



CLYDE VALLEY  
GROUP

# Customer Health and Safety Handbook

Version 3: January 2026

The help you  
need, **whenever**  
you need it.

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# USING THIS HANDBOOK



## What we will do

Pages or Boxes with a green outline and the 'what we will do' label contains information about what the Association is doing to keep you safe. These pages outline our responsibilities and obligations as your landlord.



## What you should do

Pages with a blue outline and the 'what you should do' label contain information about steps you should take to make sure that you and your family stay safe within your home.



## Important

Boxes with a red border contain important information referring to very urgent, potentially life threatening situations where emergency action is required.

# WELCOME MESSAGE

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Dear Customer,

Welcome to your Customer Health and Safety Handbook.

At Clyde Valley Housing Association (CVHA), your safety is our highest priority. We are committed to ensuring that every customer feels confident and secure in their home and community. Building trust in the safety of your home is a key objective for us, and we take that responsibility seriously.

In today's world, health and safety awareness has never been more important. Experience shows that when we work together, we achieve stronger, safer outcomes. That's why this handbook is designed not only to inform you about the steps CVHA takes to maintain safe homes, but also to empower you with practical advice and tips to help keep your household safe.

Inside, you'll find clear guidance on how we meet regulatory standards through regular inspections and essential maintenance, such as annual gas safety checks and servicing. These programmes are closely monitored, independently audited, and reported through our governance channels and to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

We encourage you to take a few moments to read through this handbook. If you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out using the contact details provided at the end.

Together, we can make your home, and your neighbourhood, a safer place to live.

*Carron Garmory*  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

# FIRE SAFETY



CVHA is committed to ensuring the safety of all residents, staff, and visitors by maintaining robust fire safety standards across our properties. As a responsible landlord, CVHA undertakes a range of proactive measures to comply with legal obligations and promote a culture of safety.

## To support this, we will:

- Commission regular fire risk assessments for all common areas in flatted domestic properties, carried out by qualified contractors. **It is very important that no items are kept on landings or in stairwells.**
- Ensure that fire alarms, emergency lighting, dry risers, smoke control systems, and fire doors are inspected and maintained on a scheduled basis. For example, fire alarm servicing occurs every six months, and emergency lighting undergoes annual discharge testing.
- Engage with customers who may require assistance during fire emergencies. This includes customers with disabilities or impairments affecting their ability to self-evacuate.
- Share fire safety guidance through newsletters, handbooks and our social media channels to ensure clear and specific communication.
- Ensure that fire extinguishers and fire blankets are installed, maintained, and accessible where required across our properties – particularly in amenity housing blocks, and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
- Ensure that all properties are equipped with compliant LD2 smoke and heat detectors, in line with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. These are also reviewed annually, ensuring they remain operational, interlinked and within expiry dates. Properties with detectors nearing expiry are flagged for proactive replacement.
- Ensure that flats in enclosed communal blocks are fitted with a fire door. Fire doors are essential to contain fire and prevent the spread of fire into communal areas. They allow time for residents to escape or the Fire Service to respond. Please report any damage or obstruction to fire doors immediately and never tamper with fire doors – they could save your life.

# FIRE SAFETY



While CVHA maintains robust fire safety systems and procedures, you play a vital role in ensuring your home and community remain safe. We have outlined below some important steps you can take to reduce fire risks and respond appropriately in the event of an emergency

## General Fire Safety Practices

- **Keep escape routes clear:** do not store personal items, furniture, or rubbish in communal hallways, stairwells, or near fire exits. These can block escape routes and increase fire risk.
- **Avoid smoking / vaping indoors:** smoking / vaping is a leading cause of domestic fires. Always use designated outdoor areas and dispose of cigarette ends safely.
- **Use electrical appliances responsibly:** avoid overloading sockets, unplug devices when not in use, and report any faulty wiring or appliances to CVHA immediately. Use chargers for devices (e.g. mobile phones, laptops, etc.) supplied by the manufacturer of the device – cheap replacements have an increased risk of catching fire.
- **Do not tamper with fire safety equipment:** smoke alarms, heat detectors, fire extinguishers, and fire blankets are installed for your protection. Never disable or remove them.
- **Fire retardant furniture:** ensure your furniture is fire retardant and keep combustibles away from any heat source.
- **Take care with candles:** keep an eye on lit candles – they should be on a stable surface, away from flammable items e.g. curtains, and kept out of reach of children.



**Around 48% of domestic fires start in the kitchen, and are most commonly caused when cooking is left unattended.**

# FIRE SAFETY



## Smoke and Heat Detectors

- **Test regularly:** press the button on your smoke and heat detectors monthly to ensure they are working.
- **Report faults:** if any of your detectors are beeping or not functioning, contact CVHA immediately for servicing or replacement.

## Fire Doors

- **Keep fire doors closed:** fire doors are designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke. Never wedge them open.
- **Report damage:** if you notice a fire door that doesn't close properly or has visible damage, notify CVHA so it can be inspected and repaired.

## In Case of Fire

- **Know your evacuation plan:** familiarise yourself with the escape routes and fire safety signage in your building.
- **Stay calm and exit safely:** do not use lifts during a fire. Use stairs and follow the designated escape route.
- **Call emergency services:** dial 999 once you are safely outside and provide clear information about the fire.

## Access for Safety Checks

- **Allow access for inspections:** CVHA conducts regular fire safety checks, including servicing of alarms and detectors. Please ensure access is granted when requested.
- **Engage with safety communications:** Read newsletters, handbooks, and notices from CVHA that contain important fire safety updates and advice.

# FIRE SAFETY



## Fire Safety in Communal Blocks

Living in a communal block means that your actions can directly impact the safety of your neighbours. CVHA is committed to maintaining safe homes and communal areas, but you also have a vital role to play in preventing fire risks and ensuring safe evacuation in emergencies.

