

Preventing fires in your home

Fire is a danger in every home and older people and young children are most often the victims. Follow these steps to keep you and your family safe.

DO:

- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Switch off and unplug all appliances not used at night. Do not leave televisions, phone chargers or other devices on stand-by. They are a fire hazard and also increase your electricity bills.
- Only plug one electrical appliance into a socket.
- Close doors to all rooms at night. Don't open a door if you suspect there is a fire in the room.
- Use gas and electrical appliances according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Have gas and electrical appliances serviced regularly.
- Use a secure fireguard if you have an open fire.
- Check smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms regularly by pressing the test button.

DO NOT:

- Do not leave young children alone in the home.
- Do not smoke in bed.

What should I do if a fire breaks out?

Get everyone out of the house and then call the fire brigade – dial 999 or 112. If your escape routes are blocked by fire or smoke, go into a room, close the door and stuff a blanket or carpet at the bottom of the door to keep out smoke. Call for help from the window and wait for the fire brigade to arrive. Do not jump from an upstairs window except as a last resort.

What should I do if the chimney goes on fire?

Call the fire brigade. If possible, move furniture and carpets away from the fireplace. After a chimney fire, get an experienced builder to check the chimney for damage. If necessary, repair the chimney and fireplace before using it again. Get the chimney cleaned at least twice a year.

What is the advice about open fires?

Use a fireguard and always check that it is in position before you go to bed. Never carry hot coals from one fireplace to another and avoid banking fires too high.

What should I do if my chip pan goes on fire?

Use a fire blanket or the correct extinguisher to smother the flames. If you don't have a fire blanket or extinguisher, use a lid, large plate or a wet towel. Don't move the chip pan or use water to put out the fire. Never leave a chip pan unattended. If you have to answer the phone or door, turn off the power and move the chip pan to a cold ring or hob.

Most fires start in the kitchen, so you should consider a fire blanket or extinguisher and, if you use a chip pan, buy one with a thermostat. We will distribute fire blankets to all of our tenants. If there is not one in your property, contact Housing Maintenance.

Gas cylinders and heating care

Do I need to take special care with gas cylinders?

Yes, please take the following precautions.

- Keep cylinders upright all the time.
- Switch off cylinders at the regulator when not using them.
- Return empty cylinders to the place you bought them from straight away.
- Check hoses and connections regularly for signs of wear and tear.
- Keep all portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and place them where they can't be knocked over.

Also, remember:

- Never seal air vents. It is important that each room with a gas heater has good ventilation.
- Never store cylinders indoors.
- Never move a gas or oil heater when it is switched on.

What should I do if I smell gas?

- Immediately ring Gas Networks Ireland emergency line on 1850 20 50 50 (open 24 hours).
- Don't smoke or use a naked flame.
- Don't unplug or switch anything electrical on or off.
- Turn off the gas at your meter and appliances.
- Open doors and windows to let the gas escape.