



Fire Safety Handbook

Understanding the importance
of fire safety in your home.

Everyone has a place

Radius
HOUSING

A photograph of a laundry room with a washing machine, a clothes rack, and a pile of laundry on the floor, overlaid with safety text. The scene is dimly lit with a warm, orange glow. A washing machine is the central focus, with a clothes rack in front of it. A pile of laundry is on the floor to the right. The text is white and bold, positioned in the lower-left quadrant.

**Remember,
if in doubt:
Get out.
Stay out.
Call 999.**

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Fire Safety: A Shared Responsibility

Data shows that those living in rented properties are statistically more likely to experience a fire.

Radius is dedicated to maintaining safe homes, but fire safety is a shared responsibility between us and you, our tenant.

Please Speak Up About Your Concerns

Please don't assume Radius is aware of potential fire safety issues, even if you think it's our responsibility.

Contact us directly with any concerns, and we will provide clear guidance on who needs to take action.

Reach Out with Any Questions

If you have any concerns about these fire safety aspects, please contact our Customer Service Centre on: 0330 123 0888

Your cooperation with these fire safety measures is a condition of your tenancy.

More significantly, non-compliance can have devastating consequences, risking both your life and the lives of those around you.

Our Responsibilities

What Radius is responsible for:

Safe Escape Routes

As mandated by the Housing Order (Northern Ireland) 2003, Radius ensures adequate escape routes are in place for all our properties, tailored to the specific building type.

Apartment Block Fire Safety

In apartment blocks, Radius may also be required to install smoke detection systems and provide fire extinguishers in designated risk areas.

Identifying Tenant Needs

We are committed to understanding if any tenant has a disability or condition that may impact their ability to evacuate safely during a fire.

Gas Appliance Maintenance

Radius is legally obligated to maintain all gas appliances we provide and arrange an annual safety check and service by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Electrical System Safety

We are responsible for maintaining the fixed electrical wiring and any electrical appliances we supply (like cookers and kettles) to ensure they are safe to use.

Fire-Safe Furnishings

All furniture and furnishings provided by Radius meet the required fire resistance or retardant standards.

Communal Fire Safety Systems

Radius maintains communal fire alarms and emergency lighting systems where installed.

Fire Risk Assessments

Radius conducts Fire Risk Assessments for specific types of properties.

Your Responsibilities

As a tenant of Radius, your cooperation is vital in maintaining a safe living environment for yourself, your family, visitors, and neighbours.

Please adhere to the following responsibilities:

Maintaining Clear Escape Routes

- Keep all escape routes within your home and communal areas completely clear of obstructions. This includes hallways, landings, and any paths leading to exits.
- Ensure areas below escape windows are unobstructed to allow for emergency escape if necessary.
- Never wedge fire doors open or remove door closers where they are fitted. These are crucial for preventing the spread of fire and smoke.
- Do not place mats or furniture outside your apartment door in communal hallways, as these can be trip hazards and obstruct escape routes.
- Do not block stairwells at any time.

Protecting Fire Safety Equipment

- Never remove or interfere with any fire safety equipment installed in your home or communal areas. This equipment is there to save lives.
- Do not cover, remove, or disconnect smoke, heat, or carbon monoxide detectors. These are essential early warning systems.
- Test domestic smoke and heat detectors regularly as instructed, and replace batteries promptly when necessary.
- Contact us immediately if any fire safety equipment appears to be faulty.
- Co-operate fully when Radius or our contractors require access for testing gas appliances, oil appliances, electrical systems, and fire alarm systems.
- Co-operate fully when the main fire alarm system and emergency lighting (where fitted) are being tested.

Providing Important Information to Radius

- Advise us if you intend to store medical gases such as oxygen in your home so we can take necessary safety precautions and provide appropriate advice.
- Advise us immediately if you are unable to self-evacuate from your home in the event of a fire so we can understand your needs and any potential support required.
- Speak to your Housing Officer if you intend to purchase or store a mobility scooter as this may have implications for fire safety and storage.

Safe Use of Appliances and Substances

- Do not use portable gas heaters (Supersers) or paraffin heaters in your home due to the significant fire and carbon monoxide risks.
- Do not replace or alter doors, such as fitting letter boxes, without first consulting Radius. This is to ensure fire safety integrity is maintained.
- Do not replace thumb-turn locks with keyed locks on internal doors, as this can impede quick escape in an emergency.
- Take extra care when cooking, decorating, and using any potential ignition sources to avoid unwanted fire alarm activations.

Storage and General Housekeeping

- Do not store or dump any items in the communal areas of apartment blocks. These areas must remain clear for access and in case of emergency.
- Keep your home clean and tidy. Pay particular attention to keeping your cooker clean and free from excess grease and oil, which can easily ignite.
- Do not hoard items as this can obstruct your escape routes, prevent access for the Fire and Rescue Service, and increase the likelihood and severity of fires.
- If you have and use an open fire, you must ensure the chimney is swept regularly by a qualified professional to prevent chimney fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Keep Visitors to your apartment safe in an Emergency

- Stay with your visitors at all times. Be aware that visitors with disabilities may require your assistance during a fire evacuation.
- Remember: Lifts cannot be used for evacuation in a fire.
- If you or your visitor cannot use the stairway to evacuate and the fire is elsewhere in the building, remain in your flat and call for help. Your flat is designed to offer a period of fire resistance.
- If the fire is in your flat and you cannot use the stairway, proceed to a designated disabled refuge point (usually at the top of the stairwell) if one is provided.

