



torus



# Your Home Your Safety



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# Introduction

Every tenant and resident has the right to a decent, safe home, and a good quality service. You have the right to be listened to and have your views heard on decisions which may affect your home, your community and your safety.

Working together we all have a responsibility to keep everyone safe. The safety information in this booklet will help to keep you, your family and your neighbours safe, along with our staff, visitors and contractors.

This booklet explains the steps we take to keep you, your family and neighbours and your home safe.

## Our responsibilities

- As your landlord we have a legal duty to meet all applicable statutory requirements that we provide for the health and safety of occupants in their homes and to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that we own clean and safe.
- We do this by carrying out regular safety checks on your home, these are to protect you, your family and your neighbours.
- We will communicate with you when safety checks are required and arrange a suitable time to visit your home.

## Your responsibilities

We can't do this without your support and co-operation, so to ensure we keep your home safe we need you to:

- Report any concerns you have about the safety of your home.
- Allow us access to your home to carry out these important safety checks. If you have any questions or concerns about the visits, please give us a call and we will do our best to help.
- Keep appointments we arrange with you to carry out safety checks. If you are unable to keep the appointment, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can arrange another time.



- Co-operate with any safety work needed to ensure your home is safe.
- Keep us up-to-date with any personal changes that may have an affect on how we manage your home, your tenancy and the building in general. In particular, changes that may affect any response to an emergency situation should the need arise i.e. evacuation.

We understand it can be disruptive having people visit your home and will keep any inconvenience to a minimum, to help us do this please follow this advice to ensure the visit goes smoothly.

- Please ensure you are available at the arranged time. Contact us in advance if you need to change the appointment.
- Please follow any instructions you have been given. If you have any questions or need some advice or assistance, please get in touch before the visit. We will do our best to help.
- Ask to see ID badge before you let an operative into your home.
- Keep children and pets safe away from areas where we are working.
- Occasionally we may need to use scaffolding at your home or in your neighbourhood. Please follow any safety advice given, any temporary safety related signage and ensure children and pets stay away from the area.
- Further information is available on our website or you can call us if you have any questions about work being completed in your home.

We will contact you to arrange regular safety checks to ensure your home is safe. This booklet explains what each check involves, why they are so important and has useful tips and advice to help you to stay safe.

# Vital Gas Safety



# Vital Gas Safety



## Gas Safety

### What do we need to do?

We need to carry out an annual service of your boiler, check pipework and any gas appliances. We also check any solid fuel appliances e.g. wood burners. We ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are fitted and working correctly.

### Why do we do this?

Torus has a legal responsibility to comply with the Gas Safety (installation and use) regulations 1998 as amended. A gas safety check and service can identify risks and actions we need to take to ensure your gas installation remain safe to use.

A leaking gas appliance can cause explosions. Boilers, fires and cookers that aren't well maintained can produce carbon monoxide (CO) gas, that you can't see, smell or taste, but its affects can be fatal.

A regular inspection will help keep you safe and could save you money on your fuel bills. An annual gas safety check is legally required, if you don't allow us to complete this you are putting your tenancy, your families and your neighbours' safety and health at great risk.



# What's involved?

During an inspection we will:

- Check all gas appliances, boilers, flues, pipework, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms that are owned by Torus.
- Do a visual inspection of any gas cooker. Servicing and maintenance of a gas cooker is your responsibility since it belongs to you.
- Show you where the gas meter is and how to turn off the gas in an emergency.
- Record the safety checks we make and give you a copy.

# How often do we need to carry out the check?

A 45-minute safety check and service, once a year.

Gas Safety Check	
Type of Property	Frequency
All Properties	Every Year

# Vital Gas Safety

## What do I need to do?

- Allow us access to your home for the check. You will receive an appointment letter when your gas safety check is due. It is important that this safety check is completed as soon as possible. If you can't be at home for this appointment, please let us know and we'll change the appointment to a more suitable time.
- Report any gas safety concerns to us immediately.
- Check that you have credit on your gas and electric meter.
- Do not use bottled gas (LPG) appliances or store gas bottles in the property.
- Always ask permission before installing any gas appliances and ensure you use a gas safe registered business.

If you have any questions or concerns about the visit or need any advice and support please call us, we will do our best to help.

## Useful tips and information to keep you and your family safe

- Never use a gas appliance if you think it is not working properly – signs include yellow or orange flames (except fuel effect fires).
- Never cover an appliance or block convection air vents.
- Never block or obstruct fixed ventilation grilles or air bricks.
- Never block or cover outside flues.
- Anyone carrying out work on gas appliances or fittings must be competent and registered with the Gas Safe Register.





