



London Borough
of Hounslow

Hounslow Housing



Home Safety Advice

Hounslow Council Residents

The Following Home Safety advice is designed to keep you safe in your home.

Fire Safety Advice

London Borough of Hounslow takes fire safety very seriously. There is an ongoing programme of inspections carried out to ensure that risks are minimised. This leaflet contains advice for residents about how to reduce the risk of fire in your home and what to do in the event of fire.

If you live in a Tower Block your building has been designed and built with fire safety in mind. The walls and doors between flats, stairs and corridors are specially designed to resist fire and stop the spread of smoke.

WHAT RESIDENTS MUST NOT DO

- Do not change the front fire door to the flat.
- Do not remove the kitchen fire door.
- Do not wedge open any fire doors. This is dangerous – when not in use these doors must be kept closed.
- Do not store anything in the communal areas. Communal areas including the stairs must be kept clear of obstructions.
- If there are drying rooms they should not be used for storing any items.
- You must not keep, store or use any volatile or flammable liquid or gas products (e.g. paraffin or Calor Gas) or other combustible goods inside the property, any garage or shed that is integral to a building, or any communal areas. Any such items that are found will be immediately removed by us and the reasonable cost of removal and disposal will be charged to you.

WHAT RESIDENTS MUST DO

- Inform the repairs team if any of your doors or any communal doors in your building are unable to close properly or are damaged on **020 8583 4000**.
- Report anything being stored in the communal areas to Hounslow Housing on **020 8583 4000**.

DRY RISER INLETS AND LANDING VALVES

- In purpose built blocks of flats these are located in a small cupboard on each floor, usually marked 'dry riser'. They are designed to allow the fire service to have an immediate supply of water to the floor involved in the fire. These valves

should not be tampered with. Please contact the Hounslow Housing on **020 8583 4000** if you notice any problems with them or if they have been vandalised.

FABRIC OF THE BUILDING

- Buildings are designed to restrict the spread of fire and smoke by creating fire resistant compartments.
- Please contact the Hounslow Housing team prior to disturbing the fabric of the building for advice as you may release asbestos fibres and also remove the protection against fire and smoke spread.

SMOKE ALARMS

- Make sure you have at least one working smoke alarm on each floor of your home. If battery operated change the battery at least once a year. Some alarms are mains powered.
- Make sure you check smoke alarms on a regular basis, at least once a month by pressing the test button. If the smoke alarm is making a beeping sound you need to replace the batteries. Never disconnect or take the batteries out of your alarm.
- Some alarms are fitted with long-life or sealed battery units. Do not try to replace the battery for a 10-year long-lasting smoke alarm. After testing it, please report it to repairs as soon as possible.
- The Fire Brigade offer home fire safety visits and may even be able to fit a smoke alarm in your property for free. You can book a visit online at www.london-fire.gov.uk/homefiresafetyvisit.asp or call **0800 028 44 28**.

SMOKING

- It is safer not to smoke in your property.
- Do not smoke in communal areas.
- Try to smoke outside and make sure cigarettes are put right out.
- The London Fire Brigade report that smoking remains the third largest cause of accidental dwelling fires for the past five years in the capital and the single largest cause of death.
- Never smoke in bed, or anywhere else if you think you might fall asleep.
- Do not leave a cigarette or pipe unattended.

- Use proper ashtrays and never throw hot ash into the bin.
- Keep matches and lighters well out of reach of children.

E-CIGARETTES

- The London Fire Brigade report that switching from tobacco to vaping can greatly reduce the risk of dying in a fire as long as the manufacturer's instructions are followed. However, e-cigarettes are not risk free.
- If you are an e-cigarette user only use the charger supplied with your e-cigarette kit. Other chargers may cause problems with incompatible battery types.
- Do not 'mix and match' components between kits.
- Do not leave the kit unattended while charging.
- Once fully charged, remove the battery from the charger.

