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# Private Tenants: Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

## INTRODUCTION

This Factsheet is one in a series, provided by HAD.org.uk that provides information for Disabled people, their families, carers and professionals supporting them.

It focuses on Private tenants and the legal requirement placed upon them since 2015 to provide smoke and carbon monoxide

### Smoke alarms

It is your landlord's duty to install a working smoke alarm on every floor of your home.

It is your responsibility to check it works on a regular basis. Test it by pressing the button until the alarm sounds.

If there is no sound:

- a standard battery-powered alarm needs a new battery

- a ten year sealed battery-powered alarm needs to be completely replaced
- a mains-powered alarm may need replacing by an electrician

If an alarm stops working, contact your landlord so they can arrange for the necessary repair or replacement.

## **Specialist alarms if you are deaf**

Your landlord should provide you with a specialist alarm if you ask for one because you are deaf or hard of hearing.

Action on Hearing Loss can provide information about alarms that alert through vibration or flashing light.

They can be contacted by:

- Telephone: 0808 808 0123
- Textphone: 0808 808 9000

If your landlord will not supply a specialist alarm, ask your local fire and rescue service for advice.

## **Carbon Monoxide poisoning**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odourless gas that can make you ill or even kill you.

CO poisoning can be a result of:

- poorly maintained gas appliances
- incomplete burning of solid fuel

- poor ventilation in the home

To prevent CO poisoning, your landlord must:

- ensure gas appliances are serviced annually by a Gas Safe engineer
- provide a CO detector in every room containing a solid fuel burner.

## **Symptoms of Carbon monoxide poisoning**

The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are often similar to flu - for example, dizziness, headaches, and nausea. Long term exposure can cause serious health problems, even paralysis and brain damage.

If you think you are at risk:

- Switch off any appliance that could be faulty
- Open doors and windows to ventilate the room
- Do not sleep in it
- Report the problem to your landlord as soon as possible
- Don't re-light any appliance until it has been checked by a qualified person
- Visit your doctor urgently for a blood test

## **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

If you live in a licensed house in multiple occupation (HMO) your

landlord must provide smoke alarms and keep them in working order. Gas appliances must be checked every year and your landlord must provide a certificate to prove this has been done. HMOs licensed after 1 October 2015 must have CO detectors in every room containing a solid fuel appliance.

## **What Harrow Council can do**

Contact your local council if your landlord does not provide a working smoke alarm or CO detector.

The council will serve a notice telling your landlord to comply with the law within 28 days, and can carry out necessary urgent works.

### **Do you need further help?**

**Please contact [HAD.org.uk](http://HAD.org.uk) on 020 8861 9920,  
Or visit us at The Wealdstone Centre,  
38-40 High Street, Wealdstone, Harrow, HA3 7AE.**

This fact sheet is one of a series, providing information and advice on a number of topics.

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- Universal Credit
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## **HOUSING MATTERS:**

- A General Guide to Housing Benefit
- A Guide to Housing Benefit for Disabled Students
- Applying as Homeless (Priority Need)
- Homelessness (Out of Hours) Emergencies
- Private Tenants: smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Rent Increases : Assured Shorthold Tenancies
- The Right to Rent
- 10 Rights of Private Tenants