## What to do if you smell gas or fumes

- Turn off gas supply at the meter
- Open all windows and doors
- Put out any naked flames
- Keep away from the affected area
- Do not use electrical switches or sockets
- Call the National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999**

## Useful websites

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

## In an emergency contact

Gas Emergency Freephone number: **0800 111 999**

HSE Gas Safety Advice Line: **0800 300 363**

# Vital Gas Safety

## Solid Fuel Appliances (wood, coal, charcoal)

If you have a solid fuel appliance e.g. a wood burner you need to take care to ensure these are used correctly and safely maintained. If you wish to install a solid fuel appliance you must ask for permission first and ensure work is carried out by a HETAS (Heating Equipment Testing and Approvals Scheme) registered business.

### Do:

- Make sure you have and use a CO (carbon monoxide) alarm which must be tested regularly.
- Maintain your appliance with regular cleaning and checks.
- Use quality clean, dry hard wood, or smokeless fuel and provide adequate fuel storage.
- If you have a wood burner use a moisture meter to check your wood is less than 20% moisture inside the log when split.
- Have the flue or chimney swept and checked at least annually.
- Always use a fire guard when children and vulnerable people are in the areas when the fire or wood burner is lit.
- Please use protective equipment i.e. stove gloves and the correct tools.
- Do warm up the stove fully on the first lighting of fuel before reducing the air controls to a lower position.
- Do keep your stove and throat plate clean inside & out.
- Use the correct fuel as burning coal in a wood burner could cause serious damage to your stove.



## Do not:

- Do not leave the stove unattended with the air controls fully open.
- Do not overload your stove with fuel.
- Do not let any metal part of the stove glow red hot (including the base plate) – this is over firing and will damage your stove!
- Do not cover or remove your CO (carbon monoxide) alarm from the room, it is there for your protection.
- Do not burn rubbish, painted or preserved wood in your stove, it can cause damage, excessive smoke and it is illegal.
- Do not close the stove air controls down too quickly before the chimney and stove have properly warmed up, it can stifle the fire and cause smoke and tar build up.
- Do not store logs or coal right next to your stove – they can overheat!
- Do not leave ash/embers inside your property, remove them to a safe place in the open air immediately after cleaning, carbon monoxide (CO) will still be being released.
- Do not block air vents, these are needed to help your fire burn efficiently.

# Fire Safety





# Fire

## What do we need to do?

We take Fire Safety very seriously and are committed to securing the safety, health and wellbeing of everyone within the Torus community. To help do this we:

- Carry out Fire Risk Assessments of communal areas.
- Regularly inspect communal areas to minimise risk of fire, to ensure residents can escape in an emergency and that emergency service access is not hindered.

## Why do we do this?

Torus is required to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Carrying out a Fire Risk assessment helps Torus identify any fire related safety risks that may be present in our properties and any actions we may need to take to manage these risks. Safe use and storage of electrical equipment is important in fire prevention.

# Fire Safety

## What's involved?

We will only need to access communal areas within the building. However, in flat blocks we may need access to individual flats to check fire doors, safety features e.g. closing mechanisms.

## How often do we need to carry out the check?

How often we carry out a Fire Risk Assessment depends on the level of risk.

- **Higher Risk** - annually (high occupancy, high rise or specific risk)
- **Medium Risk** – every two years (all other properties)
- **Lower Risk** - every three years (these will be low occupancy, such as low-rise properties)

Fire Risk Assessment (communal areas)	
Type of Property	Frequency
Flat	At least every 3 years
House	Not required
Multi-Storey Block	Every Year
Bungalow	Not required
Sheltered / Extra Care	Every Year

## What do I need to do?

- Report any concerns with Fire Safety to us at the earliest opportunity.
- Read and take notice of information on notice boards in and around the property.
- Do not tamper with any fire safety equipment, it is there to protect you and your home. If you live in a flat you may have a door closing mechanism on your front door, this is to prevent fire spreading to your flat, do not tamper with this. If you have any concerns report them to us.
- Think about home insurance to cover your personal possessions in the event of a fire.

## Useful tips and information to keep you and your family safe:

- Test your smoke alarm regularly.
- Never leave food cooking unattended.
- Always extinguish cigarettes and candles after use.
- Don't overload sockets or extension leads.
- Mobile phones and tablets that are left charging overnight can overheat and cause fires.
- Only use the charger which was designed for the appliance, do not use if it is damaged or the cables are frayed. Switch off when not in use and ensure cable charging end isn't covered when not in use i.e. covered by loose or discarded linen.
- Never put your phone under your pillow at night, it can overheat and cause a fire.
- Keep exits free from clutter, consider fire risks when storing items in your home.
- Leave communal areas clear - don't leave out personal items, including door mats, bikes, prams or mobility scooters.
- Don't wedge fire doors open. Closed doors helps stop fire from spreading.