CANDLES

- Candles, tea lights and incense burners should only be placed in stable, heat-resistant holders.
- Keep candles well away from curtains, furniture and clothes.
- Do not leave candles unattended and put them out when you leave the room and before bed.

HEATING AND ELECTRICS

- Do not overload electrical sockets. Visit this site to check if you are overloading sockets this link to check if items are overloaded - www.london-fire.gov.uk/overloading-electrical-sockets.asp
- Faulty electrical goods can cause fires. Take care with second-hand appliances, and ensure they have been safely checked. A list of recalled products is available at: www.london-fire.gov.uk/product-recalls.asp
- You can register all of your domestic appliances to ensure that the manufacturers know who to contact if a safety repair is needed. The website provides quick access to the registration pages of over 60 leading brands of domestic appliances. www.registermyappliance.org.uk
- Sit at least one metre away from heaters.
- Keep heaters well away from anything that can catch alight.
- Switch off and unplug electrical items at the end of each day.
- Always use the charger that came with your phone, tablet, e-cigarette or mobile

device or a genuine replacement. Counterfeit electrical chargers can be deadly and many fail to meet UK safety regulations leading to fires and injury.
www.london-fire.gov.uk/overloading-electrical-sockets.asp

COOKING

- Never leave pans unattended when cooking.
- Ensure you always check that you have switched the cooker off after cooking.
- Don't cook if you are tired, have been drinking alcohol or taking medication that might make you drowsy.
- Keep the oven, hob, cooker hood and grill clean, and in good working order.
- Never put anything metal in the microwave.
- Never use a barbeque (BBQ) including disposable, indoors or on a balcony.
- If a cooking pan catches fire do not try to move the pan. Do not throw water onto the fire as it can create a fireball. If you can do so safely turn off the heat. Leave the room and close the door. Shout to warn others to get out, stay out and call **999**.

STAY SAFE WHEN YOU GO TO BED

- Close all doors as this helps to prevent fire spreading.
- Switch off and unplug electrical items such as TVs and avoid charging devices like mobile phones when you are asleep.
- Only leave essential appliances switched on such as fridge or freezer. Turn all others off.
- Make sure candles are out before you go to bed.
- Check that your cooker and heaters are turned off.
- Turn off and unplug electric blankets before going to sleep.

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

- If you live in a flat in a converted house or a Hostel and a fire alarm sounds please evacuate immediately.
- If you live in a purpose-built block of flats they are built to give you protection from fire. If the fire is in your flat or on your floor leave, shut the door and call London Fire Brigade. If the fire is elsewhere in the building remain in your flat, close doors and windows, call **999** and await rescue by the London Fire Brigade.

- If your flat is affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is clear get everyone out, close the door and walk calmly out of the building.
- Shout 'FIRE' to warn others and don't stop to pick up valuables.
- If the smoke alarm has gone off check closed doors with the back of your hand. Do not open the door if it feels warm, the fire may be on the other side.
- Call **999**, give your address, the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.
- Use the stairs and not the lift.
- If your escape route is not clear it may be safer to stay in your flat until the fire brigade arrives.
- Smoke can kill, get down as low as possible where the air will be clearer.
- Do not use balconies unless they are a recognised escape route.
- Find a safe room, close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke.
- Go to the window, shout 'HELP, FIRE' and call **999**.
- If you are on the first floor it may be possible to lower yourself from the windowsill to arm's length before dropping to the ground. First drop pillows or cushions to break your fall. If there are two adults one should go first to lower any children.

