

A GUIDE TO FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME



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Emollient

English	If you would like this document translated or require an accessible format such as large print or braille, please call 0300 123 4000, and select option 3.
Kurdish	ئەگەر دەستوێت ئێمە بەلگەنامەیە وەر بگێڕدر ئێت یان پێویستیت بە شێوازێکی دەستگەشتن هەیە وەک چاپی گەورە یان نووسینی نابینایان braille، تکایە پێوەندی بکە بە 0300 123 4000، و بژاردەی 3 هەڵبژێرە.
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Fire Safety in your home

As a landlord, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils we are required by law to carry out fire risk assessments in residential buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises, and taking action to identify, manage and mitigate risks associated with fire within the common areas of buildings we own and manage. We have a duty to take general fire precaution measures to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of the people on our premises and in the immediate vicinity.

We will provide you with a tenant friendly copy of the fire risk assessment which can be requested via the e mail at the end of this leaflet. As a tenant you must cooperate with us and follow our guidance to ensure the safety of yourself and others.

What to do in an emergency

Evacuating your home in the event of a fire

Ensure you know what the evacuation procedures are for your home, so you know what to do in the event of a fire. Evacuation procedures for flats, blocks and buildings are explained on the fire action notices displayed in the communal areas.

It is extremely important you know and understand the evacuation procedures so you know what you must do.

If you have a fire in your home you must evacuate immediately and call 999.

Plan:

In the event of a fire, every second counts so it is important that you know your escape route. You should make sure everyone in your home knows what to do, so practice with them. Make sure keys are easily accessible and everyone knows where they are.

Practice using different routes, it could be possible during a fire your usual escape route is blocked, make sure you know alternative routes.

For further advice visit;

[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service - Suffolk County Council](#)

You may be eligible for a home fire safety visit, to see if you are eligible follow the link below

[Check if you're eligible for a home fire safety visit - Suffolk County Council](#)

Things you can do to improve fire safety



Fire doors

- Keep fire doors shut when not in use, do not wedge a fire door open at any time.
- Do not disconnect or tamper with self closing devices.
- Report any faults or damage immediately, for yours and others safety.

[more information can be found on pages 9 - 10](#)



Electric scooters/Electric bikes and Mobility scooters

- Store these outside and away from your home and escape routes, never leave them in communal areas.
- Do not charge in bedrooms or when you are asleep.
- Buy from a reputable retailer and follow the manufacturer's guidance on charging.
- Always charge during the day when you are at home – once your item is fully charged, disconnect it and turn the charger off.
- If your battery gets damaged – ensure it is disposed of appropriately.

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms weekly, if they don't work and are hard wired contact us immediately so we can organise a repair. If it is battery powered change the batteries.
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms once a week by pressing the test button.
- Don't move or tamper with any alarms fitted, they are there to keep you safe.



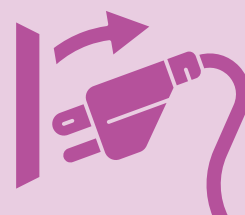
Communal spaces

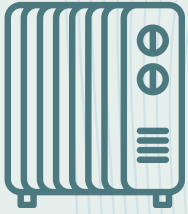
- Keep your communal spaces clear, items are not permitted to be stored in these areas. A safe route to get out of the building is needed in an emergency.



Electrical Safety

- Don't overload sockets, keep to one plug per socket.
- Unplug appliances when not in use or when you go to bed.
- Always use the correct fuse.
- Check and replace old cables and leads.
- Do not place cables under carpets and mats.
- Never carry out electrical work yourself, as a landlord BMSDC have specific responsibilities relating to electrical checks within your property, if you are unsure please check the tenant handbook.





Portable Heaters

- Try to secure heaters against a wall for stability.
- Keep heaters clear from curtains and other flammable items.
- Never use heaters for drying clothes.



Kitchen Safety

- Do not leave food cooking unattended .
- Keep electrical leads, tea towels and cloths away from the oven or hob.
- Switch off oven or hob when you have finished cooking.
- Never leave children alone in the kitchen.
- Take care with hot oil as it can easily set alight or cause injury if dropped when hot.



Cigarettes

- Never smoke in bed.
- Use ashtrays and empty to an outside bin regularly when cooled.
- Use child resistant lighters or matchboxes and keep out of reach of children.
- Take extra care if you smoke when tired, use medication, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Stub out properly and dispose of carefully.

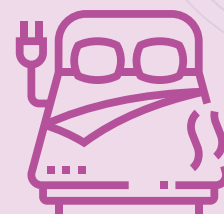
Candles

- Make sure candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire.
- Put candles out when you leave a room or go to bed.
- Children and pets shouldn't be left alone with lit candles or lighting materials.



Electric Blankets

- If your blanket has scorch marks/worn fabric/bare wires/a damaged or buzzing connector – Replace it, the general advice is to replace it if it is more than ten years old.
- Unplug at night – unless thermostatically controlled.
- Do not buy second hand.
- Do not fold. Roll or store flat.
- If in doubt, get it checked or dispose of it.



