



3 Your Safety



3.1 Security in your home

You can reduce the risk of your home being broken into by taking the following advice:

- Make sure that doors and windows are locked when you go out.
- Leave a light on if you go out at night.
- Ensure broken windows are fixed as soon as possible.
- Don't leave your keys under the doormat or anywhere burglars are likely to find them.
- Change your locks if your keys are lost or stolen.
- Put a security mark on your electrical goods with a UV-pen or get them security-etched.
- Ask a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on the property if you're going away, e.g. they could park a car in your driveway or turn on lights at night.
- Secure garden sheds and side gates with locks.
- Let your Housing Officer know if you are going away for longer than 2 weeks and arrange a contact in case of an emergency.

Where can I get more advice on home security?

Call your local Garda Crime Prevention Officer or have a look at the Garda Síochána website (www.garda.ie).

Are my contents insured?

Not by Clúid Housing Association – our insurance covers the building only. So you will need to get your own contents insurance. You will need to estimate the value of all your belongings, including furniture, white goods, electrical goods, jewellery etc. Ask for several quotations and ask about payment options such as monthly or quarterly payments. Contents insurance should cover your belongings for fire, accidental damage and theft. Remember that Clúid does not replace glass, so you may want cover for broken glass in doors and windows as well.

3.2 Safety in apartment buildings

Door entry systems control who comes into buildings with shared entrances. To keep your building safe:

- Make sure that the entrance door always locks behind you.
- Never leave the entrance door open or propped open.
- Don't let people follow you inside if they don't live in the block – they should press the button for the flat they are visiting.
- Report any faults to Clúid as quickly as possible.

Also make sure not to block entrances, landings and stairwells with bicycles, buggies or other items, so there is a safe exit route for emergencies.

3.3 Gas Safety

Clúid Housing Association will service gas central heating boilers regularly and any other gas appliances supplied by us. Tenants have to allow access for the contractor.



What if I smell gas?

If you smell gas, immediately follow these steps:

- Turn off the mains
- Open windows and doors
- Extinguish flames
- Do not switch on electrical equipment or switches
- Contact the gas company immediately - **1850 20 50 50**

3.4 Electrical safety

Electrical installations can be dangerous, so please follow this advice:

- Unplug any appliances that are not in use
- Use the correct fuses in plugs
- Don't touch bare wires - turn off the electricity at the consumer unit (fuse box)
- Don't touch any electrical appliance if it is wet or if your hands are wet - turn off the electricity at the fuse box and don't use the appliance again until it is dry
- Don't overload sockets
- Don't carry out any electrical alterations or improvements without our permission
- Don't put nails or fittings in a wall near a socket, switch or light fitting or around the edge of the wall as this is usually where electrical wires are put behind plaster

3.5 Fire Safety

Here is some advice on how to prevent fires and how to protect yourself and your family in case of a fire.



What do I need to know about smoke alarms?

- Test each alarm every week by pressing and holding the test button until the alarm sounds
- Replace the backup battery every year or when the alarm starts to bleep
- If a smoke alarm is damaged or doesn't sound when tested, please tell your Housing Officer immediately

How can I prevent fires in the kitchen?

- Keep children away from the cooker unit when cooking
- Never leave pans unattended and keep the handles turned in over the work surface to avoid adults or children knocking or pulling them off the cooker
- Keep cables from kettles, toasters etc. away from the cooker and don't let them hang off worktops
- If you deep fry food, use a proper electric deep fat fryer instead of a chip pan. Chip pans are highly dangerous!
- If a pan catches fire, turn off the cooker, soak a tea towel under the tap and wring it out. Hold the wet tea towel in front of you and place it over the pan
- Do not remove the tea towel or move the pan for at least 1 hour until it has cooled down.
- Never throw water onto a pan fire!!

Can cigarettes or candles be dangerous?

- Yes, both can start fires very quickly if you are not careful
- Never smoke in bed
- Don't smoke when you are tired or when you have had a drink
- Make sure you put out cigarettes fully when you are finished
- Never leave lit candles unattended or near anything that could catch fire, especially curtains by windows
- Always put candles out when you leave the property and when going to bed
- Always use a proper holder for candles and never put them on plastic surfaces like televisions



What else should I do?

- It's a good routine to check the home every night before going to bed
- Check you have put out all cigarettes
- Check all candles are out
- Unplug all electrical appliances, especially televisions, dryers and washing machines
- Check the cooker is off

What else should I do?

- Put the guard up to the fire
- Close the door to each room. This will help stop smoke and flames spreading if there is a fire

It's also a good idea to plan ahead, so that your family members are prepared for an emergency.

- Make sure all your family know what to do if there is a fire
- Plan your escape route and keep all exit routes clear, keep door and window keys handy
- Make sure you know where to meet outside of the dwelling and account for everyone that was in the dwelling

What should I do if a fire starts?

- If there is smoke, keep low where the air is cleaner
- Get everyone out as quickly as possible, don't waste time investigating the fire or stopping to collect valuables
- Call the fire brigade 999 or 112 - try to stay calm and give them your address and other details they need
- Don't go back into the house or apartment for anything, wait for the fire brigade

What do I do if my clothes catch fire?

- Don't run
- Lie down and roll around
- Smother the flames with a heavy material, like a coat, blanket or a fire blanket if there is one near

3.6 Preventing carbon monoxide fumes

Carbon monoxide poisoning can arise in a number of different ways. You cannot see or smell it, but it can kill. Early symptoms include tiredness, headaches, nausea and pains in the chest. There is a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning:

- If your gas or oil appliance is not working properly
- Your boiler or fires have not been serviced regularly
- There is not enough ventilation
- Your chimney has not been swept regularly

Clúid carries out a gas safety check on all appliances installed by us once a year. You must allow us into your home to do this check. If you have your own gas appliances, you must use a registered gas installer to fit them and must get them serviced regularly.

Also follow this advice:

- Keep rooms well ventilated
- Never block or close vents
- Sweep chimneys at least once a year if they are used for wood or coal fires