ACCESS TO THE BUILDING FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

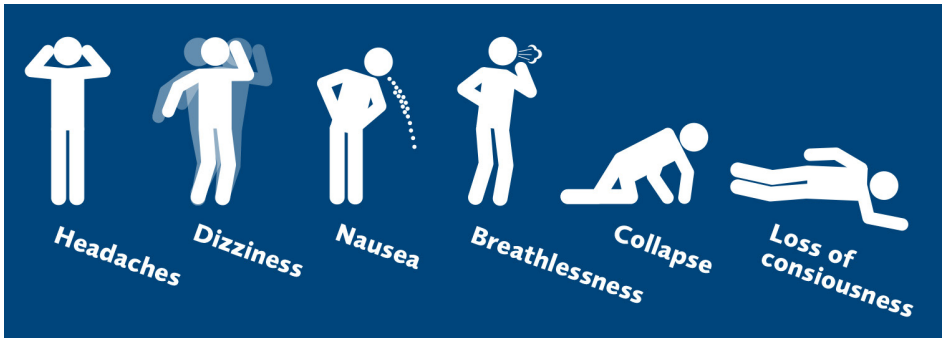
- The area around the building is designed so that emergency vehicles can access the building. Please make sure that this access is not blocked in any way.

CARBON MONOXIDE AND GAS

- If you are a council tenant with a gas boiler the council has a legal responsibility to service the boiler on an annual basis. You must allow us access to inspect and service your gas appliance and to carry out any essential work.
- Carbon Monoxide can be produced when gas appliances such as gas cookers, heaters, gas fires or solid fuel burners have been incorrectly fitted or poorly maintained. Never attempt to install, repair or service appliances yourself.
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that has no smell or taste and can kill quickly. If you have a gas boiler or use a solid fuel burner fit a CO alarm next to it.

- If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning or if your CO alarm sounds, get some fresh air immediately. Open doors and windows, if possible, and leave the building. You should seek medical attention immediately and explain your symptoms may be related to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If you suspect that there is a carbon monoxide or gas leak in your building call the National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999**.
- If you think someone's life may be in immediate danger call **999**.

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING SYMPTOMS



FIRE SAFETY

- For more information about Fire Safety visit: www.london-fire.gov.uk/FireSafety.asp
- And firekills.campaign.gov.uk

Home Safety Advice

ASBESTOS IN THE HOME

Your safety is important to us, so we want to explain why and what you can do if you are concerned about asbestos.

Asbestos has been widely used in a variety of building products due to its unique properties, which include its strength, stability under extreme heat or cold and resistance to chemicals and electricity.

Asbestos products were used in the building industry until 1999, when its use was finally banned. Buildings built prior to 2000 are likely to contain some kind of asbestos product.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral which has been mined and processed to produce thousands of different products. It is almost impossible to identify by just looking at it, the only sure way of knowing is by having it sampled and analysed.

Asbestos dust can cause asbestosis, mesothelioma and certain types of cancer, for which there is no cure.

If there is asbestos in your home and if it is in good condition, the best advice is to leave it undisturbed. If items do become damaged or deteriorate, then you and others may be at risk from asbestos fibres in the air.

DIY activities such as drilling or sanding may disturb and possibly damage products containing asbestos. **The danger from asbestos only occurs when it is damaged.**

Before Hounslow Housing undertake any improvements or major repairs to your home we commission an asbestos survey which is carried out by independent UKAS accredited surveyors.

When asbestos is found to be damaged or may be disturbed during planned or future works, it will be removed by trained specialised contractors. Should asbestos need to be removed from your home you will be notified accordingly.

If you suspect that asbestos containing materials are damaged in your home, you want to carry out any work to the property or you suspect that material may have been fly tipped please contact the repairs call centre on **020 8583 4000** or email repairs.team@hounslow.gov.uk

Home owners and leaseholders are responsible for any asbestos in their homes and are strongly advised to take sensible precautions and use the links below for the best advice on carrying out DIY work on asbestos. Always remember, if you cannot identify the material, then presume it is asbestos and seek professional advice.

FOR ASBESTOS INFORMATION OR ADVICE

www.asbestoswatchdog.co.uk/home

www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm

DAMP AND MOULD GROWTH:

Condensation, penetrating damp and rising damp are the three most common types of damp for residential properties. Each need to be treated in different ways.

Condensation:

Condensation is the most common kind of damp. It is caused by moist air condensing on walls, particularly in rooms with a lot of air moisture. Condensation can be exacerbated by poor ventilation and heating that comes on and off, as this allows warm, damp air to condense.