# Fire Safety

## Be prepared by making a plan of escape:

- Plan an escape route and make sure everyone in your household knows how to escape.
- Do not block exits with bikes, prams and mobility scooters.
- The best route is the normal way in and out of your home.
- Think of a second route in case the first one is blocked.
- Take a few minutes to practise your escape plan.
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes.

## If there is a fire don't take risks Get Out, Stay Out and Call 999

If you live in a Multi-storey Block, Sheltered or Extra Care Scheme ensure that you know and follow the fire procedure. The Safety Notice boards contain important information which all tenants must read.

## Useful websites

[www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/fire.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/fire.htm)

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire)

[www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk)

[www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)

[www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk](http://www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk)





# Oxygen Therapy

Oxygen has been widely used medically for many years. Oxygen therapy means using an oxygen cylinder or a machine to breathe in air that contains more oxygen than normal.

If you use oxygen therapy at home, you will need to take some additional fire safety precautions. If used sensibly, oxygen can be safe. However, used incorrectly it can cause severe burns, which can prove fatal.

# Fire Safety

## Using Oxygen Safely

Do not use oxygen next to:

- Cigarettes
- Lighters and matches
- Cooking appliances
- Heating appliances
- Grease or oil-based products
- Never smoke or let anyone else smoke while you are using oxygen.
- Turn off the equipment when not in use and ventilate the room.
- Do not use flammable products, such as cleaning fluid, paint thinner, petroleum-based creams or aerosols, while you are using oxygen.
- Ensure you have smoke alarms within your home that are in working order.
- Always follow the safety guidance from your oxygen cylinder or concentrator supplier.
- Contact your Local Fire service for advice.

## Storage

- Follow the manufacturer's advice on how to store oxygen.
- Your oxygen equipment should be stored safely; out of direct sunlight and in a place that is well ventilated, always dry and away from heat sources.
- Store away from areas that would block escape routes or fire exits.
- Store away from combustible material (such as paper, cardboard, curtains).

# Electrical Safety



# Electrical Safety



## Electrical Safety

### What do we need to do?

Safe use of electrical equipment and installations is an important part of electrical safety fire prevention.

We will check the electrics in your home at least every five years to make sure they are safe and working properly. We will ensure that all electrical work is carried out by a competent person.

We will also test any electrical equipment and white goods that Torus owns.

### Why do we do this?

The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Regulation 11), together with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 place important obligations on landlords to ensure that electrical systems are maintained in a safe condition.

For all fixed wiring installations and equipment owned by Torus, we will carry out testing and routine maintenance repairs. We use a combination of rewire or upgrade work where sub-standard installations are identified.



## What's involved?

We will need to check all electrical wiring and components throughout the property. If you have any questions or concerns about the visit or need any advice and support please call us, we will do our best to help.

## How often do we need to carry out the check?

Depending on the size and condition of the electrical installation within your home, it is anticipated that the electrical safety inspection and test could take between two and four hours to complete. This essential safety check is carried out every five years.

Electrical Safety Check Fixed Wiring	
Type of Property	Frequency
All properties	At least every 5 Years

# Electrical Safety

## What do I need to do?

- Allow us access to your home for the electrical safety check. You will receive an appointment letter when your electrical safety check is due. If you can't be at home for this appointment, please let us know and we'll change it for one that suits you better.
- Report any electrical safety concerns to us immediately.
- You are responsible for ensuring any electrical equipment you own is safe and well maintained.
- Ensure that your own electrical appliances, light fittings, switches etc are installed by a competent person and that equipment and accessories are kept in a safe condition.
- If you intend to carry out any additions or alterations to the fixed wiring which could include, but is not limited to, additional sockets, the installation of an electric shower, power supply to an out building etc you must request permission in writing to carry out that work and upon completion ensure that the relevant certification is provided by the person/organisation carrying out the work. We will respond to any requests made in writing.

## Useful tips and information to keep you and your family safe

- Check the condition of extension leads, cables and connections, always use them correctly.
- Check electrical equipment used outdoors is suitable for outdoor use.
- Don't bring mains-powered portable appliances such as hairdryers, heaters or radios into a bathroom.
- Don't overload electrical sockets or extension leads.
- Always use a charger that is designed for use with the product.
- Don't drill holes or fix nails in walls or partitions without knowing what is hidden behind them. They can hide electrical cables, gas and water pipes.



## Useful websites

Register your appliances for important safety updates, recalls and information at:

[www.registermyappliance.org.uk](http://www.registermyappliance.org.uk)

[www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

**Contact your local council for advice on disposing of electrical items**

[www.liverpool.gov.uk](http://www.liverpool.gov.uk)

[www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)

[www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk)

# Electrical Safety

## Mobility Scooters

If you have a mobility scooter you need to ensure that it is safely stored and follow simple safety rules when charging.