Storage of oxygen

- Some individuals require oxygen for oxygen therapy, you need to make us aware if you are storing oxygen in your home for our records, and so we might inform the Fire Service.



More information can be found on pages 11 - 14

Fire Door Safety

Fire doors are a very important life saving measure, they need to be installed and maintained correctly to ensure they will hold back smoke and fire to help save lives. Fire doors provide a level of protection as they are made from materials that work together to slow down or stop the spread of fire and will hold back fire for at least 30 minutes – some doors are rated for longer.

As with all fire safety measures, fire doors need to be kept in good working order and in good repair otherwise the door will not work properly. Here are some dos and dont's for fire doors.



- Keep fire doors shut when not in use.
- Keep fire doors free from any obstructions, the space in front and behind a fire door should always be kept clear.
- Report any fault or damage immediately, for yours and others' safety.



- Do not wedge open fire doors at any time.
- Do not disconnect or tamper with self-closing devices.
- Do not change or alter fire doors in any way, this includes decorating doors with signs or wreaths as well as adding coat hooks.
- Do not adjust or replace Fire resistant hinges.

Fire Door Safety

If you suspect a fire door is damaged or faulty do not attempt to repair it yourself, there are a few simple checks you can carry out to ensure your door provides the appropriate protection.

- Does the door fully close? Open the door halfway, let it go and allow it to close. It should close onto the latch without sticking to the frame.
- Are there large gaps around the door? Gaps around the top and side of the door should be consistently less than 4mm when the door is closed. The gap under the door can be slightly larger, but ideally you shouldn't be able to see light under the door.
- Are there any damaged seals around the door or the frame. These will be plastic or brushed strips imbedded in the door or the frame.



REMEMBER

If you notice a fire door is damaged, not closing properly, has a defect or you are simply unsure it is in good working condition, report it immediately. Do not attempt to repair it yourself.

Oxygen Safety

Oxygen safety is important for individuals who require supplemental oxygen therapy. While oxygen therapy can be lifesaving and beneficial, it also presents certain safety considerations due to the potential risks associated with oxygen use. By following these oxygen safety guidelines, individuals using oxygen therapy can minimise risks and ensure safe and effective use of their oxygen equipment.

Handling and storing

No Smoking

Keep all sources of ignition away from oxygen, including smoking, open flames, candles and gas cookers. Oxygen is highly flammable and can cause fire or explosions.

Avoid oil and grease

Keep oxygen equipment and surfaces clean and free from oil, grease or petroleum based products. Oxygen can react with these substances and ignite.

Store properly

Store oxygen cylinders in an upright position in a well-ventilated area. Secure cylinders to prevent tipping or falling.

Keep clear of heat sources

Do not place oxygen equipment near heat sources such as radiators, heaters or direct sunlight.



Equipment Safety

If you do use and/or store oxygen in your home remember to let us know for our records as we need to inform the Fire Service. you can do this via e mail at firesafety@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Use proper tubing and connectors

Use oxygen compatible tubing and connectors designed for oxygen therapy. Avoid using improvised or non-standard equipment.

Follow instructions

Use oxygen equipment and devices according to manufacturer's instructions and healthcare provider guidance.

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Oxygen

Inspect regularly

Check oxygen equipment regularly for signs of damage, leaks or malfunction.

Prevent tripping hazards

Arrange oxygen tubing and cords to prevent tripping or entanglement. Use tubing clips or holders to secure tubing along walls or furniture.

Personal Safety with Oxygen

It is important that you have regular discussions with health professionals and oxygen suppliers to ensure ongoing safety and support. If you have concerns or questions about oxygen safety please consult your healthcare provider for personalised advice and recommendations.

Wear cotton clothing

Choose clothing made of natural fibres like cotton. Avoid wearing synthetic fabrics that can generate static electricity.

Maintain distance from Electrical devices

Keep a safe distance from electrical devices that may generate sparks, such as electric razors or hair dryers

Train Family Members

Educate household members about oxygen safety, especially if they assist with caregiving.

Avoid electric blankets

Do not use electric blankets or heating pads while using oxygen therapy, as they can pose a fire risk.

Secure oxygen during travel

Ensure that oxygen cylinders are securely positioned during travel to prevent tipping or damage.

No petroleum based products

Avoid using petroleum-based skin products (eg petroleum jelly, oil based lotions) around your face or nasal cannula to prevent fire hazards.



Display Safety Signs

Display oxygen safety signs or reminders in visible areas to promote awareness. If you make us aware that you store or use oxygen in your home we will supply you with oxygen safety signs and guidance on the best place to put them, we can also, if required, put them up for you. To request signs contact us via e mail at firesafety@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Special note

If you have made us aware that you store/use oxygen in your home and you move to a new property, please let us know so we can update the fire service and our records.