If you live in a block with a shared stairwell, there are a few things you need to think about when it comes to fire safety:

### Keep Communal Areas Clear

- **Do not store personal items** such as bikes, furniture, or rubbish in hallways, stairwells, or near fire exits. These can block escape routes and increase fire hazards.
- **Avoid placing flammable materials** in communal spaces. This includes cardboard boxes, clothing, or any items that could ignite or obstruct movement.
- **Report issues of fly-tipping** and any unauthorised storage to CVHA immediately.
- **Report any issues with door entry systems** to CVHA promptly.
- **Keep bin stores tidy** and take excess rubbish and unwanted household items to the nearest recycling centre.

### Respect Fire Doors and Safety Equipment

- **Never wedge open fire doors** as these are designed to contain fire and smoke, protecting escape routes and buying time for safe evacuation.
- **Report any damage** to fire doors, extinguishers, or smoke detectors to CVHA immediately.
- **Do not tamper with fire safety equipment** such as alarms, extinguishers or signage.

# FIRE SAFETY



## Be Mindful of Everyday Fire Risks

- **No smoking / vaping in communal areas** – dispose of cigarettes safely and keep lighters and matches away from children.
- **Use electrical appliances safely:** avoid overloading sockets, unplug devices when not in use, and never leave cooking unattended.



**Fires in common closes are often started by discarded smoking materials or clutter left in stairwells. Even a single spark from a cigarette can ignite dry materials and spread rapidly.**

## Looking After Your Smoke Alarms and Heat Detectors

Smoke alarms and heat detectors are essential for early fire detection and saving lives. CVHA installs and maintains these devices in all properties, but you also have a responsibility to ensure they remain in good working order.

## Understanding Your Devices

CVHA installs LD-2 compliant smoke and heat detectors, which include:

- One smoke alarm in the living room.
- One smoke alarm in every hallway or landing.
- One heat alarm in the kitchen.



All alarms are interlinked, meaning if one goes off, they all sound. This ensures you are alerted no matter where the fire starts.

# FIRE SAFETY



## Tenant Responsibilities

To support your safety, you should:

- **Test your alarms monthly** by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds.
- **Do not cover or obstruct** the alarms with furniture, decorations, or paint.
- **Report any faults or beeping sounds** to CVHA immediately. These may indicate a low battery or expired device.
- **Do not remove or disable** the alarms. This puts you and your neighbours at serious risk.



**A working smoke alarm can cut your risk of dying in a house fire by half. Most fatal fires occur at night when people are asleep, making early detection critical.**

## Servicing and Maintenance

- CVHA checks all smoke and heat detectors annually as part of the gas servicing programme, carried out by our contractors. If your device is found to be expired or faulty, it will be replaced during the visit or as part of a follow up visit.
- You will be offered at least two appointment options to allow access for servicing. If access is not granted, CVHA may proceed to a forced access appointment to ensure your safety and maintain compliance.

## What's your plan?

Even with care, fires can happen. They can spread quickly, so you need to have a plan of how you would get out of your home, and make sure that everyone who lives there, as well as any visitors, are aware of it.

You can find an example of a fire escape plan on the Scottish Fire and Rescue web page: [www.firescotland.gov.uk/at-home/escape-plan/](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/at-home/escape-plan/)

You should check your route regularly to make sure that it's clear.

# FIRE SAFETY



## What to Do in the Event of a Fire

If a fire breaks out in your home or communal block, acting quickly and calmly can save lives. CVHA encourages all tenants to follow these steps to protect themselves and others:

### If You Discover a Fire

- **Raise the alarm immediately:** activate the nearest fire alarm point if available, or shout “fire” to alert others.
- **Call 999:** ask for the Fire and Rescue Service and provide your full address and details of the fire.
- **Do not attempt to fight the fire** unless it is very small and you are trained to use a fire extinguisher safely.
- **Leave the building immediately** using the designated escape route. Do not use lifts.

### If You Hear the Fire Alarm

- **Evacuate calmly and quickly:** follow the escape route and leave the building. Do not stop to collect belongings.
- **Help others if safe to do so** especially children, elderly neighbours, or those with mobility issues.
- **Close doors behind you** to slow the spread of fire and smoke.
- **Go to the designated assembly point** and wait for emergency services. Do not re-enter the building until told it is safe.

### If You are Trapped

- **Stay in a room with a window** and close the door.
- **Call 999** and tell them your location.
- **Block gaps under the door** with towels or clothing to stop smoke entering.
- **Signal for help** from a window using a torch, phone light, or waving a cloth.

# SAFETY IN COMMUNAL AREAS



Safety in communal areas is important to reduce unwanted access to the block and to keep communal areas (internal and external) free from hazards which could cause injury, catch fire or obstruct escape in an emergency. Our team carry out regular health and safety inspections of the common parts of our properties. If you have any health and safety concerns, please report them to us as soon as possible. Tenants are encouraged and welcome to accompany officers on estate and common area inspections.

What CVHA will do to keep you safe:

- **Fire Safety and Risk Assessments:** we will conduct regular Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) across all communal areas, including amenity blocks, Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), and commercial buildings.
- **Checks of Fire Safety Equipment:** We will conduct checks, inspections and servicing of core fire safety equipment e.g. fire alarms, emergency lighting, dry risers, smoke control systems, and fire extinguishers.
- **Routine Inspections and Maintenance:** we carry out consistent inspections of communal areas ensuring escape routes are clear, signage is in place, cleanliness, pest control, secure entry systems, recording of defects, etc.
- **Bin Stores:** are a critical part of communal safety and we enforce strict standards to ensure these remain clean, accessible, and pest free.
- **Tenant engagement:** Tenants receive a Health and Safety Handbook outlining their responsibilities. We also communicate regularly through letters and inspections to reinforce expectations.
- **Maintain door entry systems:** we maintain secure access to communal blocks through regular servicing of door entry systems. These systems are inspected to ensure entry panels, sensors, etc. are functioning and faults are repaired promptly. Any faults are flagged and escalated for urgent repair to prevent unauthorised access or entrapment risks.
- **Cleanliness of Common Areas:** we have in place cleaning contracts across key areas e.g. close cleaning, gutters, landscaped areas, bin stores, etc.