You may notice water droplets on windows or walls, see dark mould appearing, particularly on glass or around windows, and/or notice an unpleasant smell. This can provide ideal conditions for mould especially mildew which causes black patches on walls and fabric. If left untreated, condensation can damage paint and plaster and cause window frames to decay, so when you see it form you should wipe it away with a cloth.

Condensation can be reduced as much as possible by following some simple tips:

- Ventilation is needed in your home to get rid of moisture. Make sure that air bricks and double glazing trickle vents are clear and open and use the extractor fans in the bathroom and kitchen (don't switch them off / disable them). Bear in mind that these measures may mean that some heat is lost from your house, so balance that against the scale of the damp issue.
- Changing your heating regime can reduce condensation (i.e. having your heating on constantly at a lower heat can be better than having it switching from high to off). If you're going to do this, make sure you're on the best energy deal first.
- In the bathroom, always keep the door shut during use. After use keep the door shut and open the window or use the extractor fan to let the steam out.
- In the kitchen try using saucepan lids to cut down on steam escaping into the air. Cook with the door closed and the window open or (if you have one), the extractor fan or hob extractor system on.
- Dry clothes outside if possible. If clothes are being dried inside, a confined space with maximum ventilation should be used (i.e. in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or fan on). Tumble dryers should be vented to the outside (unless a tumble dryer is a self-condensing type)
- Allow adequate air circulation around large pieces of furniture.

Penetrating dampness:

A leak in the roof or gutter, rain water pipes, other pipes in the building or even the mains water supply as well as defects in the pointing of brickwork can cause penetrating damp issues. Defects of this sort can be relatively straight forward to repair once they have been tracked down, although the dampness may then take some time to dry out.

Rising dampness:

Rising dampness can affect ground floor rooms and is caused by water from the ground getting into the walls and floors, often because a damp-proof course (DPC) or damp-proof membrane (DPM) has failed or (in the case of many older buildings) because the property was built without such damp proofing. Residents are advised against piling rubbish or soil up against the outside of the house above the level of the DPC.

If you are a council tenant and a repair is needed to resolve a damp problem, please contact the Repairs Service on **020 8583 4000**.

LIGHTING

It is important that the lighting provided in your home is working to reduce the risk of trips or falls. If a light bulb is not working it is your responsibility to replace it. If you are a council tenant and your lighting (i.e. electrical circuits) is not working please report this to the repairs service on **020 8583 4000**.

PESTS OR INFESTATION

If you are a council tenant and you have a problem in your property with pests such as mice or rats or an infestation such as bed bugs please call the Customer Service centre on **020 8583 2000**.

SECURITY

If you are a council tenant and there are any problems with the locks provided within the property, please report this to the Repairs Service on **020 8583 4000**.

HEATING

It is essential that your property has an adequate means of heating. The heating should be controllable, safely and properly installed and maintained.

The system should be capable of maintaining the following internal temperatures when the external temperature is -1°C :

Living room 21°C

Bathroom 22°C

Elsewhere 18°C

If you are a council tenant and there are any problems with your heating please contact the repairs service on **020 8583 4000**.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Many accidents at home involve electricity. Please read the following advice:

- If you have electrical faults in your property report them to the council. Do not attempt to fix electrical problems yourself.
- Take great care with any DIY. DIY attempts result in nearly half of all severe electric shocks in the home. If you're not sure, don't DIY.
- Locate cables in your wall. A common DIY error is accidentally drilling, nailing or screwing things into cables hidden inside your walls. A quality cable detector can help you to track buried cables before you start work and avoid the risk of an electric shock.
- The main switch in the fusebox allows you to turn off the supply to your electrical installations. It should be easy to get to, so find out where your main switch is so that you can turn the electricity off in an emergency.
- Shut off the power. If you're doing any work near electrical wiring or power supplies, where possible, shut off the power in your fusebox and use battery powered tools. To be sure that power is off before beginning DIY, plug an appliance into sockets and try switching on the lights.
- Check power tools and watch out for the lead. Before using any power tools, check the lead and plug are in good condition. If you can see signs of damage (such as frayed wires) get the equipment repaired before using it. And watch out for the power lead at all times so you don't accidentally cut through or trip over it.
- Do not use appliances with worn or damaged power cables.
- Ensure that plugs and sockets are not damaged.
- Check that your light fittings are not visibly damaged and that downlighters are in good working condition.
- Keep portable mains-operated appliances out of the bathroom.
- Have electric blankets serviced and checked regularly.