Insurance

- Ensure you have adequate home contents insurance to cover your belongings in case of fire or other incidents.

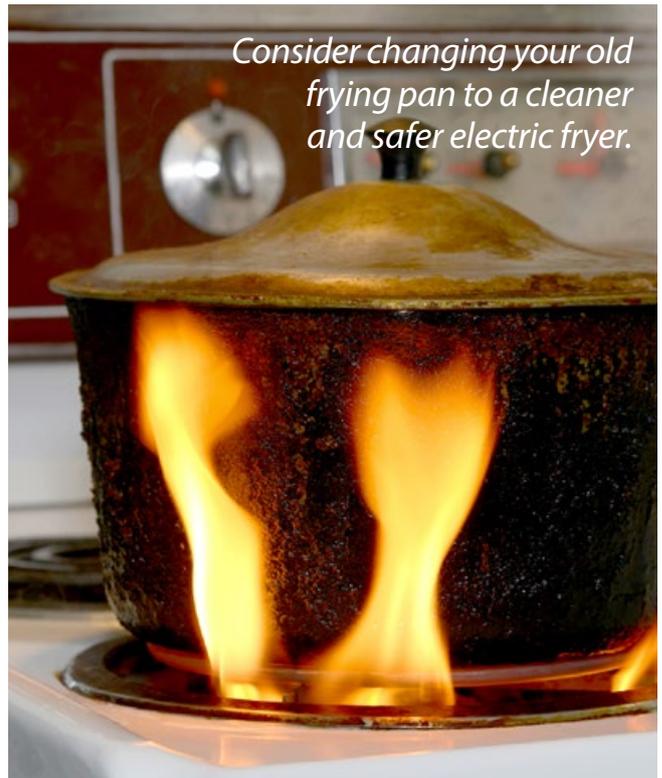
By adhering to these responsibilities, you play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone in our community. If you have any questions or concerns about fire safety, please do not hesitate to contact Radius.

Safety in the Kitchen

More accidental fires and fire injuries occur in the kitchen than anywhere else in the home.

Many kitchen fires happen when people become distracted and leave cooking unattended. Fires can also occur whilst cooking under the influence of alcohol, or medication that makes you drowsy.

- **Dress safely**
Avoid loose clothing and tie back long hair while cooking.
- **Clear the area**
Keep electrical cords, tea towels, and cloths away from the stovetop.
- **Supervise children**
Never leave children unattended in the kitchen.
- **Secure hazards**
Store matches, lighters, and saucepan handles out of children's reach. Use oven door safety catches.
- **Handle with care**
Turn saucepan handles inward, away from the stovetop edge and flames.
- **Keep it clean**
Regularly clean the oven, stovetop, toaster, and grill to prevent grease and crumb buildup.
- **Never leave unattended**
Do not leave cooking food on the stovetop unattended. Remove it from the heat if you must leave the kitchen.
- **Use safe ignition**
Use spark devices, not matches or lighters, for gas cookers.
- **Microwave safety**
Never put metal or metallic items in the microwave. Always switch off the oven and stovetop after use.
- **Cook responsibly**
Avoid cooking if you've consumed alcohol or taken medication/drugs that cause drowsiness.
- **Outdoor cooking**
Never use barbecues indoors.



Consider changing your old frying pan to a cleaner and safer electric fryer.

Deep Frying

- **Electric Fryers are Safer**
For regular deep-frying, an electric fryer with a thermostat significantly reduces the risk of fire.
- **Prevent Splashing**
Ensure food is dry before adding it to hot oil.
- **Oil Level and Temperature**
Never fill a pan more than one-third with oil. If it smokes, it's too hot – turn off the heat immediately.

PAN FIRE RESPONSE

GET OUT, STAY OUT, CALL 999

Your safety is paramount.

Evacuate everyone and call the Fire and Rescue Service on 999.

IF SAFE TO DO SO:

- **Smother the flames**
If it's **safe to do so**, turn off the heat and carefully cover the pan with a metal lid, fire blanket, or damp cloth. Let it cool completely.
- **NEVER use water on a grease fire.**
- **Avoid Contact**
Never lean over hot or burning oil.



Treat Burns Quickly



- **Major Burns**
For burns larger than a postage stamp, seek immediate medical attention.
- **Initial Treatment**
For all burns, run under cool water for at least 10 minutes.
- **Covering the Burn**
Use a clean, non-fluffy dressing (like cling film) to protect the burn.

Using Electrics and Appliances

Plugs & Cables

- **Unplug to be safe**
Always disconnect appliances from the power when they are not in use.
- **Avoid overloading**
One plug per socket is the safest practice.
- **Use adaptors wisely**
If an adaptor is necessary, choose a fused bar type and never exceed its 13-amp limit (be aware that a kettle can reach this).
- **High power needs single sockets**
Washing machines and electric heaters are high-demand appliances and must have their own dedicated socket.
- **Don't hide cables**
Running cables under carpets or mats can cause unseen damage – keep them visible.
- **Right fuse, right appliance**
Always ensure the plug contains the correct fuse for the appliance.
- **Beware of damage**
Regularly inspect wiring and plugs for looseness, fraying, scorch marks, or flickering lights – these are signs of danger.
Get them fixed by a professional immediately. Exposed inner colored wires (blue, red, green/yellow) indicate a serious problem.
- **Damaged leads are dangerous**
Replace or have worn or taped-up cables professionally repaired.
- **Water and electricity don't mix**
Never use standard electrical appliances in bathrooms or wet areas. Use only those specifically designed for such environments.