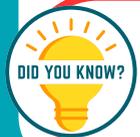
# SAFETY IN COMMUNAL AREAS



## What You Can Do to Keep Communal Areas Safe

At CVHA, safety is a shared responsibility. While the Association carries out regular inspections, maintenance and compliance checks, you also play a vital role in keeping communal areas safe, clean, and welcoming for everyone. To support this you can:

- **Report repairs promptly:** we encourage customers to report any damage or faults to communal areas – such as broken lighting, loose handrails, or malfunctioning door entry systems. Prompt reporting helps prevent hazards and ensures timely repairs.
- **Keep communal spaces clear:** to reduce the fire risk and maintain safe access do not store personal items (e.g. bikes, furniture, boxes) in hallways, stairwells, or bin stores.
- **Dispose of waste properly** and avoid leaving bulk items in bin stores. Use Council uplift services where possible to avoid communal charges.
- **Keep bin stores tidy** and take excess rubbish, unwanted household items to the recycling centre.
- **Respect shared facilities:** use lifts, door entry systems, and other shared amenities responsibly avoiding vandalism or misuse of equipment, report faults or suspicious activity and follow posted instructions and safety signage.
- **Avoid unauthorised access:** only allow entry to the close to people you know or are expecting where a door entry system is fitted to avoid unwanted access to the block.
- **Keep Communal Doors Closed:** keep communal doors closed and do not wedge them open as this could compromise the security of the block and/or allow fire to spread more easily.



CVHA's communal cleaning contracts are reviewed regularly to ensure value for money and high standards. Customers can help by reporting missed cleans or hazards – your feedback directly improves service delivery.

# GAS SAFETY



## Gas safety checks are vital for your safety and are required by law.

By law Landlords must make sure that all gas appliances, flues and pipe work are safely maintained and checked once a year. This is to ensure your home is safe to live in. Unless gas appliances are serviced regularly, they can become dangerous and can kill. CVHA must carry out a service before the anniversary date expires on the previous gas safety certificate.

- ✓ CVHA will ensure that every property with a gas supply receives an annual gas safety inspection, carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. These checks will cover all gas appliances, fittings, and flues provided for use, including those in communal areas.
- ✓ We will take all reasonable steps to get in touch with you to arrange a suitable appointment for your gas service check. We will offer at least two appointment options for gas servicing. If access is not granted, CVHA may proceed to a forced access appointment to ensure legal compliance and to protect your safety.
- ✓ We will carry out gas safety checks on all empty homes, and cap the gas.
- ✓ If additional works are identified during the safety check the contractor will call you to arrange an appointment to have the repair carried out.
- ✓ CVHA ensures our gas contractors are Gas Safe registered and are qualified to work on each relevant gas appliance
- ✓ All gas cookers must be fitted with a stability bracket. At each annual service a gas engineer will check that they have been fitted correctly.
- ✓ A copy of the gas safety certificate will be sent to you by letter or email within 28 days. Please keep this safe next to your appliance if possible, to assist with any inspections.

# GAS SAFETY



Gas safety is a shared responsibility between CVHA and its customers. While CVHA ensures annual servicing and compliance with all legal standards, you play a vital role in keeping your home safe and accessible for inspections. Outlined below are some key steps that you can take to support safety around gas systems and appliances in your home.

## **Allow Access for Annual Gas Safety Checks**

- CVHA is legally required to carry out a gas safety inspection every 12 months. As noted, you will be offered at least two appointment options. If you cannot attend, contact CVHA or our contractor immediately to reschedule. If access is not granted, CVHA may proceed to a forced access appointment to protect your safety and comply with legal obligations. Please note that appointments must be completed before the anniversary date (i.e. within a year of the last service).
- **If you have a prepayment meter**, please make sure you have at least emergency credit available on your electric and gas meter for our gas engineers to complete the gas safety check.
- **Ensure you have cleared the area surrounding your boiler** to allow the engineer easy access to the boiler.

## **Know What to Expect During a Service**

- A Gas Safe registered engineer will inspect all gas appliances and issue a gas safety certificate confirming the property is safe – you will receive a copy of this certificate within 28 days of the inspection.
- The engineer will also check your smoke and heat detectors to ensure they are operational and interlinked.

# GAS SAFETY



## Report Issues Promptly

If you smell gas or suspect a leak:

- **Turn off the gas supply** at the meter (if safe to do so).
- **Open windows and doors** to ventilate the area.
- **Do not use electrical switches or naked flames.**
- **If any gas appliances have been left on, turn them off.**
- **If the pilot light is still on and your gas appliances are all off, there may be a leak.**
- **Call the Scottish Gas Network immediately on 0800 111 999**
- **Notify CVHA** as soon as possible.

## Staying Gas Safe – Your Appliances

If you live in a flat, the law requires that any new gas cooker has a flame supervision device fitted to shut off the supply and prevent a gas explosion or a fire if the flame is extinguished. Make sure you check with us before you buy any new gas appliances. You must obtain written permission from CVHA to install new gas appliances – unauthorised installations may breach your tenancy agreement and pose serious risks. If approved, any new installations you have fitted must be fitted by a qualified gas engineer and a certificate forwarded to CVHA.

- **Do not attempt repairs yourself.** All gas related work must be carried out by a qualified engineer.
- **Do not install new gas appliances** without written permission from CVHA. Unauthorised installations may breach your tenancy agreement and pose serious risks.

If you suspect any problems with your gas appliance, please call us immediately.

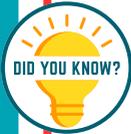
# GAS SAFETY



## Gas Cookers

All gas cookers must be fitted with a stability bracket. At each annual service a gas engineer will check that they have been fitted correctly.

The gas inspection will look at all gas appliances in your home to check they are working correctly. We shall repair any appliance that we own such as boilers. If there is a problem with an appliance that belongs to you, we will not carry out any repairs. Our contractor may attach a warning label to your appliance to warn you that it's not safe to use. It is illegal to remove this label and use the appliance until it has been made safe to use.



