

STRATHCLYDE
FIRE & RESCUE



Fire Safety in high rise flats



making our communities safe places to live, work and visit



Fire Safety in High Rise Buildings

Introduction

If you take precautions against fire, living above the first floor doesn't make you any more at risk from fire. Most of your fire safety planning is the same as homes at ground level, but there are some key differences.

High rise flats are built to be fire-proof – walls, ceilings and doors will hold back flames and smoke. Most fires don't spread further than one or two rooms. If there's a fire elsewhere in the building, you're usually safest in your flat unless heat and smoke is affecting you.

General advice

Your building has been designed and built with safety in mind. The walls, the doors between flats, stairs and corridors are specially designed to resist fire and stop the spread of smoke (these doors should be kept closed).

The lift system has been designed so that the Fire & Rescue Service can use it in an emergency.

Outside the building, roads and other areas are designed so that fire appliances can get as near as possible.

There will be a fire hydrant close by (it must not be obstructed) which is used to provide firefighting water via an internal rising main with Fire & Rescue Service hose connections on each floor.

Do not obstruct, interfere with, remove or damage any equipment provided for firefighting or use by the Fire & Rescue Service.

Never jump from windows or balconies, wait to be rescued.



If there is a fire in your flat – get out, stay out and call the Fire & Rescue Service.

Your smoke alarm(s) should give early warning of fire.

Alert everyone

Make sure everyone in your home knows about the fire. Alert neighbouring flats by banging on the doors on your way out. Set off the fire alarm if there is one.

Close all doors behind you.

If there's a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer.

Get everyone out

Don't use the lift – go down the escape stair(s).

Don't delay for valuables.

Don't investigate the fire.

Before you open doors check them with the back of your hand. If they're warm don't open them – the fire may be on the other side.

Call 999 (it's free from any telephone)

Use a mobile phone or phone box. Give the address including the number of your flat, and tell them what floor the fire is on.

If fire breaks out in another flat

You may be alerted by the sound of a smoke alarm. If the flat is next to yours, or immediately below, follow the previous advice.

If the fire is on another floor, it should be safe to stay in your own flat.

Close all windows and doors.

Call the Fire & Rescue Service.



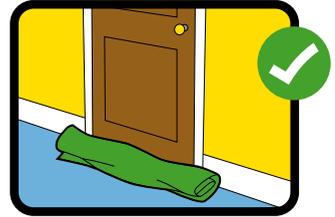
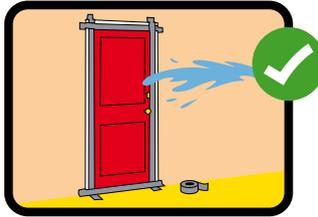
If your escape route is blocked

You may not be able to get out of your flat because fire or smoke is blocking the exit. Or you may not be able to get out of the building if, for example, there is a fire outside your flat or in the stairway.

If you are unable to escape from your flat, get everyone into a room with a window or balcony. Put cushions, bedding etc round the bottom of the door to keep out smoke.

If possible, open the window for fresh air and shout for assistance to let firefighters know you are there and need rescued.

If the fire is outside your flat, seal your front door with tape, damp towels or bedding. Close any ventilators. Phone 999, giving the number of your flat. If your front door becomes hot, wet it down.



If fire breaks out in the bin area/bin chute/communal areas

You may smell smoke, but remember your flat is a safe refuge area.

Close all windows and doors.

Call the Fire & Rescue Service.

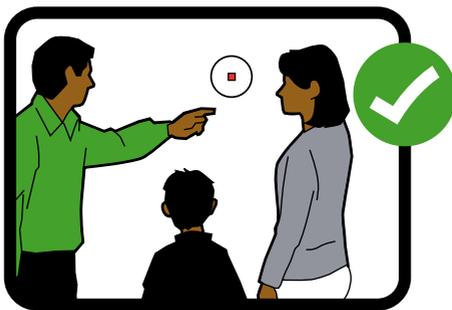
If you feel threatened by the fire/smoke spreading, inform a Police or Fire Officer.

