

Fire Safety Advice for North Star Customers

June 2023

Dear Customer,

Find enclosed some important home fire safety advice.

A fire in your home could be catastrophic however by following the advice enclosed you could prevent a fire from starting and avoid a terrible life changing event and damage to your personal belongings.

Your safety is paramount to us and we want to ensure you are fully aware of the action to take in the unlikely event of a fire in your home. We also want you to talk to us if you have any fire safety concerns or need more fire safety information relating to the building you live in.

Every year, North Star carry out essential safety checks in your home, including an annual boiler service and an electrical installation inspection every 5 years. It is essential that when an appointment is made to carry out one of these essential checks you are in your property to let the inspectors in to complete their work.

We would value your engagement with us to prevent a fire starting in your home and please report anything to us that you think could be a fire safety concern.

We very much appreciate your on-going cooperation with North Star and if you have any enquiries about the enclosed advice then please contact us on 03000110011 or email us at customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk .

Emma Speight



Executive Director of Assets and Growth

Responsible Person for Fire Safety

North Star Housing Group

Home Fire safety Advice

Every year in the UK, avoidable fires start in homes which result in injury or death and severe property damage. The effect of a fire and the resulting loss has a huge impact on the people involved. The following advice should help in preventing a fire from starting.

Servicing and Inspections of your Heating and Electrical systems

It is important that you are at home during an appointment to give access to our engineers and electricians to carry out vital safety checks on your heating and electrical systems.

Electrics

Avoid overloading sockets or using multiple extension leads (daisy chaining) as heat can build up in cables and cause a fire. Check for any damage to cables or the appliance, unplug electrical appliances if not in use and make sure you don't have any heavy items including furniture, on top of cables as this can damage the cable and start a fire. Don't leave appliances on 'standby' as this could be a potential source of a fire and you will also save money! Buy electrical appliances from reputable sellers and repair or dispose of faulty electrical appliances.

Gas

Do not store combustibles or other items in boiler cupboards as it may affect electrical and gas connections to the boiler causing a fire risk. Do not store gas cylinders inside your home. If you smell gas in your home, turn off the main gas valve located next to your gas meter, open your doors and windows to ventilate the property and evacuate everyone from your home. Do not use a phone inside the property or turn switches on or off.

When outside of the property, phone the National Gas Emergencies number on 0800 111 999. Follow the advice of the emergency adviser and wait for the gas engineer to arrive. Do not re-enter your home.

Candles

Ensure candles are not close to combustibles including curtains and soft furnishings. Don't leave candles unattended and ensure you extinguish them when not in use.

Heaters

Keep combustibles at least 1 meter away from a heater, don't leave an open fire unattended including garden heating equipment and barbeques. Replace faulty heating equipment.

Cooking

Don't leave cooking unattended, keep combustible items away from the oven and hob. Clean any grease build up and residues. Use a deep fat fryer with thermal control rather than a chip pan. Make sure your cooker controls are fully turned off when you finish cooking.

Smoking

Avoid smoking in bed or when you are feeling tired, make sure cigarette ends are properly extinguished. Do not smoke in communal shared areas.

Evacuation Plan

Think about various fire scenarios located in different rooms in your home. Think how you and your family or visitors would get out in a fire situation. Ensure your internal exit routes are clear and you can easily get out of your main doors and fire escape windows.

Children

Supervise young children near ovens and fires. Keep matches and lighters out of reach.

Garden Fire Safety

Take care if having a barbeque or using a fire pit in the garden. Keep heated appliances away from the building, wooden fences, bins and trees. Never empty hot ashes into bins.

Smoke Detectors

North Star provide smoke detectors in your property. Smoke detectors can save lives and alert you that there is a fire in your home. The detector will sound an alarm when smoke particles reach the detector. Never remove a smoke detector and it is recommended to test them weekly.

Home Insurance

It is strongly advised that you have home insurance in place which will help replace any costly items within your home, including furniture, TV's, phones and computer equipment. Expensive items could get accidentally damaged or destroyed in a fire situation. North Star can give advice on obtaining home insurance at a very competitive rate which will give you peace of mind knowing that you can replace those costly items without costing the earth. For more information on home insurance please contact your Housing Officer at North Star on 03000 110 011.

Reporting Fire Safety Concerns and for Further Fire Safety Advice

If you have any fire safety concerns or require further fire safety advice then please contact North Star Customer Services on 03000 110 011 or email customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk

Alternatively, you can contact your local fire authority for advice or to carry out a home fire safety welfare check:

Cleveland Fire Brigade 01429 872311

Durham and Darlington Fire Brigade 0345 305 8383

Tyne and Wear Fire Brigade 0800 032 7777