**Regular gas servicing not only keeps your appliances safe, it can also prevent deadly carbon monoxide leaks. Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless gas that can cause serious illness or even death. Annual servicing by a Gas Safe registered engineer helps detect and fix issues before they become dangerous.**

# GAS SAFETY



## Boiler Faults: Tips and Staying Safe

If your boiler stops working or shows signs of a fault, there are a few simple checks you can carry out before reporting the issue. These steps can help resolve minor problems and ensure your home stays warm and safe.

### Initial Checks Before Reporting a Fault

- Check your prepayment meter: if you use a prepay system, make sure there is enough credit on both your gas and electricity meters.
- Check for power: ensure there hasn't been a power cut and that the boiler is receiving electricity.
- Inspect the pilot light: if your boiler has a pilot light, check whether it has gone out.
- Try resetting the boiler: use the reset button. If you don't have the instruction manual, contact CVHA for a copy.
- Check the pressure gauge: when the system is cold, the pressure should be between 1 and 1.5 bar (usually indicated by a green zone). Do not overfill past 2 bar.
- Review the settings: make sure the boiler isn't set to "hot water only" or on a timer that's not currently active.
- Check the thermostat: set it to 30°C to test the boiler, then adjust to a comfortable temperature once it's running.
- Look for frozen condensate pipes: in cold weather, the external condensate pipe may freeze, causing the boiler to shut down. Pour warm (not boiling) water over the pipe to thaw it.

### Safety Reminders

- Do not attempt repairs yourself: if the boiler still isn't working after these checks, contact CVHA or our gas contractor.
- Keep the area around the boiler clear to allow engineers easy access during servicing or repairs.
- Report any unusual smells or noises immediately. If you suspect a gas leak, call the Scottish Gas Network on 0800 111 999.

# CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY



## What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, and tasteless gas produced when fuels like gas, coal, wood, or oil don't burn completely. It's often called the "silent killer" because it's impossible to detect without a proper alarm.

CO can leak from faulty or poorly ventilated appliances such as: boilers, water heaters, gas cookers and blocked chimneys or flues.

## Why is Carbon Monoxide Dangerous?

When inhaled, CO prevents oxygen from reaching your body's organs and tissues. Symptoms of CO poisoning include: headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, confusion, collapse or unconsciousness.

If symptoms improve when you leave the house it could be a sign of CO exposure.

## What CVHA Is Doing to Keep You Safe

CVHA takes carbon monoxide safety seriously and has implemented the following measures to safeguard your safety:

- We will ensure homes with gas heating appliances are fitted with a carbon monoxide detector and appropriate ventilation.
- We will test all carbon monoxide detectors annually by CVHA's gas servicing contractor as part of the mandatory gas safety check. Any faults or expired alarms are repaired or replaced during the service.
- We will respond to reports of carbon monoxide alarm activation as an emergency and if required replace the detector. Depending on the situation a CVHA member of staff or our contractor may attend and carry out an inspection to assess the fault. This may be escalated to our gas contractor to carry out a more thorough investigation where required.

# CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY



## What you should do to stay safe.

- Do NOT remove carbon monoxide detection alarms from your property – they are there for your safety and can save you and your family's lives.
- Report issues or activations promptly.
- Do not cover vents, they are there to ensure effective ventilation to prevent build-up of fumes.
- If your alarm bleeps intermittently this indicates a battery low fault or an alarm memory fault, which needs attention. Please call CVHA to have this rectified. CVHA have replaced all alarms to mains powered with 10 year sealed battery back up for your safety. Do not install alarms that have replaceable batteries in your home. Call CVHA if you have any alarm issue you are not sure about.
- If your alarm activates, switch off gas appliances immediately and open all windows to ventilate, leave the property to a well-ventilated area and report to Scottish Gas Network.



**Carbon monoxide poisoning leads to around 60 deaths and 200 hospitalisations each year in the UK – most of which are preventable with proper alarms and servicing.**

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY



As your landlord, CVHA has a legal duty to ensure that all electrical installations, fixtures, fittings, and any electrical equipment provided are safe at the start of your tenancy and throughout its duration. We need to carry out electrical checks and tests because electrical installations deteriorate due to damage, wear and tear, corrosion, excessive electrical loading, ageing and environmental influences.

The following steps are taken by CVHA to support electrical safety in our homes:

- We will carry out an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICRs) every five years for all domestic dwellings and communal areas and undertake any works identified during the check promptly. These inspections are also triggered by major upgrade works (e.g. kitchen replacements), significant electrical works and changes in tenancy.
- We will ensure that a copy of the most recent EICR is provided to you before a tenancy begins or after any inspection during the tenancy.
- CVHA does not routinely provide portable appliances in our homes. Where appliances are provided (e.g. in mid-market rent properties), we will ensure all items are tested under a Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) regime and that manufacturers instructions for the appliances are issued to tenants.
- We ensure that any contractor undertaking works in our homes are properly electrically qualified for the works they are undertaking.

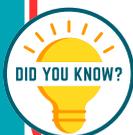
# ELECTRICAL SAFETY



Electricity is essential in every home, but it can also be dangerous if not used properly. CVHA encourages customers to follow these simple safety tips to protect themselves and their home:

- ✔ Do not overload sockets: avoid plugging multiple high powered devices into one outlet or using daisy-chained extension leads.
- ✔ Switch off appliances when not in use: chargers, kettles, and other devices should be unplugged to prevent overheating.
- ✔ Check for signs of damage: look out for frayed wires, scorch marks, or buzzing sounds. Report any concerns to CVHA immediately.
- ✔ Avoid carrying out your own electrical work: you must not attempt repairs or installations – work must be done by a qualified electrician.
- ✔ Allow access for safety checks: CVHA carries out EICRs every five years in all homes and communal areas. It is essential that you provide access for these inspections. If access is not granted, CVHA may arrange a forced access visit to ensure compliance and tenant safety.