- If an appliance appears faulty stop using it and have it checked at once.
- Make sure electrical appliances have a British or European safety mark when you buy them.
- Never overload an electric socket.
- Make sure that you are not storing combustible materials around your fusebox, electricity meter or electrical intake.
- Don't use the top of the microwave for extra storage.
- Never trail cables under carpets or rugs.
- If you have to use an adaptor, use a fused 'in line' type but don't overload it by adding extra plug-in adaptors or using high current appliances such as electric heaters. Know the limits.

If you are a council tenant and you have electrical problems in your property contact please contact the repairs call centre on **020 8583 4000** or email repairs.team@hounslow.gov.uk

HEATING AND COOKING

Safety is especially important when choosing and using heating products.

- When buying gas appliances look for the mark that appliances meet British Standards.
- Beware of second hand bargains.
- When arranging installation by law all gas engineers must be on the Gas Safe Register to work safely and legally on gas appliances.
- All fuel-burning appliances use up fresh air as they burn, and give off waste gases including the deadly carbon monoxide (CO). Never block air vents or airbricks and service appliances annually.
- Be aware of symptoms of CO poisoning such as drowsiness and flu like symptoms.
- Never block any outside grilles or rest anything against it.
- If a gas flame, which normally burns blue, burns orange this may be a build-up of carbon monoxide. Have your appliance checked immediately.



- Check the pilot regularly on gas cookers and water heaters to make sure it has not gone out.
- If you suspect a gas leak, open the windows, turn off the supply and call your gas supplier. Don't operate switches as a spark could ignite the gas.
- Always keep a special watch on young children and elderly people when fires and heaters are in use.

The kitchen is where some of the most serious home accidents occur.

- Plan your storage areas carefully so that heavy items are not kept on high shelves, and items in daily use are within easy reach.
- Take extra care with hot water, tea, coffee or soup. If there are young children around, they could get scalded.
- Keep panhandles turned inward so that children cannot reach them and pull them over.
- Use a cordless kettle or one with a coiled lead so that children cannot pull on them.

SAFETY WITH MEDICINES AND CLEANERS

Chemical preparations of any sort, whether in the form of medicines or household cleaners should always be treated with caution.

- Consider having a lockable cabinet fitted in the kitchen for medicines and chemicals.
- Keep medicines and chemicals in their original containers, clearly labelled. Do not decant medicines or chemicals into other containers.
- Keep medicines, chemical and cleaning products such as bleach, turps and caustic soda where children cannot see or reach them.
- Chemicals used in the garden, garage or workshop need to be used and stored with great care. Store them in a safe place where children can't see or reach them.
- Never mix chemicals.
- Always read the label.
- Never store aerosols in direct sunlight.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke whilst using chemicals.
- After using a chemical always wash your hands.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION

- Keep window blind cords out of reach of children. Research indicates that most accidental deaths involving blind cords happen in the bedroom and occur in children between 16 months and 36 months old, with the majority (more than half) happening at around 23 months.
- Take steps to prevent trips and falls. Ensure that your property is not cluttered. Arrange for damaged floor coverings to be fixed. Request extra hand rails if needed. Use non-slip mats and rugs. Ensure that your property is well lit and report any lighting that is not working.
- If you require adaptations to your home please call the Hounslow Council First Contact team to request an Occupational Therapy assessment on 020 8583 3100 firstcontact.duty@hounslow.gov.uk