If you live in a sheltered scheme or flat block you should always seek advice before purchasing a mobility scooter to ensure you understand your responsibilities and any restrictions on storage, charging and use in communal areas.

### Storing your mobility scooter

- Storing and charging mobility scooters in corridors, staircases, foyers and communal areas is forbidden and potentially dangerous.
- In the event of a fire, obstacles like mobility scooters may prevent firefighters from entering the building or other residents from escaping.

### Charging your battery safely

Like any electrical item, a mobility scooter poses a fire safety risk. They should be stored, and the battery charged with care and attention and in line with any manufacturer's instructions.

- Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe charging and handle carefully.
- Make sure you use the correct battery charger for your battery type and size.
- Make sure there is no frayed, split or loose wiring.
- To avoid fire or electrical shock do not use extension leads and charge from the nearest socket/charging point available.
- Always charge in a dry, well ventilated area, but not in a communal flat area.
- Do not smoke and do not sit on the scooter whilst charging.





## At home

- Never leave on charge overnight, consider the use of timers.
- Ensure the scooter is not on your escape route.
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms and know your escape plan.
- Power cables are a potential trip hazard. Keep cables tucked out of the way where possible i.e. edges of skirting boards.
- Make sure you have your scooter regularly serviced by a qualified engineer.

# Asbestos Safety



# Asbestos Safety

## What do we need to do?

Before you move into your home, we make sure that the property is surveyed for asbestos.

If your home was built before the year 2000 there's a possibility that some materials used to construct it may contain asbestos.

Our specialist asbestos surveyors and inspection team will assess your home periodically, taking into account location, type and condition of any asbestos containing material. Following assessment, you will be made aware if any evidence of asbestos is found, provided with a written report and advice on how to stay safe.

- Most asbestos products in the home are very low risk and can be monitored and left in place.
- Any high-risk asbestos products will be removed, repaired or enclosed to make them safe.

We'll re-inspect the condition of any asbestos items as part of our regular checks for your safety. We may arrange to further inspect your home if we're carrying out any major or intrusive works for example fitting a new kitchen or bathroom.

A copy of the asbestos information for your property will be given to you when you sign up for your property but if you need another copy, we can e-mail or post to you on request.

## Why do we do this?

Asbestos is an additive used in insulation and fire-resistant materials that was widely used in the building trade until the end of the last century.

Left undisturbed these materials are very safe. It's only when they are disturbed or damaged and fibres and dust are released that problems can occur because breathing this in can be harmful.

# Asbestos Safety



## What's involved?

Torus need our safety inspections to be as thorough as possible to provide piece of mind to you, your family and anyone who needs to carry out any building or repair work in your home.

Inspection surveys usually take around one to two hours depending on the size and construction of your home. No mess or risks are created during the survey.

During surveying and sampling you may be asked to leave the room if a sample is needed to be taken. This is nothing to worry about. No dust is released during the sample process.

For clarity in our reports, we will need to take some discreet photos of certain building elements but we always ensure that any personal items are not in the photos.

The surveyor also makes a plan of the home too, which can further illustrate the locations they have inspected. We will need to gain entry into lofts, as well as all internal and external sheds, store rooms and service cupboards. Your assistance to access these areas is crucial to maintaining up-to-date information so please help out as much as you can.



## How often do we need to carry out the check?

We'll need to perform safety condition checks on certain materials at regular intervals, this can be between one and five years depending on the risks. We will also need to carry out a more detailed check before we do any work if you are due to have a specific property upgrade such as a new kitchen, or bathroom.

## What do I need to do?

Keeping you and your family safe is a priority for us.

- You must always ask permission before doing any DIY in your home.
- Allow us access to your home to perform routine inspections to items which we need to risk monitor. If you have any questions or concerns about the visit or need any advice or support please call us and we will do our best to help.
- Keep your inspection appointments, please contact us straight away if you need to rearrange.

# Asbestos Safety

## Useful tips and information to keep you and your family safe

### What should I do if you find asbestos in my home?

You may be alarmed because you've probably heard stories about asbestos but please don't panic.

#### What to do

- If the asbestos is in good condition leave it alone.
- If the asbestos gets damaged let us know ASAP.
- If you are thinking about doing some DIY let us know what and where, we may need to come out and do further inspections or sampling.

#### What not to do

- Don't start any DIY projects without contacting us first.
- Basic painting and decorating are fine, but be careful not to damage any textured coatings e.g. Artex.
- Never drill, sand or strip areas that may contain asbestos.
- Avoid fitting shelving (drilling and screwing) in cupboards unless you know there's no Asbestos in them.
- Never remove walls, saw holes into ceilings or sand Artex coatings.



