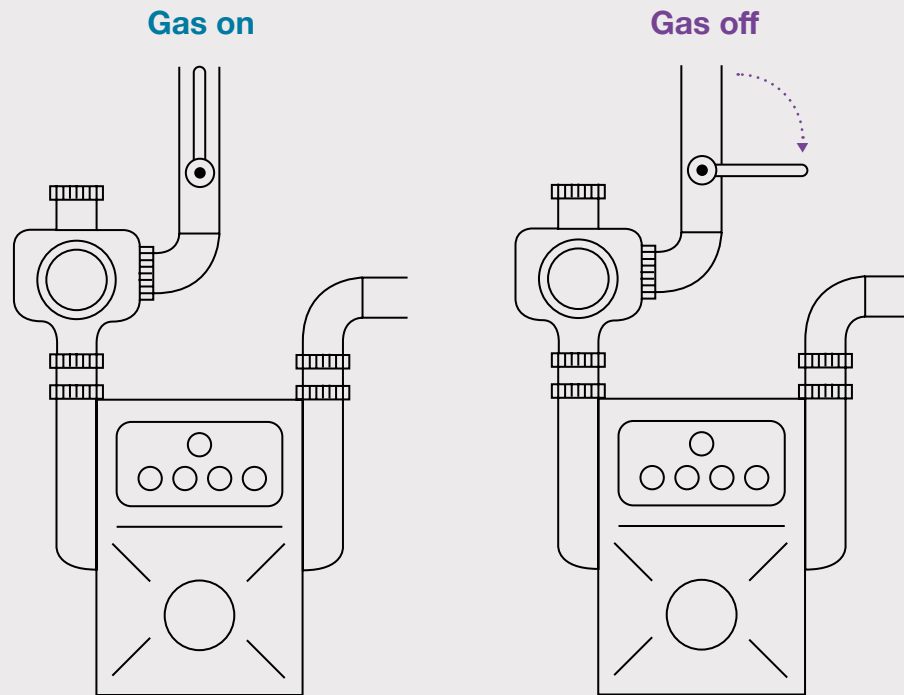


# Staying safe at PBHA



# The safe use of gas

Where gas is concerned, safety is not only relevant to people who have gas installations in their premises. It has to be the responsibility of everyone, as gas pipes run under roads and near non-customers' homes; a gas leak, with the subsequent build-up of gas, could affect anyone.



If you smell a gas leak in the house:

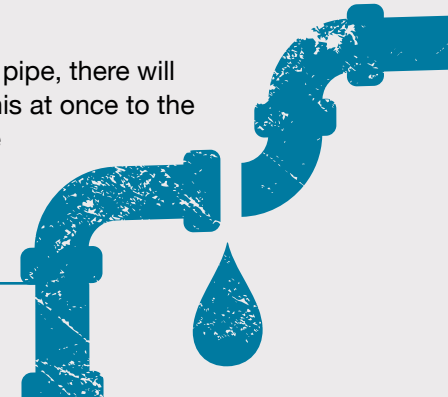
## Danger! Danger! Danger! Danger!

- Don't take any chances.
- Don't light any cigarettes or matches.
- Tell you flatmates not to light any matches.
- Extinguish any naked flames – **never** look for a gas leak with a match.
- Leave all electrical equipment, including lights alone. Don't switch them on or off as they can spark and may cause an explosion.
- Check that gas appliances in the immediate vicinity are properly switched off and that a pilot light hasn't gone out, e.g. check gas fire and gas cooker are turned off.
- Open doors and windows to disperse the gas.
- If the gas is not from an extinguished pilot light or something left on slightly, then **turn gas off at meter**. If handle is too stiff to move, don't force it.
- Call emergency service immediately.
- If necessary, evacuate building.

When you turn the gas back on, make sure you light any pilot lights. If you are unsure about this, ask your Key worker to do it for you.

## Gas leaks in the road

Sometimes if there is a leak in an underground pipe, there will be a strong smell of gas in the street. Report this at once to the emergency repair service, making a note of the whereabouts of the smell.



# The safe use of electricity

Electricity is invaluable in modern society. It is a resource that we use more and more. But it is essential that we continue to treat it with respect. Remember that the majority of house fires are started by electrical faults and that electricity itself can kill.



## The safe use of electrical appliances:

- Buy the appropriate appliance for the job and situation; don't use an appliance for something it's not intended for; and follow the manufacturer's advice and instructions.
- Have the flex of a safe length, wire the plug correctly and use the correct fuse in the plug.
- Keep all electrical devices away from water; don't touch plugs and switches with wet hands. Bathrooms should have a pull cord to switch on the electric light.



Any electric heaters in a bathroom should be wall mounted and professionally fitted.

- Fit adequate guards to all electric heaters. Don't cover convector or other heaters with clothes, and ensure that curtains and furniture are well away from all heaters.
- Switch off and always unplug any appliance before checking a seemingly simple problem.
- When in doubt, don't take chances – tell your Key worker.
- Do not touch any electrical appliance with wet hands. Make sure that your hands are dry.