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents has a wide range of information and advice about preventing accidents in the home www.rosipa.com

The Child Accident Prevention Trust provides advice to families to stop children being injured www.capt.org.uk

The NHS Choices website has advice on preventing accidents and protecting children www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/baby-safety-tips.aspx

If you need language assistance with this leaflet or would like a copy in large print or Braille, please call 020 8583 4000 or email customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Albanian

Nëse ju duhet ndihmë me gjuhën për këtë fletëpalosje ose doni një kopje me germa të mëdha apo në gjuhën Braille, ju lutemi telefononi numrin 020 8583 4000 ose dërgoni email te customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Arabic

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة لغوية لفهم هذه النشرة، أو كنت ترغب في الحصول على نسخة مطبوعة بخط كبير أو بنظام برايل، يرجى الاتصال برقم **020 8583 4000** أو إرسال رسالة بريد إلكتروني إلى customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Bulgarian

Ако Ви е необходим превод на тази брошура на български език, или бихте искали копие, напечатано с едър шрифт или на Брайл, моля обадете се на тел. 020 8583 400 или изпратете емейл на customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Farsi

اگر در مورد زبان این بروشور نیاز به کمک دارید و یا نسخه ای با چاپ درشت یا بصورت بریل می خواهید، لطفاً با شماره ۰۲۰۸۵۸۳۴۰۰۰ و یا از طریق آدرس ایمیل customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk تماس حاصل فرمائید.

Gujarati

જો તમને આ પત્રિકા માટે ભાષાકીય સહાયતાની જરૂર હોય અથવા મોટા લખાણમાં અથવા બ્રેઇલમાં નકલની ઇચ્છા હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને 020 8583 4000 (020 8583 4000) પર ફોન કરો અથવા customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk પર ઇમેઇલ કરો

Hindi

यदि आपको इस पुस्तिका के साथ भाषा सहायता की आवश्यकता है या बड़े प्रिंट या ब्रेल में एक प्रतिलिपि प्राप्त करना पसंद करेंगे, तो कृपया **020 8583 4000** पर कॉल करें या customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk पर ई-मेल करें।

Polish

Jeśli potrzebuje Pan/Pani pomocy językowej w zrozumieniu tej ulotki, większego druku lub alfabetu Braille'a, proszę zadzwonić pod numer telefonu 020 8583 4000 lub napisać na adres customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਨਾਲ ਭਾਸ਼ੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਜਾਂ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਕ ਕਾਪੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ **020 8583 4000** ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk ਤੇ ਈਮੇਲ ਕਰੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de asistență lingvistică în citirea acestui pliant sau doriți o imprimată cu caractere mari sau Braille vă rugăm să sunați la 02085834000 sau să trimiteți e-mail la adresa customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Somali

Hadii aad ubaahantahay cawimaad xaga luqadda ah oo ku saabsan xanshidaan ama (buugan yar) iyo hadii aad ubahatahay nuqul ka mid ah oo lagu soo qoray far waweyn ama mid lagu soo qaray qoraalka indholayaasha ee loo yaqaano Braille, fadlan soo wac telefoonkaan 020 8583 4000 ama qadka intarneetka noogu soo dir taas oo cinwankeeda yahay customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk

Turkish

Eğer bu broşürle ilgili olarak bir dil desteğine ihtiyacınız varsa veya büyük harfle yada Braille bir kopyasını istiyorsanız lütfen 020 8583 4000 numaralı telefonu arayabilirsiniz veya bu adrese email atabilirsiniz customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk.

Urdu

آپ کو اس کتابچہ کے ساتھ زبان کی مدد کی ضرورت ہے یا بڑے پرنٹ یا بریل میں ایک کاپی پسند ہے
یا ای میل customerservicecentre@hounslow.gov.uk یا کال کریں 02085834000