### What we will do

- Remove or make safe any high-risk materials.
- Manage and monitor certain medium risk materials.
- Perform regular safety inspections to check the condition of certain materials containing asbestos.
- Ensure adequate asbestos information is in place before we do any destructive planned work such as re-fitting and fitting out wetrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, roofs and other major work which significantly affects the structure of your home.
- Ensure that all our repair workers and contractors are asbestos awareness trained and know what to do if they come across suspect items during their day to day work.

## Useful websites

[www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos)

# Water Safety





# Water Safety

## What do we need to do?

Before you move into your home we check thoroughly for water safety.

When you move in to your home you will receive a water safety leaflet. You will also see warning signs and advice stickers.

## Why do we do this?

If your home has been empty for a couple of weeks or more there is a small risk of legionella bacteria developing in the hot and cold-water systems. Legionella bacteria can cause Legionnaires' disease, a form of pneumonia, which is potentially fatal. It is caused when droplets of water containing the bacteria are inhaled e.g. spray from a shower or taps.

The risk of contracting Legionnaires' disease is really low, however certain people are at higher risk – over age 45, heavy drinkers, people with chronic respiratory or kidney disease, anyone with an impaired immune system.

## What's involved?

We assess all homes identifying any risks and preventative measures to improve water safety.

We carry out checks including water monitoring, sampling and testing. How often we do this depends on the risks we have identified following assessment.

# Water Safety

## How often do we need to carry out the check?

If your home has a stored water installation, we will do these checks every five years. For properties without a stored water installation there is a lower risk, so we sample 1% of these properties every year.

Water Safety Check	
Type of Property	Frequency
All properties with stored water installations	Every 5 Years

## What do I need to do?

Please read the water safety information we provide.

Follow the steps below when your home has been empty for a period of time.

If you have any questions or concerns or need any advice and support please call us, we will do our best to help.



## Useful tips and information to keep you and your family safe

Although the risk of Legionella is very low, it's best to be safe and minimise any risk.

### **If your home has been empty for a couple of weeks or more we advise**

- Running the hot water tap for a minimum of 60 seconds.
- Remove the showerhead and run water for at least ten minutes.
- Flush the toilet twice to circulate fresh water.

### **Other ways to minimise risks are**

- Clean showerheads every three to six months.
- Keep hot water on your boiler system at a safe temperature.
- Avoid hanging damp dishcloths over taps.

## Useful websites

[www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/what-is.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/what-is.htm)

# Water Safety



## Flood Risk

### What do we need to do?

In the event of a flood we will work with partners to respond to reports of a flood which affects your home.

Where necessary we will assist with rehousing in the event of a serious flood in your home.

### What do I need to do?

Check if your property is at risk of flooding at [www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk)

Sign up for flood warnings. You can do this on the environment agency website to receive alerts by email, text or phone. [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings)

If you are in a flood risk area and have been issued with any flood defence equipment, ensure you know where this is stored, when and how to use it. It is a good idea to test setting up the equipment before you need it.

Think about home insurance to cover your personal possessions in the event of a flood.

# Useful tips and information to keep you, your family, your home and belongings safe

## If you are about to be flooded

- Check the National Flood Forum or speak to a Floodline Advisor to find out how to stay safe during a flood. Floodline Telephone: **0345 988 1188** 24-hour service (find out about call charges on the environment agency website).
- Contact your local Council for advice on where to obtain sandbags.
- If you need to travel check flood warnings and travel advice.

## What to do after a flood

- Throw things away that have been affected by the flood. You can put most other things in the bin or take to a recycling centre as long as they're not polluted with sewage or chemicals.
- Contaminated items must be disposed of safely. Contact the Environmental Health department at your local council to get rid of sandbags and other things polluted by chemicals or sewage. The Council will tell you how to dispose of them as hazardous waste.

## Protect yourself from future flooding

- Consider creating a personal flood plan. A template is available on the Environment Agency website. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan) The personal flood plan includes a list of things you should do (like moving sentimental items to safety) and provides space for you to note down important contact details such as your utility companies and insurance.
- Get advice from the National Flood Forum on how to protect your property.
- Ensure you have home insurance to cover your belongings in the event of a flood. You can get advice on this from the National Flood Forum.

# Water Safety

## General Advice and Tips:

Infection problems arising from floods in this country are rare. Usually any harmful bugs in floodwater become very diluted and present a low risk, however, there are a few precautions to be aware of when dealing with flooding which should prevent unnecessary additional health problems:

- Wherever possible, try to avoid coming into direct contact with floodwater. If there is a necessity to step into the water, wear waterproof gloves and rubber boots and remember to be careful of potentially concealed hazards i.e. drain covers and sewer entry points. However, **'If in doubt, stay out'** of any flooded areas where the ground beneath cannot be clearly seen.