Fire safety outdoors



Disposable Barbecues

- Always place disposable barbecues on a fire-proof even surface raise off the ground, positioned at least two metres away from the property, shed and fences.
- Follow the safety instructions provided and never use a barbecue indoors. Barbeques should only be used in garden areas, barbeques on balconies are prohibited.
- Make sure your disposable barbecue has cooled before putting it in the bin. Consider pouring water over it to make sure it's properly out.

Charcoal Barbecues



- Use only enough charcoal to cover the base of the barbecue.
- Follow the safety instructions provided and never use a barbecue indoors. Barbeques should only be used in garden areas positioned at least two metres away from the property, sheds and fences.
- Barbeques on balconies are prohibited.
- Stick to recognised fire lighters or starter fuel and only use them on cold coals.
- Never put hot ashes straight into a dustbin or wheelie bin - they could melt the plastic and cause a fire.
- Keep a bucket of water, sand or garden hose nearby for emergencies.

Gas Barbecues



- Change cylinders outdoors or in a well-ventilated area and make sure the tap is turned off.
- Follow the safety instructions provided and never use a barbecue indoors. Barbeques should only be used in garden areas positioned at least two metres away from fences, sheds and shrubbery.
- Barbeques on balconies are prohibited.
- If you suspect a leak to the cylinder or pipe work, brush soapy water around the joints and watch for bubbles - tighten to fix but do not overtighten. If there is any doubt, do not use it until repaired by a competent person.
- After cooking, turn off the gas cylinder before turning off at the controls to ensure any residual gas in the pipe work is used up.
- Store gas cylinders outside away from the barbecue, direct sunlight and frost. Gas cylinders are not permitted to be stored in communal areas.
- Don't store gas cylinders with combustible materials like rubbish or wood, avoid storing them in sheds.

Did you know?

BBQs can stay hot for hours, so be really careful moving them. They also give off poisonous carbon monoxide fumes for several hours after they go out, so don't bring them indoors, or into a tent, with you.



Chimineas and Fire Pits

- Don't place fire pits or chimineas too close to gazebos, sheds, fences, trees/bushes or anything else that could catch fire.
- chimineas and fire pits should only be used in garden areas, chimineas and fire pits are not permitted on balconies.
- Stick to recognised fire lighters or starter fuel and only use them on cold coals.
- Don't leave unattended and don't leave them to smoulder, ensure they are completely out before leaving them.
- Don't empty barbecue or fire ashes/embers into a dustbin or wheelie bin. If they're hot they can melt the plastic and start a fire.
- Keep a bucket of water, sand or garden hose nearby for emergencies.

Bonfires



- If you are having a bonfire ensure it is situated away from houses, garages, sheds overhead trees and cables.
- Never use flammable liquids to start the bonfire, never leave any flammable liquids in the vicinity of a bonfire.
- Never leave a bonfire unattended or leave children unattended by a bonfire.
- Keep a safe distance away from the bonfire to avoid any hot embers which may fly out.
- Ensure once you have finished with the bonfire that you extinguish any embers with water.
- Wait until the next day or until embers are cooled before disposing of them.

What do we mean by emollient and skin creams?

Emollient and skin creams are an important and effective treatment used to prevent or treat dry skin conditions like:

- Eczema
- Bed sores
- Ulcers
- Psoriasis

They come in a variety of forms: creams, lotions, ointments, gels or sprays . They can also include soap alternatives. They may be water-based, contain paraffin or natural oils. All cover the skin with a protective film to reduce water loss.

The emollient products are not flammable in, or of themselves. However, residue on fabrics such as bedding, clothing and dressings can increase flammability, even from just one application, they act as an accelerant, increasing the speed of ignition and intensity of the fire when fabric with residue dried on it is ignited.

Emollients and skin creams are especially a fire safety concern when used by people who spend extended periods in a bed or armchair due to illness or impaired mobility.

Understand the risks

Anyone using emollients or skin creams regularly should keep well away from fire, naked flames or heat sources. A build up of residue on bedding, clothing and dressings can increase flammability.

- Don't smoke.
- Loose clothing can easily catch fire – take care not to lean over a hot hob and roll up your sleeves if possible when cooking.
- Keep candles away from your clothing, including when lighting them.
- Sit at least one metre away from a heater – sitting too close could easily set light to your clothes or chair. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Be aware that washing clothing or fabric at a high temperature may reduce emollient build-up but not totally remove it.

How to report a damaged or faulty fire door, or that you store/use oxygen in your home

If you think you have a damaged or faulty fire door please report it to us as soon as possible after noticing a problem. When we receive a report, an operative will attend your property to determine the cause and seek to resolve the immediate issue. In some cases they may need to further diagnose the problem.

Please make us aware if you use or store oxygen in you home. If you make us aware that you store or use oxygen in your home we will supply you with oxygen safety signs and guidance on the best place to put them, we can also, if required, put them up for you.



0300 123 4000



firesafety@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

We value your feedback

We would love to hear your feedback on this guide to fire safety in the home. Please e mail us at housinghealthandsafety@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk with your thoughts.

To see our policies and read similar documents please visit our websites;

[Babergh District Council](#)

[Mid Suffolk District Council](#)