## Emergencies

If any of your appliances or sockets spark or start to smoke, switch off at the fuse box or consumer unit. Allow a few minutes for plug to cool, then remove from socket.

Phone PBHA – **0203 815 4000** – and tell them what has happened.

## Basic first aid for accidents with electricity

Keep yourself safe – don't add to the casualties by being electrocuted. Turn off the electricity supply at the socket or the mains if necessary.

If this is not possible, use a wooden item to break the contact between the casualty and the electric current, or pull the person away by any loose, dry clothing. **Do not** touch the casualty's skin with your skin – skin is always slightly moist and will therefore conduct electricity.

If necessary, begin resuscitation, and then place the person in the recovery position. Cover any burns with sterile dressings, treat the person for shock and arrange for them to be taken to hospital.

**Call 999 for an ambulance as soon as possible**



## Buying second-hand goods

Generally speaking, it is better

not to buy second-hand electrical goods. The exceptions may be a reconditioned cooker or washing machine from a reputable trader or a very new-looking item from a private sale if it still has its BS label of approval. "Bargains" from jumble sales or second-hand shops could prove costly in more than financial terms and should always be checked over by an electrician before use.

## Fuses

All electrical equipment is fitted with a fuse, as a safety measure. The various electrical circuits in a house are also protected from faults and over-loading by fuses in the fuse box, located near the main electric switch and meter. Most of our houses have fuses, which operate by a switch or a button. You can quickly see if a fuse has gone because one switch or button will be in a different position to the others. There is often a label on the switch to say what it is for.

Sometimes if a fuse goes, you can just put the switch back on. However if it goes again, then there may be something more seriously wrong. Please report this to the office or to your Key worker as soon as possible.

## The plug and socket

It is best to have only one plug in one socket. An adaptor can be used occasionally to contain two plugs, if the adaptor is also fitted with a fuse. Never overload an adaptor – this can be dangerous and could lead to too great a demand on the electric circuit. A fuse would then blow at the mains box.

## Flexes

When using any electrical appliance, make sure that the flex is long enough for safe use; continued tension on the flex could pull the plug from the socket and/or loosen the wires within the plug.

Avoid trailing wire across other hazards, such as the kitchen sink, the cooker, or a main pathway through a room.

When using equipment regularly, check that the flex isn't getting worn – often, especially using an item almost automatically, it is easy to overlook a "creeping" fault. A cracked plug should be replaced; a plug that gets warm with use should be removed and the wiring checked for fit.

PBHA checks all the equipment it supplies every year for safety. If you are worried that something is not working safely, let your Key worker know as soon as possible.



# Safety with fire



## What to do if there is a fire:

In the event of a fire emergency, **remember:**

### First priority is safety of the individual

### Second priority is care of the building

- if you are someone who may panic easily or be very nervous, the most important thing for you to do is to leave the building and cross to the other side of the road before phoning 999 for the fire 2) However, if you have time and it is safe for you to do so, close doors and windows to contain the fire.
- On the way out, break alarm glass (nearest front door) and do whatever else you can to safely notify others in the building. The alarm glass is easily broken by using your shoe.
- Dial 999 for Fire Brigade and only then dial our emergency number. If you cannot phone yourself, ask someone (e.g. a neighbour) to do so for you.
- Only if the fire is small, can be easily located and put out and

you feel very confident should you try to put it out.

## What to do if you are trapped by fire:

- Close all doors and windows, to try and contain the fire. Reduce the draughts by blocking around doors with any fabric available.
- If there are smoke and fumes in the room, lean out of the window to breathe.
- Otherwise, stay low down on the floor, where the air is clearer. Attract attention from the window.

## Simple fire precautions

### Escape routes:

Ensure you know the different escape routes if there is a fire in the house. Plan these now; don't wait for a real fire, when people may feel panicky.

When doors and windows are locked from the inside with a key, always leave the key in the same accessible place at night, so it can be found in the dark. Don't leave it in the lock, as this is too accessible for the burglar! Tie something onto



the key, such as a piece of wood, then if it is dropped in the dark, you will be able to feel it more easily.

### Smoke alarms:

Most PB flats either have a fire alarm system; or else we supply smoke detectors. If they sound then unless you know there is another reason for them going off (e.g. burnt toast) you should assume there is a fire and follow the instructions above.

### Fires:

Electric and gas fires should be kept in good order.

Avoid trailing flexes.

### Cigarettes and Smoking:

When smoking, always use a deep ashtray, always stub the end out completely, and avoid leaving a lit cigarette propped on an ashtray.

Don't empty an ashtray into a container of waste paper, as any smouldering ash will ignite the paper. Only empty the ash tray when it is cold.

### Never smoke in bed



### Cookers:

Keep saucepan handles to the side or rear of the cooker, not pointing into the room or over a lit ring.

Don't have items such as a flex crossing over the cooker, or tea towels hanging over it.