**CVHA has supported hundreds of tenants facing fuel poverty by providing fuel vouchers, energy debt clearance, and direct financial support to help with topping up meters and paying bills during the winter months. CVHA has also delivered energy saving items and advice from dedicated Energy Advisors to help tenants reduce their energy costs and stay safe and warm. If you need help, please contact us.**



# ELECTRICAL SAFETY



## What to Do if You Lose Power

Power cuts can happen unexpectedly, but knowing what to do can help you stay safe and get your electricity back on quickly. CVHA encourages tenants to follow the following steps before reporting the issue:

### Check Your Home

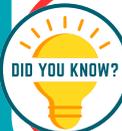
- Look at your fuse box or consumer unit: if the trip switch has flipped, reset it. If it trips again, unplug all appliances and turn them on one by one to identify the faulty item.
- Check your prepayment meter: if you use a prepay system, make sure there's enough credit on both your gas and electricity meter.
- Check your appliances: a faulty kettle, toaster or washing machine could be causing the issue.

### Check with Neighbours

If your neighbours also have no power, it may be a wider outage. Contact your electricity supplier or check their website for updates.

### Report the Issue and Stay Safe

- If the problem is isolated to your home and you cannot resolve it, contact us immediately.
- If you smell burning or suspect an electrical fault, do not attempt repairs yourself. Leave the area and contact us immediately.
- Use torches instead of candles to avoid fire risks.
- Keep fridge and freezer doors closed to preserve food.
- Turn off sensitive appliances like computers and TVs to prevent damage when power returns.



**Two-thirds of UK residents have experienced a power cut in their local area, with outages lasting up to 2.5 hours on average. That's why you should keep a torch, spare batteries, and emergency contact numbers handy – just in case.**

# DAMP & MOULD



Damp and mould can affect your health and damage your home. CVHA is committed to keeping your home safe, warm, and dry – and we have a clear process in place to respond quickly and effectively when issues arise.



Just by breathing a family of four can add moisture to the air equivalent to 30 to 40 litres (53 to 70 pints) of water a week.



Drying clothes indoors can add 10-15 litres (18 to 26 pints) a week.



Showering, cooking, bathing, and washing can add 15 to 20 litres (26 to 35 pints a week)

## Understanding Damp and Mould

Damp refers to unwanted moisture in your home, which can come from:

- **Penetrating damp** – caused by leaks through walls, roofs, or windows. This is usually recognisable by a damp patch or discolouration on the internal wall, or flaking paint or wallpaper. Some examples of common causes and signs to look out for are broken or blocked gutters or downpipes, or damaged roofs.
- **Rising damp** – moisture rising from the ground due to missing or damaged damp-proof courses. This is less common than penetrating damp as most homes have damp proof coursing (DPC) to prevent rising damp occurring. However, this can fail or be breached due to debris in the cavity, or the external ground level being raised above the DPC level. Signs in the home of rising damp are similar to penetrating damp, but it usually only affects basement and ground floor rooms.
- **Condensation** – the most common type caused when warm, moist air meets cold surfaces like windows or walls. This happens more in rooms where there is a lot of moisture, such as bathrooms and kitchens, or in rooms where there are a lot of people. Condensation also forms in cold rooms when there is little movement of air.

# DAMP & MOULD



Mould is a type of fungus that grows in damp conditions. It often appears as black, green, or brown spots on walls, ceilings, or around windows. Mould can affect your health especially if you have asthma, allergies, or a weakened immune system.

Other factors contributing to damp and mould can include poor ventilation, plumbing leaks, blocked drainage, or building defects.

## What CVHA is doing to keep you safe and how we respond to cases of damp and mould

- **Inspection:** We aim to have a Technical Inspector visit your home to assess the severity of the issue and take photographs to document the condition.
- **Diagnosis and Repair:** They will use tools such as moisture meters and airflow monitors to identify the cause and recommend appropriate solutions. In some cases, an independent specialist may be required to carry out a more detailed survey to understand the reasons for damp and mould. Remedial works will be carried out as required in line with our damp and mould policy, including by specialist contractors where necessary.
- **Clear communication:** you'll be kept informed at every stage – what we're doing, why it matters, and how you can get in touch.
- **Aftercare and Follow-Up Checks:** We will follow up with you to make sure that the issue hasn't returned and will continue to monitor the situation until both you and CVHA are satisfied.

# MANAGING CONDENSATION



## What You Can Do to Help Prevent Damp and Mould



- **Allow access for inspections and repairs:** this helps us resolve problems quickly and safely.
- **Ventilate your home:** open windows regularly, especially after cooking, drying clothes, or showering.
- **Use extractor fans:** if you have them in kitchens and bathrooms, use them to remove moisture. They are cheap to run and are effective in quickly removing moisture from a room.
- **Keep your home warm:** try to maintain a steady temperature, especially in colder months. It is better to have a constant level of heat throughout your home, ideally between 17°C and 21°C. Keeping the temperature constant will help control condensation and works out cheaper than constantly heating a cold home to the temperature you want.
- **Avoid drying clothes indoors:** if you must, use a well-ventilated room and keep the door closed. Avoid drying your clothes on radiators.
- **Keep furniture away from walls:** particularly external walls to allow air to circulate around them. Allow room in wardrobes and cupboards for circulation.
- **Keep lids on pans when cooking** and don't allow kettles to boil for longer than they need to.
- **Report problems early:** if you see mould, damp patches, or condensation, contact CVHA immediately.
- **Wipe down condensation:** use a cloth to remove moisture from windows and sills each morning.
- **Report any damage** or gaps in sealant around baths and showers.



**Most mould problems start with condensation. Simply opening a window for 10 minutes a day can make a big difference.**

# TOP TIPS FOR REDUCING CONDENSATION



Dry clothes outside if you can. If drying inside, put them in the bathroom with the door closed and window open/fan on. Any tumble drier vents should go outside (unless it's self-condensing).



Keep lids on pans when cooking, and don't allow kettles to boil for longer than you need to.



When bathing or cooking, use any extractor fans you have and open windows to remove the excess moisture from the air. Keep the doors closed to stop moisture travelling through your home.



Very cold rooms encourage mould to grow. It's recommended that you don't allow the temperature in your home to fall below 14°C.