Remember to regularly wash your hands, this is the most important way to get rid of harmful bugs:

- Using warm, clean water and soap, then rinse and dry your hands, particularly after using the toilet.
- Before eating or preparing food, after being in contact with floodwater, sewage or with items that have been in the water.
- To only use cold water to wash if warm water provision is not available. If there is no clean water, use disposable soapy, wet wipes or sanitising gel to carefully clean all parts of your hands and dry them.
- Keep open cuts or sores clean and use waterproof plasters to prevent exposure to floodwater.
- Keep children out of any flood water and away from areas affected by flooding, particularly toddlers and small babies, where hand to mouth contact is difficult to manage/avoid.
- Do not eat any food that has been in contact with floodwater or sewage as it may not be safe to eat due to microbial or chemical contamination.

## What if I start to feel unwell?

- If you feel unwell this does not necessarily mean that you are suffering from any infection. If you are concerned, then call **111**. A textphone service is also available if you are deaf or hard of hearing. The textphone number is **18001 111**. Alternatively, you may wish to visit your family doctor/GP.
- Avoid contact with floodwater and wash your hands regularly (good hand hygiene). Swallowing floodwater or mud may cause diarrhoea, fever or abdominal pain. If you visit your GP, do mention the flood and any instances where you may have been in contact with flood water or potentially contaminated surfaces and display any of the above symptoms. Particularly, if they start within ten days of being exposed to floodwater or sewage contamination.

**Remember:** Flooding can be stressful. It is normal, in some cases, to feel anxious, upset and experience difficulty sleeping.

Take care of yourself and your family and check on elderly and vulnerable friends and neighbours. Contact friends and family for support as it can take a long time for day to day life to return to normal.

**Information above taken from Public Health England (PHE): Guidance on Recovery from Flooding Essential information for frontline responders**

## Useful websites

[www.gov.uk/browse/environment-countryside/flooding-extreme-weather](http://www.gov.uk/browse/environment-countryside/flooding-extreme-weather)

Get help during a flood [www.gov.uk/help-during-flood](http://www.gov.uk/help-during-flood)

## Contacts

Floodline Telephone: **0345 988 1188** 24-hour service (find out about call charges on the Environment Agency website).

# Lifts





# Lifts

## What do we need to do?

We are responsible for ensuring the safe working, operation and statutory compliance of lifts in properties we own or manage.

These include:

- Domestic lifts and lifting equipment e.g. hoists, stairlifts
- Passenger lifts

We have systems in place to inspect, maintain and repair lifts.

## Why do we do this?

Torus is committed to ensuring the safety of tenants and residents. We have a responsibility to comply with legislation including the Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. We know that lifts breaking down can present a risk to tenants and cause considerable inconvenience, so it is important that they are regularly serviced and well maintained.

## What's involved?

A contractor will inspect the lift, carry out scheduled maintenance and report any work to be carried out with suggested timescales. It is important that work is completed on time.

# Lifts

## How often do we need to carry out the check?

Lift Safety Checks		
Type of Lift	Inspection Frequency	Servicing Frequency
Passenger Lifts	Twice a year	4 times a year
Domestic Hoists	Twice a year	Twice a year
Domestic Stairlifts	Once a year	Twice a year

## What do I need to do?

Please allow access to our staff and contractors to carry out inspections, maintenance and repairs when required.

## Useful tips and information to keep you and your family safe

- If you have any concerns about a lift you use, please report them to us.
- Make sure you know how to get help if you become trapped in a lift.
- If you have any questions or concerns about a lift that you use please get in touch, we will do our best to help.

# Safety in communal areas and your neighbourhood



# Safety in communal areas and your neighbourhood



## Communal Areas

### What do we need to do?

We carry out regular inspections of communal areas in properties. How often we do this depends on the level of risk.

### Why do we do this?

Torus is responsible for the communal areas in properties we own. We have a duty to reduce the risk of fire, to make sure tenants and residents can escape in an emergency and that fire and rescue services are not hindered in their duties.

### What's involved?

We will inspect the communal areas. Any fire safety actions will be identified, and action taken as soon as possible. If we find any hazards to people living and using the property these will be removed e.g. bikes, door mats.

We ensure any furniture we provide in communal areas is fire retardant. We ensure that any equipment that we provide in communal areas is serviced and well maintained.



## How often do we need to carry out the check?

This will depend on the building and the risks identified. Many schemes have notice boards showing when inspections take place, if you would like more information please speak to your Neighbourhood Officer or Scheme Manager.

## What do I need to do?

- If you have any questions or safety concerns about communal areas, please report them to us as soon as possible.
- Keep communal areas clear at all times.
- Do not block any escape routes. Bikes, prams, old furniture and appliance or mobility scooter must not be stored in communal areas.
- Read and take notice of information on notice boards in communal areas.