Electric Blankets

- **Never fold**
Folding electric blankets can damage the internal wiring and create a fire risk.
- **Store flat or rolled**
This is the only safe way to store them and protect the wiring.
- **Thermostatic control for overnight use**
Only leave a thermostatically controlled blanket on all night. Always check the manufacturer's guidelines.
- **Keep away from moisture**
Never use if damp or touch with wet hands.
- **Avoid trapping**
Do not use when folded, tucked in tightly, or creased. This can cause overheating.
- **No hot water bottles**
Never use an electric blanket in conjunction with a hot water bottle.
- **Not for air flow beds**
Do not use on air flow pressure relief beds.
- **Inspect regularly**
Check for any damage or wear. If in doubt, replace it immediately.
- **Age matters**
Replace blankets over 10 years old. Frequent use may need replacement after just three years.
- **Trust the Kitemark & BEAB symbol**
Ensure your electric blanket displays the British Standard Kitemark and the BEAB symbol, indicating it has been tested for safety.



Intertek

Appliances & Chargers

- **The danger of counterfeits**
Using non-genuine or poor-quality appliances and chargers is a serious fire hazard. Always choose authentic products from trusted sources.
- **CE mark caution**
Be aware that counterfeiters can fake the CE mark. Rely on reputable sellers.
- **Limit charging time**
Avoid leaving devices charging unattended, particularly overnight, to mitigate overheating risks.
- **Heatproof charging areas**
Always charge devices on surfaces that cannot catch fire or be damaged by heat.



Lights

- **Fire risk from hot bulbs**
Traditional light bulbs can become very hot, posing a fire hazard if placed near fabrics like curtains. Maintain a safe distance.
- **Switch to cooler, efficient options**
LED and compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs are much cooler to the touch, use less energy, and can help reduce your electricity costs.
- **Wattage limits are crucial**
Exceeding the maximum wattage rating for your light fitting or lampshade can lead to overheating and potentially a fire. Always check and adhere to these limits.



Portable Heaters

- **Position heaters safely**
Always place heaters with their back against a wall and the front facing into the room. If possible, securely mount them to the wall to prevent accidental tipping.
- **Keep away from combustibles**
Never place heaters near curtains, furniture, or any flammable materials. Do not use them to dry clothes.
- **Never block vents**
Ensure air vents on fan or convector heaters are never covered.
- **Switch off when unattended**
Always turn heaters off when you leave the room and before going to bed.
- **Prohibited heaters (Tenancy Condition)**
Paraffin heaters and bottled gas heaters are strictly prohibited in your tenancy.

These pose a significant fire risk, produce condensation, and can cause dangerous carbon monoxide poisoning.

Tumble Dryers

- **Installation and Ventilation**
Non-condensing tumble dryers must be properly ducted to the exterior. Ensure correct installation for safe operation.
- **Never Leave Unattended**
Tumble dryers should only be used when someone is home and awake to monitor them.
- **Lint is a Fire Hazard**
Clean the lint filter after each drying cycle without fail. This simple step drastically reduces the risk of fire.
- **Respect Capacity Limits**
Overloading can cause the dryer to overheat and potentially catch fire. Adhere to the manufacturer's guidelines.
- **Complete the Full Cycle**
Interrupting a drying program can leave items hot and increase the risk of spontaneous combustion.
Always let the cool-down cycle finish.
- **If Stopping Early, Empty Immediately**
If you have to stop a cycle prematurely, remove all items quickly and prop the door open to dissipate heat.
- **Oil and Grease are Highly Flammable**
Never put clothing contaminated with oils or grease in the tumble dryer. Wash them thoroughly first.
- **Power Down When Idle**
Switch off the tumble dryer at the wall when it's not in use for added safety.



Defective Electrical Appliances & Manufacturer Recalls

Faulty electrical items are a major cause of fires in homes. Any electrical appliance can be a fire risk.

- **Check for recalls**
Regularly check product recalls by visiting [electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls](https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls) to see if any of your appliances have been recalled due to safety concerns.
- **Register your appliances**
We strongly encourage you to register all new and existing electrical appliances at www.registermyappliance.org.uk.
This allows manufacturers to directly contact you about essential safety repairs or recalls affecting your specific appliance.

What to do in the event of an electrical fire

- **CUT THE POWER**
Immediately unplug the appliance or switch off the electricity at the fuse box.
- **SMOTHER OR USE CO2** (If Safe)
If you can do so safely, use a fire blanket to smother the fire or a CO2 extinguisher.
- **WATER IS DANGEROUS**
Absolutely never use water or water-based extinguishers on an electrical fire.



ALWAYS REMEMBER, SAFETY FIRST - EVACUATE AND CALL 999.

If you're unsure or the fire is spreading, get everyone out and call the Fire and Rescue Service immediately on 999

Gas Appliances

Connected to a Fixed Supply Pipework

Around 30 people die each year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from unsafe gas appliances.