Use trickle vents if you have them and dry the windows and window sills of your home every morning where condensation has formed. If the weather allows, open your bedroom windows for 10 minutes in the morning to let moist air escape.

## Don't forget!

Scan the QR Code to view our video for more information on protecting your home against condensation.



# WATER SAFETY



## What is Legionella?

Legionella is a type of bacteria that can grow in water systems and cause Legionnaires' disease, a potentially serious lung infection. It spreads through inhaling tiny droplets of contaminated water, often from showers, taps, or heating systems. People with weakened immune systems, older adults, and those with respiratory conditions are especially vulnerable.

## What CVHA is doing to keep you safe

- We carry out risk assessments of all properties and communal areas for Legionella risk. Where risks are identified we implement a written scheme of control, including flushing routines, temperature checks, and cleaning of water outlets like showers and taps, where applicable.
- We service and maintain key components such as thermostatic mixing valves (TMVs), calorifiers, water tanks regularly.
- We have approved contractors who are registered with the Legionella Control Association who conduct bacterial and chemical water testing and control on applicable sites.
- We carry out cyclical water checks to communal water tanks where required. This may require access to your property to access the communal tank. Any resulting works found during these checks will be undertaken promptly. Where applicable communal water tanks not required will be removed.
- During the empty homes process we will carry out a water pipework system flush and replace a shower hose, shower head and curtain (if fitted) prior to a property being allocated.
- We will maintain a register of all water checks carried out to ensure the effective management and monitoring of the water system process.
- We will ensure that any CVHA employee or contractor undertaking works in CVHA homes is properly trained for the works they are undertaking.
- We will ensure that your boiler is set at the correct temperature to prevent any risk of legionella.
- We will share updates with you through newsletters, social media and our website, including educational videos and guidance on preventing Legionnaires' disease at home.

# WATER SAFETY



Most of our properties have combi boilers, therefore have no water storage so any chance of legionella is kept to a minimum.

## What You Can Do to Stay Safe

- ✓ **Allow access for inspections:** we may need to inspect water systems in your home or communal areas. Please ensure access is granted when requested.
- ✓ **Run taps and showers regularly:** if you've been away from home for more than a week, run all taps and showers for at least two minutes to flush out stagnant water.
- ✓ **Keep water temperatures safe:** hot water should be stored at 60°C and delivered at 50°C. Cold water should be below 20°C. If your water feels unusually warm or cold, report it to CVHA. There is no need for you to alter the settings of your boiler for water temperature as this will have been set to a level to ensure your safety and will be checked as part of your annual gas safety check.
- ✓ **Report any issues:** if you notice discoloured water, unusual smells, or low water pressure, contact CVHA immediately.
- ✓ **Do not allow water to stagnate** e.g. when water outlets are not in regular use.
- ✓ **Clean your showerhead:** unscrew your showerhead and hose regularly and immerse in disinfectant for a couple of minutes.



Legionella risk increases in homes left empty for long periods. If you're going into hospital or away for an extended time, contact CVHA for advice on flushing your system when you return.

# ASBESTOS SAFETY



Asbestos is a strong, fire-resistant fibre that was widely used in buildings before 2000, especially between 1950 and 1999. It was commonly used for insulation and fire protection in construction and refurbishment.

Asbestos doesn't pose a risk if it's sealed, mixed with other materials, and left undisturbed. However, if it's damaged and fibres are released into the air, breathing them in over time can lead to serious health problems.

## **What CVHA is doing to keep you safe:**

- All CVHA properties built before 2000 are assessed for asbestos risk. Common areas and non-domestic spaces are prioritised for inspection and management.\*
- Where major works are required we assess the asbestos information we have for the property and where required carry out a further asbestos survey to ensure as far as possible asbestos is identified and taken into account when planning.
- Where day to day repairs are required we provide CVHA Employees and Contractors with the associated asbestos information for that property.
- We ensure CVHA Employees and Contractors undertake regular asbestos awareness training to identify issues on site.
- We carry out an asbestos check each time one of our properties becomes empty. A full survey will be carried out if the property has not previously received one.
- We maintain a register of all asbestos identified and assumed and where removals have taken place to ensure the effective management and monitoring of the asbestos safety process.
- If your home is known to have, or is at risk of having asbestos, we will let you know, and will tell you what you need to do to either ensure asbestos is not disturbed, or have it removed.

*\*Asbestos surveys and removal are carried out by our approved and licensed contractor.*

# ASBESTOS SAFETY



Asbestos is a material that was commonly used in buildings before 2000. It is safe if left undisturbed, but if damaged or disturbed, it can release fibres that are harmful when inhaled. As noted, CVHA has strong procedures in place to manage asbestos risks, but you also play an important role in keeping yourself and your neighbours safe.

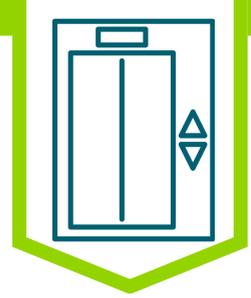
## What you can do to stay safe

- **Do not disturb walls, ceilings or floor coverings:** if you suspect a material may contain asbestos, do not drill, sand, or remove it. Contact us for advice before carrying out any DIY work.
- **Report damage immediately:** if you notice cracks, breaks or deterioration in areas that may contain asbestos (e.g. textured coatings, pipe insulation, ceiling tiles), notify CVHA immediately.
- **Avoid disturbing communal areas:** do not tamper with fixtures or fittings in shared spaces like stairwells, cupboards or service risers.
- **Allow access for inspections:** CVHA may need to inspect your home or communal areas to carry out asbestos surveys or maintenance. Please ensure access is granted when requested.



CVHA presumes asbestos may be present in any property built before 2000 unless confirmed otherwise. That's why it's important to avoid disturbing materials and always check with us before starting any work.

