



Fire prevention and safety for tenants



Lithium-ion battery charging advice

- Only use chargers that are supplied with the equipment or device, or certified third-party charging equipment that is compatible with the battery specifications. Using chargers with incorrect power delivery (voltage and current) can cause damage to the battery that can lead to fires.
- Check that chargers bear the Regulatory Compliance Mark, to show that it has met the relevant Australian Standards under the Electrical Equipment Safety System (EESS).
- Avoid leaving batteries or devices unattended while being charged or charging overnight. Once the device or battery is fully charged, disconnect it from the charger.
- Don't charge batteries or devices on combustible and insulating surfaces (e.g. beds, couches, or carpet). Keep them away from flammable materials like blankets, clothing, and paper.
- Never use and charge devices such as phones, tablets and e-cigarettes or vaping devices in bed, where they can overheat if you fall asleep.
- Larger batteries and equipment (e.g. power tools and electric scooters) should be charged in the garage, shed or carport away from living spaces.

- Never place batteries in your regular waste or recycling bins. Fires are known to occur in garbage trucks and waste facilities due to improper battery disposal.
- Some batteries may also contain toxic chemicals, heavy metals and other environmental pollutants that can contaminate water supplies and ecosystems when incorrectly disposed of.



Stay safe while cooking in the kitchen

- Never leave cooking unattended, not even for a minute: Turn off the stove (or BBQ) before you leave the room or area.
- Keep flammable materials away from heat and flames: This includes aerosols, cleaning agents and cooking oils.
- Keep loose fabric/material away from the stove: This includes clothing, fabrics, tea towels and curtains.
- Keep your oven, range hood and grill clean: A build-up of grease and fat can ignite and cause a fire.
- Don't put anything metallic in the microwave: Metal will heat up very quickly and will catch fire.
- Keep a fire blanket close by: Purchase a fire blanket that carries the Australian Standards Mark AS 3504 and store in or adjacent to a kitchen for easy access should you need it.



If a kitchen fire starts

- Turn off the stove (if it is safe to do so).
- Use a fire blanket in the first few seconds of ignition if you know how to use one.
- If you don't have a fire blanket, you can use a wooden chopping board to cover a small fire.
- Avoid moving flaming oil or fat.
- If you cannot safely extinguish the fire, leave the kitchen, close the door, evacuate everyone in the house immediately and phone 000.



Power boards, adaptors and extension leads

Do not overload power boards, extension leads or adaptors:

- Never piggy-back plugs into one socket or use double adaptors on a power board.
- Remember that an extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take, so be careful not to overload them.
- Use power boards with built-in safety switches or circuit breakers.
- Place power boards on their sides to prevent dust build up in unused points.
- Regularly check that all plugs are firmly fixed in power boards and adaptors.
- Provide adequate ventilation around power boards and adaptors.
- Regularly inspect power boards, extension leads and adaptors for signs of damage and degradation.
- Plug high-wattage appliances directly into permanent power points instead of power boards.



If an electrical fire starts

- Do not use water to put it out.
- Turn off the power if it is safe to do so.
- Call 000.



Electric blankets

- Always read and follow product instructions as well as the manufacturer's recommendations for use.
- Turn the blanket off before leaving the house or going to sleep.
- Never place objects such as clothing or blankets on the bed when the blanket is switched on.
- Always store the blankets hanging or rolled – folding can damage the wiring inside.
- Check the manufacturer's guidelines for how often it should be inspected by a qualified electrician and when it should be replaced.
- If there is fraying in the blanket or in the cords, have it inspected by an electrician or replace the blanket.



Clothes dryer

- Install, maintain and use your machine according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep the area around the dryer well ventilated and clear from clutter.
- Clean the lint filter every time you use your dryer.
- Avoid overloading the dryer.
- Don't put clothing in the dryer that states 'do not tumble dry' on the clothing tag.
- Make sure clothing is not soiled with flammable or chemical substances, such as oil or petrol.