You can't always see, smell, or taste it – it's deadly.

Give Access for FREE Annual Servicing

Radius services all gas appliances annually for FREE.

It is essential for the safety of you, your family and those living nearby that you cooperate fully when contacted by our staff or Gas Safe registered contractors to provide access.

Not providing access may put your tenancy at risk.

- **Your Annual Responsibility (Your Appliances)**
If you fitted gas appliances with our approval, you must arrange their annual service by a Gas Safe engineer.
- **Get Permission First**
You must request permission in writing from Radius to install and fit gas appliances.



Smoking

Smoking is the **leading** cause of **fire** related deaths in **homes**, surpassing any **other** single factor.

Increased Risk Factors

Your risk of causing a fire while smoking significantly increases when you are tired, under the influence of medication, or have been drinking alcohol.

Avoid Smoking While Lying Down

Never smoke in bed or on a sofa. Falling asleep with a lit cigarette is a leading cause of house fires.

Unattended Smoking is Dangerous

Never leave lit cigarettes, cigars, or pipes unattended. They can easily fall and ignite nearby flammable materials.

Extinguish Thoroughly

Ensure smoking materials are completely out before leaving them.

Protect Children

Fires started by children with accessible cigarettes, matches, and lighters result in preventable deaths each year. Secure these items where children cannot reach them.

Consider Child-Resistant Products

Opt for child-resistant lighters and matches whenever possible.

Use Appropriate Ashtrays

Always use a stable, non-combustible ashtray.

Safe Ash Disposal

Dispose of ash directly into an ashtray, never a bin. Regularly empty ashtrays to prevent buildup.

Smoke Outdoors

For the safety of yourself and the property, we strongly advise tenants to smoke outside and dispose of butts safely.

Communal Areas

Smoke-Free Zones

Smoking is strictly forbidden in all communal areas of our buildings and schemes.

Shared Housing Restrictions

Smoking is not allowed in shared housing except in officially designated smoking areas.

Remember: Out Cold, Not Just Out

When you put out smoking materials, make sure they are completely cold to the touch.

Fire Safety Equipment for Your Home

Your life could depend on a working smoke alarm

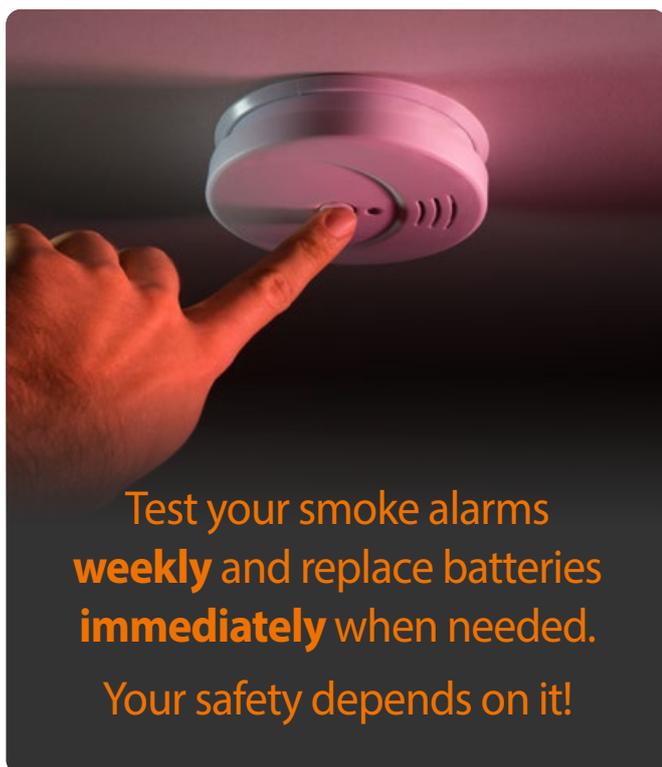
The statistics are clear: you are eight times more likely to die in a fire if your home lacks a functioning smoke alarm.

Understanding and maintaining your alarm system is a vital part of your tenancy.

Smoke Alarms

Your home is equipped with one of the following fire detection systems:

- **Communal System**
A building-wide system with detectors linked to a central alarm panel.
- **Domestic Interlinked Alarms**
Individual smoke/heat alarms within your unit that all sound together when one detects a problem.
- **Hybrid System**
A combination of both, with local alarms interlinked and a hallway detector connected to the communal system.



Test your smoke alarms weekly and replace batteries immediately when needed. Your safety depends on it!

Test & Maintain

- **A Non-Negotiable Safety Habit**
You must test your fire alarm every week. This simple check ensures it's operational and the battery (if present) is charged.
- **Keep Air Vents Clear**
Dust buildup on alarm grilles can impede smoke detection. Vacuum them regularly.
- **Protect Alarm Functionality:**
Never paint, remove or cover.