# LIFT SAFETY

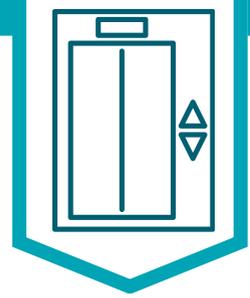


CVHA are committed to ensuring the safe operation, maintenance and inspection of all lift installations across our stock. CVHA takes a proactive and compliant approach to ensure that lift installations across our properties are safe, reliable, and responsive to tenant needs.

## What CVHA is doing to keep you safe.

- We will carry out checks of our lifts at least every six months, or more frequently if required due to operational changes or incidents.
- We will maintain contracts with certified lift maintenance providers to ensure regular inspections and servicing of our lifts.
- We will ensure that any defects identified during inspections are addressed promptly, and lifts are taken out of service if deemed unsafe until rectified and re-certified.
- We will ensure that emergency protocols are in place for lift entrapment, with contractors expected to respond promptly. In critical cases, emergency services will be contacted to ensure tenant safety.
- We will respond promptly to reports of issues affecting use or operation.
- We will upgrade and replace lift parts based on their useful life or where they require repair.

# LIFT SAFETY



While CVHA maintains a rigorous lift safety programme, customers also play a vital role in ensuring lifts remain safe and operational for everyone. To protect yourself and others when using lifts in our properties:

## What you should do to stay safe

- **Do not overload the lift:** always respect the maximum capacity signage inside the lift. Overloading can cause mechanical strain and increase the risk of malfunction.
- **Report faults immediately:** if you notice unusual noises, jerky movements, or any signs of damage, contact CVHA immediately using the details provided in your Customer Health and Safety Handbook.
- **Avoid forcing doors:** never attempt to force open lift doors or interfere with lift mechanisms. This can cause serious injury and damage the system.
- **Use emergency communication systems:** if you become trapped, use the emergency button or voice line to contact the 24/7 call centre. Do not attempt self-rescue.
- **Follow signage and instructions:** if a lift is marked out of service, do not attempt to use it. Wait until it has been inspected and cleared by a qualified engineer.
- **In case of emergency, stay calm and wait for help:** if trapped, remain calm and wait for trained personnel or emergency services to assist. CVHA's contractors aim to respond within one hour, and Fire and Rescue Services will be contacted if needed.
- **Do not attempt rescue:** only trained engineers or emergency responders should carry out lift rescues. Untrained intervention can result in severe injury.
- **Report vandalism or misuse:** if you witness unsafe behaviour or damage to lift equipment, report it to CVHA immediately.

# GENERAL SAFETY



Pest infestations – such as rats, mice, cockroaches, bedbugs, and wasps – pose serious health risks and can undermine the safety and comfort of you and your neighbours. These risks include gastrointestinal illness, asthma, allergic reactions, and psychological stress. Preventing and managing infestations is a shared responsibility between CVHA and tenants.

## What will CVHA do to prevent pest and vermin infestations

- We will ensure that properties are pest-free before a new customer moves in, including gardens and communal areas.
- Our checks of communal spaces include visual pest control checks in shared spaces like stairways, bin stores, and corridors.
- If pests enter due to disrepair (e.g. cracks, holes, broken vents), we are responsible for fixing the issue and arranging pest control treatment.

## What you can do to prevent pest and vermin infestations

- **Maintain cleanliness:** keep your home and garden clean to prevent pest attraction. This includes proper food storage, regular bin emptying, and avoiding clutter.
- **Report issues promptly:** notify CVHA immediately if you notice signs of infestation such as droppings, nests, or damage. Early reporting helps prevent escalation.
- **Bin store hygiene:** ensure bin areas are tidy and that you use the recycling facilities available. CVHA may not arrange pest control if communal bins are left in poor condition.
- **Minor insect issues:** you are expected to use appropriate treatments and maintain good hygiene.

Bats are mostly harmless and classed at worst as a nuisance. They also play a vital role in our ecosystem – and they're more common around homes than many people realise. Some bat species roost in buildings. Including houses, lofts, and even behind cladding. They don't cause structural damage and are generally quiet and clean. If you spot bats, it's important not to disturb them.

All bat species in the UK are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is illegal to harm or kill a bat, disturb a roost, or block access to a roosting site.

If you suspect bats are present, contact CVHA directly and we will provide you with advice and take any necessary actions to protect them and prevent any nuisance in your home.



# GENERAL SAFETY IN YOUR HOME



Accidents in the home are among the most common causes of injury, particularly for children, older adults, and individuals with mobility challenges. As a tenant, understanding the risks and taking proactive steps can significantly reduce the likelihood of harm.

Below is a short checklist to help keep you safe in your home:

## Fire Hazards

### Common Risks:

- Unattended cooking.
- Faulty electrical appliances.
- Candles and smoking / vaping indoors.



### Prevention Tips

- Never leave cooking unattended and keep flammable items away from heat sources.
- Regularly check appliances for damage and report faulty wiring to your landlord.
- Use flameless candles and smoke outdoors if permitted.
- Ensure smoke alarms are installed and tested monthly.

## Electrical Incidents

### Common Risks:

- Overloaded sockets.
- Damaged cords.
- DIY electrical repairs.



### Prevention Tips

- Use extension leads safely and avoid daisy chaining.
- Report frayed or damaged cables immediately.
- Never attempt electrical repairs – report issues to us immediately.

## Slips, Trips and Falls

### Common Risks:

- Wet floors.
- Loose rugs.
- Poor lighting.

### Prevention Tips

- Use non-slip mats in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Keep floors and floor coverings in good condition, free from slip and trip hazards.
- Secure rugs with grip pads or remove them entirely.
- Keep walkways clear and ensure adequate lighting, especially on stairs.
- Replace used or broken light bulbs at once.
- Keep stairs well-lit and free from hazards.



## Poisoning and Chemical Exposure

### Common Risks:

- Cleaning products stored within reach of children.
- Mixing chemicals (e.g. bleach and ammonia).

### Prevention Tips

- Store chemicals in locked or high cupboards.
- Read labels and follow usage instructions carefully.
- Never mix cleaning products unless explicitly stated as safe.



