



10 Fire Safety & Smoke Alarms

All homes in NSW are required under the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 to have a smoke alarm fitted this is because it helps protect your life and your property. It is for this reason that smoke alarms should not be tampered with, removed or damaged.

Fire safety advice from NSW Fire and Rescue

- **Phone 000** if there is a fire.
- Never smoke cigarettes in bed.
- Never walk away from the stove or oven when you are cooking in the kitchen.
- Always turn off electric blankets before getting into bed.
- Keep curtains, clothing and bedding away from heaters and candles.
- If you use a clothes dryer clean the lint filter every time you use it.
- Do not plug more than one appliance into a power point.
- Switch off all appliances when they are not being used.
- Before leaving the room or house, always extinguish candles or any open flames.
- Keep children away from matches and lighters.
- Test the smoke alarms every month by pressing and holding the button until it beeps.

- If your alarm does not beep report this to Parramatta Mission Maintenance Line 8188 7414.

If a fire happens, stay safe and follow these steps:

- Do not try to fight a fire.
- Escape as quickly as possible and **phone 000**.
- Do not go back inside to get your possessions.
- If it is not safe to leave your property, **phone 000** and stay in your property. Close all doors and windows to keep smoke out.
- If there is smoke, cover your nose and mouth with a cloth and keep close to the floor.
- If you live in a unit, never use the lift to escape. Use the nearest stairwell as an exit.
- If the fire starts in another unit or common area, leave the building if it is safe, using the stairwell and not the lift.
- If a family member has a mobility problem and cannot walk, assign someone to help them escape.
- Contact Parramatta Mission 8188 7414 to advise of incident.
- The NSW Fire and Rescue will advise when a person can re-enter a fire damaged property.

If your smoke alarm makes a loud warning sound, don't wait:

- If you hear your smoke alarm going off and you smell smoke, everyone needs to leave the property immediately.
- Once outside **phone 000** and report the fire



Sometimes smoke alarms are triggered and make beeping noises:

- Make sure there is enough ventilation when cooking or showering as smoke from cooking or steam from showers can trigger smoke alarms.
- If the power to the property is turned off, you will hear a short beep every few seconds. When the power is first connected to the alarm it may sound for two or three seconds and continue to beep once every 40 seconds for about ten minutes – this is normal.
- If the smoke alarm sounds regularly for no clear reason, or you think it is not working properly contact Parramatta Mission Maintenance 8188 7414.

Look after your smoke alarm:

- Keep it clean by carefully vacuuming the outside of the smoke alarm several times a year to remove dust, cobwebs or insects.
- Do not open the smoke alarm because it is connect to the main power supply and could give you an electric shock.
- Do not try to fix the smoke alarm yourself if you think it is damaged, it is against the law to remove or interfere with any parts of the smoke alarm.
- A contractor will check your smoke alarm once a year. Arrangements will be made with you to set up the inspection.
- Please ensure you allow the contractor to enter your property, as the service check is required by law and will ensure your smoke alarm is working correctly.

- If your smoke alarm loses battery, there is a standby battery in the smoke alarm that should last for 5-10 years. This will not fit into any other electrical appliance.

If a fire happens, who will pay for the cost of repairs?

NSW Fire and rescue will work with the police and investigators to determine if the fire was started deliberately or accidentally. Parramatta Mission Housing will use this information to decide who will pay for the damage. If the fire has been deliberately lit or caused through negligence, Parramatta Mission Housing may charge the person(s) responsible for the fire. Those responsible could include the tenant, any household member, visitor or person staying at the property with consent.

Where to get more information

For more information about fire safety, including a home safety checklist, home escape plan and keeping fire safe, please visit the NSW Fire and Rescue website www.fire.nsw.gov.au.

