risk when the fibres are released and breathed in. Fibres can only be released under the following circumstances:

- The asbestos is damaged (e.g. drilled into, sanded, or cut)
- The condition of the asbestos-containing material (ACM) deteriorates

CCHA surveys all of its properties built before 2000 for asbestos. This information is then provided to our contractors, enabling them to prevent any disturbance during works being carried out. If it is foreseeable that any work will disturb the asbestos, the asbestos will be removed safely prior to the works being undertaken.

Tenants wanting to do DIY on their home must first seek advice from CCHA with regards to any asbestos that may be located in the property. They will then be advised accordingly.

The asbestos regulations do not state that we must remove asbestos if it is known to be present, providing it is in good condition and presents no risk to health.



Lead

Historically, lead has been used in many building products, including

- Plumbing
- Glazing
- Roofing materials
- Paint (lead pigments were widely used in paints for homes, schools, offices, etc., until the 1960s. It was not removed from all commonly-used paint until the early 1980s. Therefore, lead can be found underneath existing paintwork in older buildings)

Lead does not pose a risk unless it is disturbed. Here are some examples of ways in which lead can become a health risk:

- **Particles** – When lead paint is sanded particles of lead will become airborne, which could be breathed in, creating a health risk
- **Vapours** – When paint containing lead is burnt off lead vapours will become airborne, which could be breathed in, creating a health risk
- **Ingestion** – If you handle lead-based products without any hand protection, and have not washed your hands, you may ingest lead through hand to mouth contact



When removing paint from wood or metal, you will need to consider if lead is present in the paint being removed and follow these procedures:

- Avoid the removal of the old paint, unless it is absolutely necessary
- Remove the paint using a chemical paint-remover
- Use a damp rag wipe and wipe the workpiece clean
- Using a damp sanding block, sand the workpiece as required prior to painting
- If a heat gun is being used to remove pain the temperature must be kept below 500C
- When carrying out the works ensure that you are wearing the required personal protective equipment

Legionella

Legionella is a bacteria found in water sources such as lakes and reservoirs. It can sometimes get into a water supply and can cause illnesses such as Pontiac Fever or Legionnaires Disease, resulting in flu-like symptoms and, in more serious cases, pneumonia.

These illnesses cannot be contracted by drinking water contaminated by the legionella bacteria; they are contracted as a result of inhaling contaminated water droplets. Bacteria within water systems can multiply when water between the temperatures of 20°C and 45°C stands, and where there is sludge, rust, and scale, which the bacteria can feed upon.

Buildings such as leisure centres, hotels, and hospitals have a higher risk of legionella contamination as they commonly have stored water, because some pipework within them is not frequently used, and because of their size. There is a very low chance of legionella being in your home water supply, as most households do not store a large amount of water.

Following these steps can help to keep you safe from legionella contamination:

- Set the thermostat of your hot water cylinder to 60°C to ensure that your water is stored at the correct temperature
- Run your taps for a few minutes if you have been on holiday, or if a room is not used regularly
- Keep all shower heads and taps clean and free from lime scale. Shower head cleaning should be completed at least once every 3 months
- To wash through a shower head, put it down in the bath or shower tray to avoid too many water droplets in the air

- Run garden hoses weekly to ensure that any water left is flushed through
- Avoid the use of water butts. If used, do not use with a hosepipe and ensure that they are kept clean and drained down regularly
- Avoid using home hot tubs. The water is kept at an ideal temperature for bacteria to grow and multiply. If you do use one, please follow the manufacturer's guidelines for maintenance, cleaning, and disinfection, as well as draining down if they are not used for some time



Please let us know if:

- Cold water is still running warm after water which may have been standing in pipework has been run off
- Your boiler or hot water cylinder is not working properly, particularly if the water is not coming out of the taps at a high temperature
- Your water is discoloured

Child's Play

Young children often don't understand risks and hazards, which means that they can be at a greater risk of injury.



To help protect children from harm, consider the following:

- Environment - Assess the area where the child is playing for hazards that could cause harm to them, and remove and that you identify, where possible. Make sure that your child is secure, that gates are locked, that fences cannot be climbed, and that holes in fences are repaired
- Prevention of contact - For any hazards that cannot be removed, measures should be put in place to prevent a child from coming into contact with them. Better still, find somewhere more suitable for the child to play

- Supervise – Child’s play can be dangerous, from playing with toys with small parts, to climbing-equipment, and playing near water, etc. Supervision is essential to accident-prevention
- Suitability of toys – Toys should be checked to ensure that they are suitable for the child. Check for broken parts and small parts that could cause harm. Make sure toys have been bought from a reputable shop, as many counterfeit products can have safety defects that could cause harm
- Education – Ensure that your child is aware of potential hazards and how to avoid them
- Tidy up – Child’s play can cause hazards to other people in the house (e.g. a toy left out becoming a trip hazard)

Blind cords

Blind cords have resulted in a number of fatal accidents across the UK.