### Chip Pans:

Our advice is that chip pans should not be used, as they are very dangerous.

However if you insist on using one, please follow these guidelines.

Never fill a chip pan more than one-third full of oil (this is when the food is in it).

Never leave a chip pan unattended.

If a chip pan does catch fire, leave it where it is, turn off the cooker, cover the pan with a damp towel or the pan lid, to smother the flames. Remember to keep your hands behind the towel or lid. Never pour on water – this would only spread the oil.

### Electric points:

When electrical appliances are not in use it is safer to unplug them.

If an electrical appliance does catch fire, never throw water on it. Disconnect the supply and smother the flames with a rug or blanket.

### How to prevent a fire:

- If you smoke, always use a deep, stable ashtray.
- Each night before going to bed, check that all cigarette ends and matches are extinguished. Check that no ash or ends have fallen down the sides of any easy chairs used by smokers.
- Do not drape clothes, tea towels or other flammable objects on or near fires.
- Close all doors, to prevent the rapid spread of fire if one does occur.
- Avoid storing flammable material in the house.

### What to do if clothing catches fire:

- Cover the person in thick material such as a rug, blanket or coat, to smother the flames. Try **NOT** to roll them over, as this will cause extra damage to any burnt tissue.

- If your clothes catch fire, lie on the floor on the burning area, to smother the flames, or smother them as described above.

### Basic first aid for burns

#### For minor burns and scalds:

Minor burns are considered to be those where only the surface of a small area of skin is burnt. Cool the burn as soon as possible by putting under a running cold tap, or into cold water for at least 10 minutes. Cover the area with a clean, sterile dressing.

#### For severe burns and scalds:

Lay the casualty down in a safe place. If possible cover the damaged tissue with a large sterile dressing, securing it with a non-adhesive bandage. Don't remove anything sticking to the burn or touch the area.

### Phone 999 for an ambulance immediately.



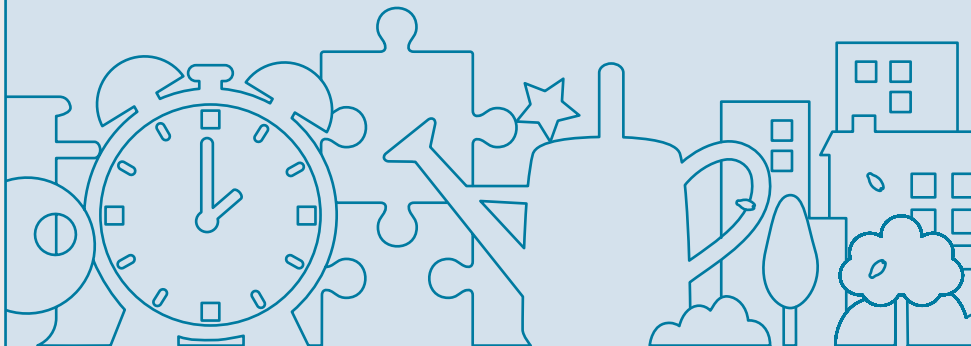
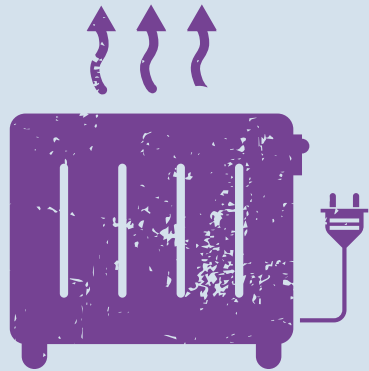
# Water and central heating

## If you have a water leak in the building

- Turn off supply at nearest point.
- Turn off immersion.
- Turn off boiler.
- Turn on bath taps, making sure plug is removed and chain wrapped around tap so that doesn't slip down.
- Phone the Repair Hotline on **0203 227 3161** in the daytime or the emergency number **020 7226 0302** at night and weekend.

## Central Heating

If you have central heating, please do not adjust the timers. The temperature can be adjusted by using either the control valve on the radiator (blue is cold; red is hot) or the room thermostat. Check with your Key worker as to how your central heating works.



# Health & safety action group



The Health & Safety action Group meets every 3 months to consider all aspects of Health & Safety within PBHA and make recommendations to the management.

The participation of tenants in the group is actively encouraged and you would be very welcome to attend and contribute to issues that in many cases affect you directly.

You will find details of the meetings in Rising Star the PBHA magazine or on the various PBHA bulletin boards.

# Health & safety audits at your flat



Every year a Health & Safety Audit will be carried out at your flat to ensure that you are not at risk and that your flat meets the required health & safety standards.

It will be carried out by a member of the Housing Team in collaboration with you so that it reflects your needs and concerns.





## Info

Phone the Repair Hotline on **0203 815 4123** in the daytime or the emergency number **0203 815 4099** at night and weekend.

Your **gas meter** is: .....

Your **meter** is: .....

Your **fuse box** is: .....

Your **water stopcock** is: .....

