

Fire Safety

Everyone is responsible for keeping Manitoba Housing homes and properties safe from fire. **In an emergency, call 911 or your local emergency services** to report problems:

- You see a fire being started or one is started anywhere in your home, property or community.
- You see a building that has smoke or fire.
- You are in building where there is smoke or fire.

Examples of when you should call Manitoba Housing at 945-4663 in Winnipeg; or toll free 1-800-661-4663 include:

- Suspicious people or activities in your buildings or on your property who have the potential to start a fire
- Any build up of garbage or other materials that could be a fire hazard
- Any shrubs, snow or other materials that may be blocking fire safety equipment in your building or your property
- Baseboard heaters, thermostats or furnaces that aren't working
- Faulty wiring or broken cover plates
- A broken smoke detector

Fire safety seminars

Manitoba Housing works with tenants, tenant associations, committees and other groups to promote fire safety in our communities by conducting fire safety seminars. To arrange a seminar for your building, property or community, call your leasing office.

Fire safety plans

Manitoba Housing has fire safety plans for buildings that have a common area and for high-rise/low-rise buildings.

- The printed plans are posted near the elevators and in the lobbies of the buildings.
- If you don't live in a unit where you have a shared common area, then you must develop a fire safety plan for yourself.

- Regardless if you live in a building, with or without a common area, you should develop a fire safety plan with your entire family. Draw your plan, to include two ways out of every room including the windows. Pick a meeting place outside, well away from the building.

What to do if there is a fire

In your apartment:

1. Immediately, **get everyone out**. Stay low to the ground as you leave and close the door of the room where the fire is located.
2. **Pull the fire alarm** on your floor to let others know there is a fire.
3. Go down the nearest stairway. **Never use the elevator.**
4. Exit the building and find a phone to **call 911**.
5. Once you have left the building, **stay out of the way of firefighters.**
6. Tell the fire department/fighters if you know of anyone trapped in the building.
7. Go to the predetermined meeting place in your family's fire safety plan

In your building:

1. When you hear the fire alarm, check the corridor for smoke or fire. If the corridor is smoke- free, **use the nearest exit**.
2. If the corridor is blocked, SHUT your door and stay in your suite.
3. **Call 911** to report that you are in the building and give your apartment number.
4. **Keep your door closed** and put wet towels around your door to keep out smoke. Turn off your air conditioner and fill the bathtub with water.
5. If the front door is hot, wet it down with wet towels. Open the windows a few inches unless there is smoke coming from below.
6. **Don't panic**. In a fire resistant building, you are safer in your suite with the door closed, than attempting to escape through fire and smoke.

If your clothing catches fire:

1. **Stop, drop and roll.** Drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands and roll until the fire goes out.
2. If you can't do this, grab a towel or blanket and smother the flames.

Fire Prevention Tips

Manitoba Housing needs your help to prevent fires in your home, buildings and community. Here are tips for you to follow:

Smoking

- Never smoke in bed.
- Avoid careless smoking. Always use proper ashtrays that don't tip.
- Dispose of smoking materials, such as cigarette butts and the contents of ashtrays with caution.
- Never empty ashtrays into combustible containers such as garbage cans or refuse containers.

Electrical

- Never overload electrical circuits.
 - Ensure all extension cords and electrical devices are in good condition.
- Check regularly for loose connections and frayed or exposed wire and discard defective cords.
- Insert plugs fully into outlets. Poor contact may cause overheating or electrical shock.
 - To avoid overheating, do not coil or bunch an extension cord while in use.
 - Never use extension cords under carpets or rugs, across doorways or any place where they will be stepped on or rubbed.
 - Make sure you follow the recommended wattage noted on your light fixtures. Do not use bulbs that exceed the amount.
 - Use light bulb protectors with older style halogen lights.

Heating

- Keep clothing, boxes, bags, papers and other flammable materials away from Furnaces, baseboard heaters, space heaters.
- Keep space heaters away from walls, they need plenty of air to work properly.

Candles

- Place all candles in sturdy holders that won't burn or allow wax to drip onto tables, floors or rugs.

- Extinguish all candles before you leave the room.
- Keep a careful eye around children and pets when you have candles lit.

Basements

- Store flammable materials in the original containers or approved safety containers.
- Do not block entrances.
- Remove lint from dryers after each load.
- Do not place plastic or rubber items in the dryer.
- Do not place items that have been exposed to chemicals in the dryer.

Kitchens

- Keep a portable fire extinguisher in the kitchen.
- Be careful that grease doesn't splatter or spill when cooking.
- Do not use tin foil or any other metal substance in the microwave.
- Wipe appliances and surfaces after cooking to prevent grease buildup.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking. Do not leave the room unless absolutely necessary.
- Never leave your home while food is on the stove, in the oven or microwave.
- Keep the stove and surrounding area clear. Dish towels, pot holders, curtains and aprons can catch fire easily, so keep them away from the stove at all times.
- Turn pot handles towards the centre of the stove.
- Never wear loose clothing while cooking.
- Always heat oil slowly over moderate heat.
- Turn all stove and oven elements and other cooking devices off as soon after use.
- Ensure all appliances are turned off when not in use.
- Keep all heat-producing appliances away from the wall and away from anything that might burn.

What to do if a cooking fire starts

- If a pot or pan catches fire, carefully slide a lid over the pot or pan and turn

off the stove. Leave the lid on until completely cool.

- If there is a fire in the oven or microwave, keep the door shut.
- Never throw water on a grease fire. Water will cause grease fires to spread.

Around children and pets

- Keep children and pets away from fires, candles, stoves, fireplaces and flammable materials.
- Do not store cookies, cereal, or other treats for small children near the stove.
- Young children should be kept at least one metre (three feet) away from the stove while older family members are cooking.
- Older children should cook only with permission and under the supervision of a grown-up.
- Cover unused wall outlets with safety caps.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach, preferably in a locked cabinet. Use only child resistant lighters.

Smoke detectors

- For the safety of you and your family, you should regularly test your smoke detector to make sure that it is working properly.
- Get into the habit of checking each day to see if the red or green indicator light is on. If the light is on, your smoke detector is working. If the red or green indicator light is not on, call Manitoba Housing.
- Once a week, depress the test button on the detector; within five seconds the alarm should emit a constant sound. To stop the alarm, release the button.

If the alarm does not sound, contact Manitoba Housing.

- Following an electrical storm, you should check your smoke detector to see if the indicator light is on.
- **Never tamper with smoke detectors, under any circumstances.** Once activated, they will stop on their own. Tampering with a fire alarm system or any fire protection equipment is a criminal offence, subject to a heavy fine, imprisonment, or both. You would also seriously jeopardize your tenancy with Manitoba Housing.