# Safety in communal areas and your neighbourhood

## Your Neighbourhood

### What do we need to do?

Torus staff will regularly inspect your neighbourhood and report concerns or maintenance required.

### Why do we do this?

We want to keep your neighbourhood safe and well repaired, but we need your help to do this.

### What do I need to do?

- Report any safety or potential environmental issues such as fly-tipping, broken street lighting, slip and trip hazards, unsafe trees to Torus or your Local Council.
- Know what your maintenance responsibilities are in your property e.g. trimming tree and shrub branches in your garden.
- Dispose of rubbish carefully and properly. Store your bins securely to prevent attraction of vermin and reduce fire risks.
- Be aware of and follow your responsibilities in your Tenancy Agreement if you keep a pet. Report any dangerous or out of control animals to the Local Council.

## Contacts

Your Local Council will be able to provide information and advice on bin collections, vermin infestations, environmental crime.

Torus can advise on their maintenance schedules and provide information on landlord and tenant responsibilities. Please check your Tenancy Agreement for more information.

# Spring Safety Tips



# Spring Safety Tips

## Garden Safety

If you are planning some gardening in the Spring months, consider these basic safety tips

- Always use a Residual Current Device (RCD) when operating electrically powered garden tools and mowers to protect yourself from electrocution. Keep children at a safe distance whenever you are using lawnmowers, strimmers etc.
- Store any chemicals you use in the garden safely out of sight and out of reach of children, preferably in a secure cabinet. Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions when using weed killers, adhesives and solvents. Never transfer to alternative containers.
- Keep garden tools in good repair and safely tidied away after use.
- Always site barbecues well away from fences, sheds and trees.

## DIY & Cleaning

Follow these helpful DIY tips to avoid accidents and injury.

- Before starting any DIY check your Tenancy Agreement and the Torus website to see what improvement you need to request permission for. If you are unsure give us a call.
- Avoid accidents and injury when doing DIY tasks by operating within the range of your skills, ability and experience. Always use personal protective equipment including gloves, goggles, helmet, and facemask and safety shoes as appropriate and follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Avoid injury from falls by always checking condition of ladders before use and use at a safe angle.
- Carefully follow instructions on cleaning products and ensure they are stored safely away from children.

For more Home Safety advice visit: [www.rosipa.com/Home-Safety/Advice.aspx](http://www.rosipa.com/Home-Safety/Advice.aspx)



# Summer Safety Tips



# Summer Safety Tips

## Barbecues

If you are planning on using a BBQ, whether it's a disposable one, gas or charcoal make sure you keep yourself safe and don't put yourself at risk.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly poisonous substance which is created when fossil fuels such as gas and solid fuels like charcoal and wood fail to burn fully due to a lack of oxygen. You can't see it, taste it or smell it but it can kill quickly with no warning.

### Follow these top tips for BBQ safety:

- Never take a smouldering or lit BBQ into a tent, caravan or cabin. Even if you have finished cooking your BBQ should remain outside as it will still give off fumes and heat for some hours after use.
- Never use a BBQ inside to keep you warm.
- Never leave a lit BBQ unattended and fully extinguish before sleeping.
- Follow the manufactures instructions when using your BBQ.
- Familiarise yourself with the signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning – headaches, dizziness, breathlessness, nausea, collapse and loss of consciousness.

### If you're using a gas BBQ or gas camping equipment, follow these extra tips to help you stay safe:

- Check that the appliance is in good working order, undamaged and that hoses are properly attached and undamaged. If in doubt get the hoses replaced or don't use it.
- Make sure the gas taps are turned off before changing the gas cylinder and do it in the open air.
- Don't over-tighten joints.
- When you have finished cooking, turn off the gas cylinder before you turn off the BBQ controls – this means any gas in the pipeline will be used up.
- Read the manufacturer's instructions about how to check for gas escapes from hoses or pipework.



## Balconies

Balconies provide an invaluable outdoor space and an ideal place for socialising. However, it is important you use your balcony safely.

- Take care to put out cigarettes.
- Never throw lit cigarettes or embers off a balcony, this could cause a fire risk on balconies below.
- Balconies are not a suitable area for any type of barbecue.

# Autumn Safety Tips



## Bonfire Night & Halloween

If you want to enjoy Halloween and Bonfire activities follow these simple safety tips to keep you, your family and neighbours and your home safe.

- Never leave lit candles and lanterns unattended.
- Keep your wheelie bins somewhere safe and secure.
- Keep bins away from windows, doors and fences.
- Only put bins out on collection day and move back in as soon as they are emptied.
- Help to protect yourself from burglars by ensuring your home is secure whilst you are out trick or treating or visiting a firework display. Leave a TV or light on or use a timer to make it look like someone is at home.

