

A dramatic photograph of a firefighter in silhouette standing in front of a large fire at night. The firefighter is wearing a helmet and looking into a structure that is engulfed in flames. The scene is lit by the intense orange and yellow light of the fire, with dark, bare tree branches visible in the upper left corner.

lawsonthompson

PROPERTY SALES & LETTINGS

fire safety and
carbon monoxide

fire safety

Whether you are in a halls of residence or living in your first flat you will be responsible for looking after the property you are living in. That means keeping it safe from fire.

things to check **when you move in**

- Check there are working smoke/heat alarms in the flat and on stairs and landings;
- Check there are no bars on the windows and that they can be easily opened from the inside;
- Check for fire resisting labels on the furniture. Furniture made before 1988 may not be match/fire-resistant. It can catch fire easily and will give off toxic smoke.

If 3 or more of you are renting or sharing, the landlord must have a licence from the local council for operating a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). This stipulates that the home must have the following:

- Smoke/heat alarms to detect and warn of fire;
- An emergency plan showing the nearest exit;
- An escape route;
- Fire extinguishers.

In addition, tenants of HMO properties are required to check the operation of the alarms and fire fighting equipment on a weekly basis before signing the property log book (Lawson & Thompson will provide you wish training on how you are to check these and show you where to sign log book etc).

escape routes, escape plans and **assembly points**

1. Keep escape routes clear of rubbish, bikes, furniture or any items which could impede your escape.
2. Make sure you have an escape plan.
3. Know how you would get out safely in the event of a fire. Make sure you know the assembly point to report to outside.

Remember that if you have consumed alcohol and/or drugs your judgement and decision making will be substantially impaired and you and other residents/tenants will be at risk of fire and fire injury. In particular cooking or smoking whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol will place you at considerable additional risk of fire and injury.

avoiding **false alarms**

Most emergency fire calls to student accommodation are false alarms. Many false alarms are caused by carelessness or negligence and are easily avoidable. Some are due to deliberate actuations of fire detection and warning equipment, misuse or reckless behaviour that can result in the person(s) responsible being reported to the Police and/or losing their tenancy.

Firefighters answering a false alarm could be delayed in saving lives in a real fire. If you have caused the fire or alarm, make yourself known to the Fire and Rescue Service and explain the circumstances.

- Never use sprays directly under smoke detectors;
- Never cover a smoke detector head;
- Keep bathroom doors closed;

IMPORTANT NOTICE: *your lease agreement does not allow you to use candles / incense sticks or portable cookers / heaters in your rented property.*

Smoke alarms are sensitive and can be triggered by:

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- Aerosol sprays;
- Candles and incense sticks;
- Cooking fumes;
- Steam from bathrooms and irons;
- Smoking materials.

REMEMBER!

- **CANDLES ARE FORBIDDEN UNDER THE TERMS OF YOUR LEASE.**
- **ANY REAL-FLAME FIREPLACES ARE NOT TO BE USED.**
- **COMMON STAIRWELL AREAS AND ESCAPE ROUTES (BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE PROPERTY) NEED TO BE KEPT FREE FROM HAZARDS, COMBUSTABLE MATERIALS AND ANY OBSTRUCTIONS.**

leaving **home**

Wherever you are renting accommodation, you'll be responsible for looking after the place you're living in. That means keeping it safe from fire. It's not just for your own safety. You've also got a responsibility to the people around you and to the community that you're now part of. Fire safety is just common sense. And making sure you've checked out a few basics could be a life saver. You're looking forward to having a great time. Keep it that way.

hoax **calls**

Hoax or false alarm calls are sometimes called 'nuisance calls'. But nuisance calls are not harmless fun. Firefighters react to every alarm call they receive. If they're answering a false alarm call, they're not available to deal with a real emergency. That can cost lives. People who make hoax calls are prosecuted. The penalty is imprisonment, a fine or both.

scottish fire and rescue **official guide**

We would strongly recommend you conduct further reading on fire safety in the attached PDF:
http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/332072/your_guide_to_fire_safety.pdf

carbon monoxide

carbon monoxide poisoning: **symptoms**

You can't see it, taste it or smell it but it can kill quickly and with no warning. Unsafe gas appliances produce a highly poisonous gas called carbon monoxide (CO). It can cause death as well as serious long term health problems such as brain damage.

Remember the six main symptoms to look out for:

1. headaches
2. dizziness
3. nausea
4. breathlessness
5. collapse
6. loss of consciousness

Being aware of the symptoms could save your life.

Carbon monoxide symptoms are similar to flu, food poisoning, viral infections and simply tiredness. That's why it's quite common for people to mistake this very dangerous poisoning for something else.

Other signs that could point to Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- Your symptoms only occur when you are at home.
- Your symptoms disappear or get better when you leave your let property and get worse when your return.
- Others in the property are experiencing symptoms and they appear at a similar time.

what you should do if you **experience symptoms**

- Get fresh air immediately. Open doors and windows and turn off gas appliances and leave the property.
- See your doctor imminently or go to hospital and advise them that you suspect that you have carbon monoxide poisoning. They can do a blood or breath test to check your levels.
- If you think there is immediate danger, call the **Gas Emergency Helpline number on 0800 111 999**.
- Report the outcome of any tests to the landlord or day to day manager who will need to arrange for a Gas Safe registered engineer to inspect all the gas appliances and flues.

what is **carbon monoxide**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly poisonous substance produced by the incomplete burning of gas and Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG). This happens when a gas appliance has been incorrectly fitted, badly repaired or poorly maintained. It can also occur if flues, chimneys or vents are blocked. Oil and solid fuels such as coal, wood, petrol and oil can also produce carbon monoxide.

what is **carbon monoxide poisoning**

Carbon monoxide poisoning occurs when you breathe in even small amounts of the gas. When you breathe in carbon monoxide, it gets into your blood stream and prevents your red blood cells from carrying oxygen. Without oxygen, your body tissue and cells die. Levels that do not kill can cause serious harm to health when breathed in over a long period of time. Long term effects of carbon monoxide poisoning include paralysis and brain damage. Such long term effects occur because many people are unaware of unsafe gas appliances and subsequent gas leaks.