Your Responsibility

- **Battery Replacement**
For domestic smoke/heat alarms with battery backups, it is your responsibility as a tenant to replace the batteries.
Use only the correct, identical battery type.
- **The Chirp Means Change**
A sporadic chirping or beeping sound is a critical warning that your battery needs immediate replacement.
- **Specialised Alarms for Specific Needs**
If you have hearing or sight difficulties, or are a heavy sleeper, special smoke alarms with vibrating pads and strobe lights can provide crucial alerts.
Linking multiple alarms (e.g., hallway and bedroom) offers enhanced protection.
- **Directly Alerting Vulnerable Individuals**
Children and adolescents may not respond to alarms effectively and require direct alerting by an adult.
- **Planning for Assistance**
If you have mobility challenges, ensure you have a reliable way to call for help quickly, such as keeping a mobile phone accessible.
Residents in sheltered or supported housing may have alarms linked to a warden call system.

We're Here to Help

If you have a disability or other health related concerns, please contact us so we can discuss additional fire safety support we can offer.

Consider a Fire Blanket: A Valuable Safety Tool

Fire blankets are lightweight sheets made of fire-resistant material. They work by smothering a fire, cutting off its oxygen supply, or can be used to wrap around someone whose clothes are burning.

- **Tenant Choice and Responsibility:** We recommend that tenants consider purchasing their own fire blanket for added safety, especially for kitchen use. Please note that you are responsible for the maintenance and replacement of any fire blanket you purchase.
- **Ensure British Standard Compliance:** When buying a fire blanket, look for the British Standard BS EN 1869 to ensure its quality and effectiveness.
- **Best Placement: The Kitchen:** The kitchen is the most likely place for a fire to start, making it the ideal location for a fire blanket.
- **Not Provided (Generally):** Radius does not typically provide fire blankets to individual tenancies, except in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

Fire Extinguisher: Use with Caution & Training

Fire extinguishers are pressurised cylinders that use water, foam, or carbon dioxide to put out fires. However, we strongly advise against using them unless you have received proper training. Incorrect use can be ineffective or even dangerous.

- **Match the Extinguisher to the Fire:** Different types of fire extinguishers are designed for specific types of fires.
Using the wrong extinguisher can be hazardous and worsen the situation.
- **Radius Policy: Limited Provision and Trained Use** Radius typically only provides fire extinguishers in high-risk areas such as boiler rooms, electrical switch rooms, and communal kitchens.
These are intended for use by trained staff only.

Contents Insurance

Don't lose everything,
get contents insurance

The aftermath of a fire can be deeply disruptive, even without physical harm.

As your landlord, Radius will address damage to our fixtures and fittings.

However, your personal belongings are your responsibility to insure.



**Is your most
prized possession
covered?**

Home Contents Insurance
protects your belongings
against theft, fire and
water damage.

Essential Protection

Home Contents Insurance

We strongly recommend that you obtain home contents insurance to safeguard your personal items against loss or damage caused by fire and other events.

Guidance from the Consumer Council NI

For independent and trustworthy advice on home contents insurance, including understanding your needs and finding suitable policies, we encourage you to contact the Consumer Council Northern Ireland.

They provide FREE resources and support to consumers.

Bedtime Safety Routine

Protect Yourself While You Sleep

Fires strike unexpectedly, and the darkness of night amplifies the danger.

They spread rapidly, causing significant damage, injury, and tragically, loss of life.

REMEMBER, SMOKE IS THE PRIMARY KILLER IN A FIRE.

If you're asleep and don't have a working smoke alarm to wake you, your chances of survival are drastically reduced.

Smoke can quickly suffocate you – you could be dead before the flames even reach you.

Make these simple steps a habit before going to bed

Switch off and unplug all unnecessary appliances

Only leave on those designed for continuous operation, such as DVD players/TV receivers (on standby), refrigerators, freezers, and clock radios.

Check Cooking Appliances

Ensure the oven, grill, and hob are completely switched off.

Avoid Overnight Operation

Never leave washing machines, tumble dryers, or dishwashers running while you sleep. Their high wattage, friction, and motors pose a significant fire risk.

Electric Blanket Safety

Turn off your electric blanket unless specifically designed for overnight use.

Heater Safety

Turn off portable electric heaters. If you have an open fire, ensure a fire guard is securely in place.

Extinguish Flames

Double-check that all candles are completely out.

Never leave a candle burning unattended, especially when you go to sleep.

Always use purpose-made, stable candle holders, ideally ceramic.

Smoking Precautions

Make absolutely sure all cigarettes, cigars, and pipes are fully extinguished.

Never smoke in bed. You could easily fall asleep and set your bedding on fire.

You are almost
three times more likely
to die in a fire that
starts during the night.

Close All Doors

Shutting internal doors can significantly slow the spread of fire and smoke, keeping your escape routes clearer for longer.

This is particularly crucial in multi-story homes or high-rise flats where window escape may not be possible.

Clear Escape Paths

Ensure all escape routes (hallways, stairs) are free from any obstructions. Keep door and window keys readily accessible in a designated place.

FOCUS ON PREVENTION, PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED

While these steps will significantly reduce the risk of a fire starting while you and your family are asleep, having working smoke alarms and a basic escape plan remains vital.

Once a Fire Starts

Act Quickly and Stay Safe

- **Stay Calm, Act Fast**
Your immediate response is crucial.
Try to remain calm and act decisively.
- **Escape the Fire Room**
If the fire is in the room you are in, leave immediately and close the door behind you to help contain the fire and smoke.
- **Raise the Alarm**
Activate any fire alarm and alert everyone in your home. Ensure that children, deep sleepers, and individuals with hearing difficulties are personally and effectively warned.