## Cuts and Burns

### Common Risks:

- Sharp kitchen tools.
- Hot surfaces and liquids.

### Prevention Tips

- Keep knives and scissors in secure drawers.
- Use oven mitts and turn pot handles inward when cooking.
- Allow appliances to cool before cleaning or storing.



## Child Safety



### Common Risks:

- Accessible outlets, cords, and small objects.
- Unsecured furniture.

### Prevention Tips

- Use outlet covers and keep cords out of reach.
- Anchor heavy furniture to walls.
- Store small items and choking hazards safely.
- Ensure cords from blinds are safety fitted to reduce risks and hazards to children.
- Do not override the window safety catch fitted on your windows.
- Keep children away from cookers.

## Elderly and Vulnerable Tenants



### Common Risks:

- Mobility-related falls.
- Difficulty accessing emergency help.

### Prevention Tips

- Install grab rails in bathrooms and stairways.
- Consider personal alarms or emergency call systems.
- Keep mobile phones charged and within reach.

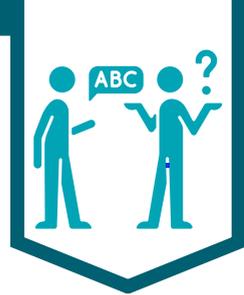
## General Safety Practices to Keep you Safe

- Report hazards promptly: inform us about any safety concerns.
- Keep emergency numbers visible: include fire, medical and our contact numbers.
- Participate in safety checks: cooperate with scheduled inspections and maintenance visits.
- Educate household members: share safety practices with everyone in your home.

Loft spaces are not designed for storage purposes. Any articles you store in your loft are there at your own risk. If we need to get access to your loft for maintenance work, you may be asked to remove any items you have stored there. If you vacate the property, ensure the loft is clear of items or you may be recharged by CVHA for disposing of the items. Also be aware there is potential fire risk in attics if you cover electric cables with combustibles.



# HEALTH & SAFETY JARGON BUSTER



Understanding health and safety language is key to staying informed and protected. Here's a quick guide to help you decode some common terms.

## General Terms

- **Risk Assessment:** a process to identify potential hazards and evaluate how likely they are to cause harm.
- **Hazard:** anything that could cause harm (e.g. wet floors, faulty wiring, pests).
- **Control measures:** steps taken to reduce or eliminate risks (e.g. installing handrails, using PPE).
- **Incident:** an unplanned event that could or does result in injury or damage.

## Housing Specific

- **Tolerable Standard:** a legal minimum standard that all homes in Scotland must meet to be considered fit for habitation. It includes 14 essential elements such as structural stability, freedom from damp, adequate lighting, safe electrical systems, and working kitchen and bathroom facilities.
- **SHQS** (Scottish Housing Quality Standard): a broader set of housing criteria introduced in 2004 and updated regularly. It includes the Tolerable Standard and adds requirements for energy efficiency, modern facilities, and safety. Properties must meet all five SHQS criteria and pass 55 individual elements to be compliant. CVHA must report annually on SHQS compliance and address any failures, exemptions, or abeyances.
- **Communal Areas:** shared spaces in a housing development, like stairwells, bin stores and gardens.
- **Tenancy Agreement:** a legal contract between tenant and landlord outlining responsibilities, including safety.
- **Void property:** a property that is currently unoccupied and may require safety checks before re-letting.
- **Pest Control:** measures to manage or eliminate vermin and insects in homes or communal areas.
- **Damp and Mould:** damp is excess moisture in a property, often caused by leaks, poor ventilation, or condensation. Mould is a fungus that grows in damp conditions and can cause respiratory issues.
- **Asbestos:** a hazardous material once used in building construction. If disturbed, asbestos fibres can be harmful when inhaled. Properties with known asbestos must be managed safely, and only licensed professionals should handle or remove it.

## Fire Safety

- **Smoke alarm:** a device that detects smoke and alerts occupants to potential fire.
- **Fire Risk Assessment:** a review of fire hazards and safety measures in a building.
- **Evacuation Plan:** a strategy for safely exiting a building during an emergency.
- **Fire Doors:** specially designed doors that help contain fire and smoke, giving people more time to escape. They must be kept closed and unobstructed.
- **Emergency Lighting:** backup lighting that activates during a power failure to illuminate escape routes and exits.
- **AOV (Automatic Opening Vent):** a system that opens automatically during a fire to release smoke and heat, improving visibility and air quality for safe evacuation.

## Electrical Safety and Maintenance

- **EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report):** a formal inspection of the electrical systems in a property to ensure they are safe and compliant. Required every 5 years in rental properties.
- **RCD (Residual Current Device):** a safety device that cuts off electricity if it detects a fault, helping prevent electric shocks and fires.
- **PAT Testing:** Portable Appliance Testing – checks to ensure electrical items are safe to use.
- **Reactive Repairs:** repairs carried out in response to a reported issue (e.g. broken lock).
- **Cyclical Maintenance:** scheduled work to keep properties safe and in good condition (e.g. boiler servicing).

## Hygiene and Health

- **Legionella:** a bacteria found in water systems that can cause serious illness if not properly managed.
- **PPE:** Personal Protective Equipment – gear like gloves, masks or goggles used to protect against hazards.

## Gas Safety

- **Gas Safety Check:** an annual inspection of gas appliances, pipework, and flues to ensure they are safe and working properly. Landlords are legally required to provide a Gas Safety Certificate.
- **Carbon Monoxide Detector:** a device that alerts occupants to the presence of carbon monoxide, a deadly gas produced by faulty gas appliances.

# INFOPOINT



## Need assistance?

There are several ways you can get in touch for support:

- In an emergency call **999**.
- If you smell Gas: if you have or suspect a gas leak or loss of supply, call Scottish Gas Network on **0800 111 999** (24hrs, 7days).
- Power cut: if you have or suspect a power cut, call the National Power Cut helpline on **105** (24hrs, 7days).
- Scottish Power (no electricity): **0800 092 9290**.
- Scottish Water (no water/burst pipes): **0800 077 8778**.

### Contact Us:



01698 268855



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