- Always let the dryer go through its cool-down cycle.
- Always turn the dryer off before leaving the house.

Your clothes dryer may not be working properly if:

- it is taking longer than usual to dry clothes
- the dryer makes strange sounds
- the dryer chamber struggles to rotate.

If your clothes dryer is not working properly, stop using it and contact a licensed electrical contractor to find and fix the issue.



Heaters

- Clean heaters every three months to remove dust and dirt.
- Always switch the heater off at the power point when not in use.
- Avoid using a double adaptor as it may overload the power supply and cause a fire.
- Always keep items (especially flammable fabrics and material) at least one metre away from the heater.
- Never leave heaters on in bedrooms, especially children's bedrooms.



Smoking

- Only smoke outside – smoking inside your home can be fatal.
- Smoking in bed or on the couch is especially dangerous – if you fall asleep and drop your cigarette or ash embers onto flammable material, you may not notice the burning until it is too late.
- Never leave lit cigarettes unattended.
- Keep matches and cigarette lighters out of the reach of children.
- Always use an ashtray – use heavy, deep ashtrays that will not tip over, and use water or sand to butt the cigarette out.

- Ensure your cigarette butt is fully extinguished before disposing of it.
- Before emptying ashtrays into a bin ensure all of the ash has been extinguished.
- Empty ashtrays into outside bins.



Using candles safely

- Always extinguish candles and oil burners before leaving a room or going to sleep.
- Candles and oil burners should only be used under adult supervision.
- Candles and oil burners should never be left unattended.
- Place candles and oil burners on a stable, dry, heat-resistant surface away from open windows, curtains, blinds or any other combustible materials.
- Keep lighters and matches out of the reach of children.
- Teach your children that candles, lighters and matches are tools, not toys.



In and around your apartment

When you live or are staying in a multi-storey building, it is important to:

- **Keep fire stairs and escape routes clear:** Storage in escape routes can delay your escape and hamper access for firefighters.
- **Never prop open fire doors:** They need to remain closed to stop the spread of smoke and fire.
- **Never use the fire cabinet as a storage cupboard:** This will delay access for firefighters in an emergency.
- **Reduce the clutter inside your apartment and on balconies:** This can delay your exit in an emergency, block the fire safety equipment in your apartment, and add fuel to a fire.



If a fire starts in a multi-storey building

It is important to evacuate immediately after you're alerted to a fire.

Stay calm and get everyone out as quickly as possible.

Never use lifts in a fire. Take the emergency exits and fire stairs to leave the building.

Remember to:

- Get out
- Stay out (never go back inside)
- Call 000 (triple zero).



Understand and practise your fire escape plan

If a fire starts in your multi-storey building, you'll need to have a plan to escape quickly.

Take the time to:

- **Understand the fire alarm system:** Speak to your building management or strata committee about what you can expect when the fire alarm system is activated.
- **Understand the evacuation plan:** This plan is required to be displayed in common areas throughout your building – if it's not, speak to building management.

This information has been obtained from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) website with permission.

For more information about preventing fires in the home and lithium-ion battery safety, visit www.dfes.wa.gov.au

- **Locate your emergency exits and your assembly area:** This is a place near your building where you and your neighbours will wait after evacuating.
- **Introduce yourself to your neighbours and exchange telephone numbers:** Neighbours can help each other in many ways – they can alert you of danger, communicate information you may not have heard and assist you in an emergency.
- **Ensure your smoke alarms are working:** Only working smoke alarms will provide the critical early warning to save your life.

Ensure everyone in your household understands the above and practise your escape plan regularly.



Understanding the risks

You're at a higher risk from fires starting in your home if:

- you're not able to move quickly
- your sight or hearing is impaired
- you may be taking medications that impact your reaction time
- you live alone
- you have a lack of immediate assistance.

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) –
Telephone: **13 14 50**

Photo provided by DFES