Clothing Fire

REMEMBER: STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

If your clothes catch fire, **STOP** what you're doing, **DROP** to the ground, and **ROLL** over and over to smother the flames. If someone else's clothes are on fire, try to smother the flames with a coat or blanket.

Get Out, Stay Out, Call for Help

Evacuate the building immediately.

Once outside and in a safe location, call the Fire and Rescue Service (999 in the UK and Ireland).

Do not go back inside for any reason until the Fire Service says it is safe to do so.

If Trapped by Fire

- **Seal the Door**
Block the bottom of doors with blankets, coats, or anything available to prevent smoke from entering. Wetting these materials can provide additional protection.
- **Stay Low**
Smoke rises, so stay low to the ground where the air is cleaner.
- **Signal for Help at a Window**
Get to a window if possible.
- **Call the Fire Service**
If you have a phone, call the Fire Service immediately to inform them of your location.
- **Open the Window and Shout**
Open the window and shout loudly for help. If you can't call yourself, ask others outside to call 999.
- **Break the Window (If Necessary)**
If you cannot open the window, break it to get fresh air and signal for help. Cover the sharp edges with a blanket or coat to avoid injury.
- **Use Fire Escape Windows Safely (If Available)**
If there is a fire escape window, use it only if it is safe to do so. Be aware that these windows can be high above ground level (up to 5.6m/18.4 ft).

Avoid jumping. Lower yourself down carefully before dropping to the ground.

Remember that fire escape windows are not common in apartment blocks or above the first floor of houses.
- **Fresh Air is Vital**
If escape is impossible, try to keep your head near the fresh air from the window until help arrives.

Fire Safety in Apartment Blocks

Your Guide to Staying Safe

Purpose-built flats and apartment blocks are designed with fire safety in mind.

Walls, ceilings, and fire doors are constructed to contain fires, often preventing them from spreading beyond one or two rooms.

In most cases, if a fire starts elsewhere in the building, your flat offers the safest place to be, provided you are not directly affected by heat or smoke.

Always follow the specific fire action plan for your building when it is safe to do so, and evacuate only when instructed by the Fire and Rescue Service.

Plan Your Escape Strategy for Peace of Mind

Creating a fire escape plan now will give you the confidence and knowledge to act decisively in an emergency.

- **Know Your Building's Advice**

Carefully read and understand emergency advice notices posted in your building and any letters issued by Radius. These provide crucial information for your specific emergency plan.

- **Important Differences for Upper Floors**

If you live above the first floor, most safety planning is similar to ground-floor homes, but key differences exist regarding escape.





Fire Safety in Apartment Blocks (Continued)

Your Guide to Staying Safe

Developing Your Personal Escape Plan

- **Family Discussion**

Sit down with everyone in your flat and discuss how you would react if a fire occurred. Ensure everyone understands the fire plan.

- **Identify Primary & Secondary Escape Routes**

PRIMARY:

Choose the easiest and most direct way out of your flat and then out of the building to a safe external area.

SECONDARY (If Available):

Identify a second escape route from your flat, if one exists (balconies are not considered safe escape routes).

- **Keep Escape Routes Clear**

Ensure all corridors, stairways, and the paths leading to your exits within your flat are free from obstructions like boxes or rubbish that could catch fire or block your way.

- **Fire Doors Save Lives**

They may stay open day-to-day, but they will close if the alarm goes off. Never tamper with or wedge them open

They will prevent the spread of fire and smoke.

- **Check Stairwell and Fire Escape Doors**

Regularly verify that doors to stairwells and fire escapes can be easily opened from both sides and are not locked.

- **Report Hazards Immediately**

Report any damaged or vandalized fire doors and fire safety equipment to Radius without delay.



Keep doors closed to contain smoke and heat

- **Never Use the Lift**

In the event of a fire, NEVER use the lift. The power can fail, trapping you inside.

- **Identify a Safe Room**

Designate a “safe room” within your flat where you can take refuge if escape is impossible. Ideally, this room should have a window that opens and a telephone.

- **Know the Stairs**

Ensure everyone knows the location of the stairs. In smoky conditions, count the number of doors to the stairwell to avoid confusion in the dark.

- **Emergency Lighting**

Be aware that corridors and stairways in your building are equipped with emergency escape lighting that will activate in a power outage.

What to Do If There Is a Fire in Your Home

- **Follow Your Escape Plan**
Immediately put your pre-arranged plan into action.
- **Alert Occupants**
Alert everyone in your flat. Do not stop to collect valuables or investigate the fire.
- **Check Doors for Heat**
Before opening any door, test it with the back of your hand. If it feels warm, do not open it – the fire is likely on the other side.
- **Alert Neighbours and Activate Alarm**
As you evacuate, bang on the doors of neighbouring flats to alert them. Activate the main fire alarm if one is fitted on your way out.
- **Do Not Use the Lift.**
- **Stay Low in Smoke**
If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be cleaner.
- **Close Doors Behind You**
Close all doors after you pass through them to help contain the fire and smoke.
- **Call 999 from Safety**
Once you are safely outside, use a mobile phone or a public phone to call 999. Provide your name, full address (including your flat number), and the floor where the fire is located, if known.