**If you are worried about a bonfire, or a build up of bonfire materials, then report it to the Local Council:**

Lighting a bonfire in a public place is illegal. A public space is anywhere other than your own back garden - fire spreads quickly & could be toxic.

## Stay safe with Fireworks

**Fireworks! It's important to remember:**

- It's against the law to carry fireworks in public if you are under 18.
- Fireworks must not be sold to anyone under 18.
- It's an offence to let fireworks off between 11pm-7am – except on Bonfire Night (until midnight), New Year's Eve, Diwali & Chinese New Year (until 1am).
- It is an offence under the Explosives Act 1875 to tamper with or modify fireworks. Have fun, stay safe and be considerate to your neighbours.

# Winter Safety Tips



## Keeping Warm

In cold weather you may want to use additional heating appliances. Follow these tips to use equipment safely.

- Use only portable heating equipment that is approved for indoor use.
- Keep combustible materials, including furniture and curtains at least three feet away from the heat source. NEVER drape clothes over a space heater to dry.
- Always keep an eye on heating equipment. Never leave children alone in the room where a space heater is running. Turn it off when you are unable to closely monitor it.
- Be careful not to overload electrical circuits.
- Make sure you have working smoke detectors. Check and change batteries as required.

## Problems with your Heating

If your central heating or hot water stops working, there are a few things you can do before calling to request an engineer:

- Check that your central heating clock or timer is working properly. Make sure that it's switched on and showing the correct time. You'll find step-by-step instructions in your boiler manual.
- If your electrical power has been off for a while, you might also need to reset your clock.
- If you have a wireless room thermostat, check to see if the batteries need replacing.
- Check the pressure level in the system (bar). If the pressure runs low, the boiler will not heat the water in the system and radiators. If in doubt make a call for one of our Gas Engineers to attend.

# Winter Safety Tips



## Candles

Always use candles safely.

- Never leave burning candles unattended.
- Never position in a draft, anywhere near curtains or near any materials, which could ignite.
- Ensure candles are in secure and suitable containers.





# Christmas Safety Tips

Follow these tips to keep your home safe at Christmas.

## Electrical safety:

- Check your Christmas tree lights conform to the British Standard. Always use an RCD on outdoor electrical equipment (that is a safety device that can save lives by instantly switching off the power).
- Make sure you buy the right set of lights for indoor use, outdoor use, or both.
- Before decorating, check all light sets for frayed wires, damaged sockets, or cracked insulation. If you find any defects, replace the entire set.
- Don't overload your electrical sockets.
- Keep fresh cut trees well-watered and keep extension cords and light strings away from the water.

# Winter Safety Tips

## Fire safety:

- Never place candles near a Christmas tree or furnishings. Don't leave them burning unattended.
- Make sure you water your live tree - a dry tree, is a flammable tree. Ensure all decorations are fire retardant.
- When watering your live Christmas tree, make sure no water goes onto electrical equipment.
- Make sure your family and visitors staying for the festive period know what to do in an emergency, get them to practice your fire escape plan.
- Decorations can burn easily, don't attach them to lights or heaters.
- Switch off electrical appliances when not in use, unless they're designed to stay on. Take special care with Christmas lights. Always switch off and unplug Christmas lights before you go to bed.
- Celebrate Christmas and New Year safely. The risk of accidents, especially in the kitchen, is greater after alcohol is consumed, enjoy yourself but be careful!
- Most fires start in the kitchen - never leave cooking unattended.
- If you are planning to celebrate with fireworks, store them in a metal box, read the instructions, never go back to a lit firework and keep a bucket of water nearby.
- Make sure cigarettes or cigars are completely extinguished.
- Check the battery in your smoke alarm every week and use Christmas as a reminder to clean it and remove dust.
- Keep candles, lighters and matches out of reach of children.
- Take the time to check on elderly relatives and neighbours at Christmas - make sure they and their homes are fire safe.

Read Christmas safety advice from The Royal Society for the Prevention of accidents [www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/christmas-safety](http://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/christmas-safety)

# Shisha Pipes



## Shisha Pipes

Shisha pipes (also known as Hooka, Water Pipes, Hubble Bubble) are a source of carbon monoxide (CO). If a Shisha is being smoked indoors the carbon monoxide can quickly build up to the point it will affect the health of the smoker and anyone else in the room. Using a shisha pipe for one hour is the equivalent of smoking 200 cigarettes, they should only be used outside or in well ventilated areas.

Shisha pipes should only be used in well ventilated open spaces.



This booklet contains important safety information, if you need this information in another language please contact **0800 678 1894** or email **[info@torus.co.uk](mailto:info@torus.co.uk)**