Only leave the safety of your flat if it is affected by smoke/fire or on instructions of a Police or Fire Officer.

Leave the building by using the escape stair(s) – never use the lift unless directed to do so by a Fire Officer.

Smoke alarms

Your flat should be provided with a smoke detector. Once a week press the button to check the alarm sounds and if the alarm does not work, contact the Housing Department/Factor to arrange repair. Clean the alarm at least once a year by lightly vacuuming the outer casing.



REMEMBER – SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

Deliberate fire setting

Get rubbish, refuse, old furniture etc out of the building and arrange immediate uplift or removal. There is usually a designated safe storage area outside on the ground floor. Get someone to help you move any unwanted items to this area where they can then be uplifted.

If fire setting is a problem in and around your flat or neighbourhood, report it to your local Police or Crimestoppers Scotland – Telephone 0800 555 111.

Common areas

Corridors, drying areas, cupboards etc – don't clutter these areas of your building. Don't dump old furniture or carpets in any of these areas.

Unlocked cupboards and stores in common areas can be a fire problem – they must not be used to store flammable or combustible materials.

Any fire that breaks out in a common area will block the escape route for you and your family.

Make a fire plan

Plan what to do in the event of a fire or emergency.

Make sure everyone knows what to do in the event of fire.

Make sure everyone is familiar with the escape route(s).

Know where your front door and window keys are kept.



Your escape plan

Sit down with everyone who lives in your home. Talk together about how you'd react to a fire.

Choose an escape route

This should be the easiest way out but you will not be able to use a lift. If one is available, also choose an alternative escape route.

You need to think how to get out of your flat and into communal areas, but also how to get to the escape stair(s).



Close all fire doors behind you as you escape.

Think about a refuge

If you can't escape you will need to find a safe room to take refuge in.

You're safest if the room (or it could be a lobby or corridor) is protected by fire-resistant walls – this is particularly important if you have difficulty moving around or going down stairs on your own.

It's best if the room you retreat to is furthest from the fire and smoke, has an external window or balcony and you have access to a phone.



Make sure everyone knows where the stairs are

As it's easy to get confused in the dark or in smoke, familiarise yourself with the escape route and count how many doors you need to go through.

Make sure everyone knows where door and window keys are kept

Keeping your keys readily available might save a life one day.

Make sure everyone knows what to do – to prevent fire and in the event of fire

Go through all the points about what to do in a fire. Everyone should know the do's and don'ts.

Put your address by the phone so children can read it out to the emergency services.

Put a reminder of what to do in a fire somewhere prominent, like on the door of the fridge.

Keep the escape route clear

Check there is no rubbish or combustible materials in corridors, lobbies or stairways. Make sure doors to stairways and fire escapes aren't locked or blocked. Regularly check you can open these doors from both sides.

Practice the plan

Take a few minutes to 'walk through' the plan with everyone in the household. Regularly remind everyone of what to do and what not to do in a fire.



Specific advice

Ensure your smoke alarms are working.

Report any defective self-closing fire doors or firefighting equipment.

Do not use or store bottled flammable gas cylinders within high rise flats and do not store or use any flammable liquids such as petrol or paraffin etc.

Always stay calm and follow the instructions of the Police and Fire & Rescue Service in the event of an emergency or fire.

Close all fire doors behind you as you escape.

Pass information about the location of the fire to the concierge or Fire Officers.

Who to contact

For advice on fire safety in your home or to arrange a **FREE** Home Fire Safety Visit, phone your local fire station or the **FREE** Community Safety Advice Line or visit our website.

0800 0731 999

www.strathclydefire.org

In case of damaged or defective smoke alarms, fire doors, firefighting equipment, fire lifts etc, please contact your Housing Provider/Factor.

To arrange immediate uplift of unwanted furniture, refuse or other items and combustible materials, please contact the Cleansing Department.

To report instances of crime in your neighbourhood, please contact Crimestoppers Scotland on **0800 555 111**.



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