**Remember:
Remain calm.
Act quickly!**

If Your Escape Route is Blocked

- **Retreat to Your Safe Room**
Gather everyone into your designated safe room.
- **Seal the Door**
Use cushions, bedding, or clothing to block gaps at the bottom of the door to prevent smoke from entering.
- **Call 999**
Immediately phone 999, providing your address and flat number.
- **Signal for Help**
Open the window. If you feel in serious danger, wave a bright sheet or cloth out of the window to alert firefighters to your location.

If the Fire is Outside Your Flat

- **Seal Your Door**
If possible, use tape along with cushions and bedding to seal your front door and any other openings to prevent smoke from entering.
- **Close Ventilators**
Close any air vents or other openings that could allow smoke to enter.
- **Call 999**
Providing your address and flat number.
- **Use 999**
Always call 999 directly. Do not call your local Fire and Rescue Service's non-emergency number, as it may take longer to be answered.
- **Provide Clear Information**
The more accurate information you give the Fire and Rescue Service, the faster they can reach you and assist.

Top Tips

For your safety and to protect your home

Smoke and Heat Alarms: Your First Line of Defence

- **Maintain Your Alarms**
Never remove, cover, or disconnect smoke and heat alarms.
- **Test Regularly**
Make it a habit to test your alarms frequently to ensure they are working.
- **Replace Batteries Promptly**
Change batteries immediately when you hear a low battery warning (e.g., chirping).
- **Keep Clean**
Regularly vacuum or gently brush the detector openings to prevent dust and debris buildup, which can impair their function.

Planning Your Escape: Be Prepared

- **Create a Fire Action Plan**
Develop a clear escape plan that everyone in your household understands.
- **Know Your Exits**
Ensure everyone knows all possible escape routes from your home.
- **Keep Exits Clear**
Always keep doorways, hallways, and windowsills free from obstructions to allow for a quick escape.
- **Key Accessibility**
Make sure everyone knows where door and window keys are kept and can access them easily, especially in an emergency.

Kitchen Safety: Prevent Fires Where They Often Start

- **Supervise Children**
Never leave young children unattended in the kitchen.
- **Care with Hot Oil**
Exercise extreme caution when cooking with hot oil.
- **Use a Thermostat-Controlled Fryer**
If deep-frying, use an electric deep-fat fryer with a thermostat to prevent overheating.

Candle Safety: Handle with Extreme Care

- **Never Leave Unattended**
Do not leave lit candles in empty rooms or rooms where children are alone.
- **Secure Placement**
Always place candles in stable, purpose-made, non-combustible holders (ideally ceramic).
- **Safe Surfaces**
Ensure candle holders are on surfaces that will not burn and are away from any flammable materials.
- **Tea Light Caution**
Tea lights generate significant heat and must only be placed on heat-resistant surfaces. Never put them on plastic (including TVs) or wood.
- **Avoid Draughts**
Keep candles away from draughty areas where they could be blown over or ignite nearby lightweight materials.

Smoking Safety: Be Responsible

- **Extinguish Thoroughly**
Always make sure cigarettes, cigars, and pipes are completely stubbed out.
- **Dispose Safely**
Dispose of smoking materials carefully in a suitable ashtray.
- **Never Smoke in Bed**
This is a significant fire hazard.

Seasonal Awareness

- **Increased Risk Periods**
Be particularly vigilant about fire safety during times of increased risk, such as Christmas and Halloween, when decorations and activities can introduce new hazards.

General Home Safety Habits

- **Close Doors at Night**
Make it a routine to close all doors before going to bed. Closing doors to the lounge and kitchen, even if a child's bedroom door is ajar, can significantly slow the spread of fire and smoke.
- **Avoid Overloading Sockets**
Remember the rule: one plug per socket.
- **Secure Matches and Lighters**
Keep matches and lighters in a secure place so children can't see or reach them.
- **Cook Responsibly**
Take extra care and avoid cooking if you are tired, have been drinking alcohol, or have taken medication that could impair your judgment.
- **Power Down Appliances**
Do not leave the TV or other electrical appliances on standby. Always switch them off completely and unplug them when not in use to prevent potential electrical fires.
- **Keep Escape Windows Clear**
Ensure the areas directly below escape windows outside your home are free from obstructions.

After a Fire

What to Do and How Radius Can Help

If a fire occurs in your home, your immediate safety is the priority. Once the Fire and Rescue Service has dealt with the incident and deemed it safe, please follow these steps and understand how Radius will support you.

Immediate Actions & Radius Support

- **Contact Radius Immediately**
Always inform Radius as soon as possible after a fire, even if it seems minor. We are here to help you through this difficult time.
- **Home Inspection**
Radius will arrange to inspect your property as soon as it is safe to do so to assess the damage.
- **Accommodation Assistance**
Depending on the extent of the damage and your circumstances, Radius may be able to provide immediate or longer-term temporary accommodation. We will discuss your options with you.
- **Building Repairs**
Radius will organize and carry out necessary repairs to the building structure and any fixtures and fittings that we own as quickly as possible.

Your Personal Property and Insurance

- **Contents Insurance is Crucial**
Please remember that Radius's insurance does not cover your personal belongings. This includes items such as furniture, clothing, appliances, carpets, and other personal effects.
- **Your Responsibility to Claim**
It is essential that you have home contents insurance. You will be responsible for making a claim with your insurance provider for any personal property that has been damaged or lost in the fire.