If you are thinking of having blinds fitted, consider the following:

- Choose blinds without a cord
- Do not fit blinds with cords in children’s bedrooms

If you already have blinds fitted, consider the following:

- Remove them from rooms where children play and sleep
- Shorten the cord and fit a cleat high up. Wrap any loose cord around the cleat
- Fit a weak link to the cord. This will allow the cord to break, should a child be caught in it

Nappy sacks

Nappy sacks have resulted in a number of fatal accidents across the UK.

If you use nappy sacks, consider the following:

- Always keep nappy sacks and other plastic bags or wrapping away from babies and young children
- Never place nappy sacks in a baby's cot or pram, or in easy reach of children
- Buy nappy sacks on a roll, if possible



People & Dogs

There have been a number of incidents across the UK where people, especially children, have been attacked by a dog, some of which have left the person with permanent scars, disfigurement, or have even resulted in death.

If you own a dog then you must comply with the Dangerous Dogs Act, which applies to all breeds. Any dog can become dangerous. The act applies to public areas, inside the home, and the garden.

If your dog attacks anyone, the dog could be taken away and destroyed. The owner or person in charge of the dog at the time can be also prosecuted under the Dangerous Dogs Act irrespective of the breed of the dog.



It is important that you understand the nature of your dog and whether it can interact safely with people. If you have any concerns that your dog may attack someone, then you need to consider securing the dog when around people.

Putting signs up saying 'Beware of Dog' is not seen as a means of preventing harm to people.

The most effective means of preventing your dog from attacking someone are as follows:

- Tether the dog when it is in the garden, particularly where children are playing
- Make sure that the garden fence is in good condition and of sufficient height, so that the dog cannot escape
- Keep the dog on a lead when walking in public spaces, and if the dog is required to wear a muzzle, make sure that it is fitted correctly and is of the correct type
- Keep the dog secure, in a separate room inside the house, if there is a risk of the dog attacking someone
- Consider using a cage
- Ensure that any children in the house are aware of, and avoid, behaviours which may cause a dog to bite (e.g. pulling a dog's tail, or approaching a dog that is feeding or sleeping)

If you do not have a dog, but are thinking about getting one, you first need to consider everything mentioned in this section.

You should also educate yourself on the breed you have in mind, particularly with regards to how they interact with people.

Product Safety

We use many products in our everyday life but often overlook safety aspects for the use of them. Product safety should be considered when purchasing and using them.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) is working with the Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliances (AMDEA), and have set up a new central register which is designed to allow owners to register their electrical appliances. If a product recall is instigated then the Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliances will notify you of the recall and of the safety concerns. If you wish to register any appliance then go to <http://www.registermyappliance.org.uk/>



Safety & Older People

More and more people are enjoying life into their 80s and 90s. However, older people, and particularly those who are frail, are one of the groups who are most likely to have an accident in and around the home. Older people are the group least likely to avoid a risk, and are more likely to have slower reactions to situations that may cause harm.

The main risks include:

- Falls
- Fire
- Burns and Scalds

These have been covered in other sections in the handbook which give practical advice on how to protect against specific risks.



Another risk that needs to be considered for the elderly is hypothermia.

There are ways to reduce the risk of developing hypothermia, including:

- Keeping the house warm during winter
- Wearing several thin layers of clothing (natural fibres like wool are warmer than synthetic fabrics)
- Eating regular meals and drinking hot drinks during the day
- Moving around at regular intervals

If you are experiencing financial difficulties which prevent you from heating your home adequately, please contact CCHA's Money Advice Team on 029 2046 8493. Other areas to consider are establishing a community network of friends. Not only will this be good for safety but it will also reduce the chances of being affected by loneliness.

If you have physical limitations and find it difficult or impossible to carry out basic tasks within your home, such as getting into or out of doors or showers, or using the bathroom or stairs, you may be entitled to a physical adaptation (e.g. handrails, ramps, stair-lifts, accessible showers, etc.). **If you feel that you may benefit from an adaptation, please contact our Customer Service Team on 029 2046 8490.** You can also arrange a referral through your GP.

The replacement of lamps and lightbulbs is your responsibility. If you are unable to do so yourself, please ask for help from your friends, family, or neighbours. **If, however, you are unable to replace a lamp or lightbulb yourself, and there is no support available to you, you can contact our Customer Service Team on 029 2046 8490 to discuss the options available to you.**



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