Returning to Your Home

- **Safety First**
You will only be able to return to your home when the Fire and Rescue Service and Radius deem it safe.
- **Limited Access**
Depending on the damage, your initial return may be solely to recover essential personal possessions before more extensive repair work begins. We will keep you informed about access.

Dealing with Your Insurance Claim

- **Document the Damage**
Where possible and safe to do so, retain any receipts for damaged items and take photographs or videos of the damage. This documentation will be invaluable when submitting your insurance claim.
- **Insurance Surveyor**
Your insurance company may arrange for a surveyor to inspect the damage. Please inform Radius of any specific arrangements or requests made by your insurer so we can coordinate access if needed.
- **Communicate with Radius**
Keep us informed of your insurance claim progress and any requirements from your insurance company that may involve Radius.

NIFRS After the Fire

The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) has produced a guide with practical advice on what to do after a fire or flood.



You can access and download this booklet on the NIFRS website via the QR Code.

**Radius is committed to supporting our tenants in the aftermath of a fire.
Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.**

Escape Plan Check List

- Are my escape routes clear?
- Are all doors closed?
- Is there a phone in my safe room?
- Did I test my smoke alarm?

- The Front Door Keys are kept:

.....

- **Escape Route A**
(to front door)

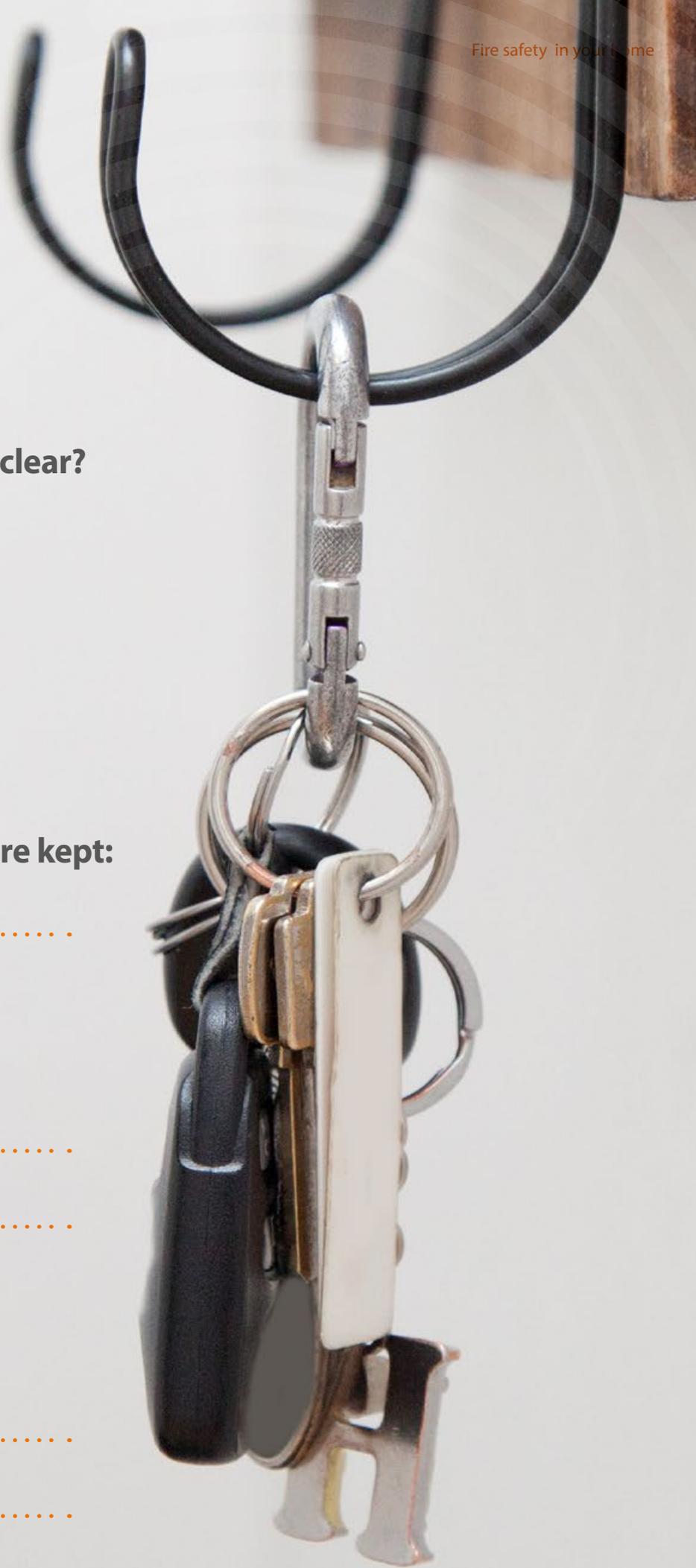
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- **Escape Route B**
(to back door)

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Useful Contacts & Resources

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS)

www.nifrs.org

Electrical Safety First

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Register my appliance

www.registermyappliance.org.uk

Government Advice

www.firekills.gov.uk or www.nidirect.gov.uk

The Health & Safety Executive

www.hseni.gov.uk

The Housing Executive

www.nihe.gov.uk

Housing Rights

www.housingadviceni.org

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

www.rospa.com

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Everyone has a place