

Safety with Electrics

As your landlord, we check the electrical circuits to individual homes at least every 10 years, and communal areas every 5 years. We do this to see if your home needs updated wiring or if there is any damaged wiring or sockets.

If you are experiencing a problem with the electricity supply in your area or a power cut, need information on electricity meters or wish to report a safety issue or incident, please contact your local electrical supplier.

However, if you are experiencing an emergency electrical issue in your home please call JJH on 0345 305 5335. Examples of emergency electrical repairs include:

- Unsafe or sparking electrical sockets or fittings
- No electrics/ total loss
- Lights out in all communal stairs

Electrical dangers around your home

Electrical accidents are most likely to happen when equipment is damaged or misused. If you have damaged cables, plugs or sockets, they can cause electric shocks, burns and fires.

Plugs and cables can suffer damage over time. To check your appliance's cables and plug, make sure the appliance is unplugged and then check the cable from end-to-end and ask the following questions:

- Is it securely attached to the appliance and the plug?
- Is it cut, worn or damaged in any way?

Also, make sure that you:

- Check the plug and socket for burn marks, buzzing or crackling sounds or a blown fuse.
- Remove plugs from sockets carefully. Pulling out a plug by the cable puts a strain on it and could damage the contact between the plug and the socket. This could result in the plug overheating, its wires becoming loose or an electric shock (if the earth wire is disconnected)
- Use plugs with the British Standard safety mark. They have live and neutral pins with insulating sleeves that allow you to put them in and pull them out of sockets safely.
- Check that the cable is firmly clamped in the plug and that no coloured wires are showing. Always replace damaged cables immediately. Touching exposed live wires may give you an electric shock or you could even be killed.

Common electrical dangers at home

- Never repair an appliance while it's still plugged in. You risk injury from electric shock, burns or injury from moving appliance parts.
- Never run cables under a carpet or rug to keep them out of the way. These are a trip hazard but are also a fire risk.

- Never dry clothes on an electric heater. If the ventilation holes are covered, or if water drips into the heater, it could cause an electric shock or fire.
- Get a registered electrician to install downlights as installing them incorrectly or fitting the wrong replacement lamp can pose a serious fire risk in your home. Remember to keep instructions for reference when you need to replace lamps. Make a note of the downlight's lamp wattage and type.
- Don't store combustible materials (clothes, papers, cleaning materials etc.) close to electrical equipment.
- Be careful when hanging pictures and putting up shelves. Don't drill holes or fix nails in walls without knowing what is behind them. They could be hiding electrical cables and gas and water pipes. Use a cable and metal detector to find these.
- Most homes have four electrical sockets in each room, however, sometimes this might not be enough. If you need to use an extension lead, be careful not to overload it. Use the online calculator at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/overloadingsockets to make sure you're not overloading an extension lead.
- Never plug an adapter or extension lead into another adapter or extension lead.

Electrical health & safety in your kitchen

Because of the potential combination of water and electricity in the kitchen, it's important that electrical appliances are installed correctly.

- Make sure electrical appliances are kept at a safe distance from the sink.
- If appliances such as fridges, dishwashers and washing machines are fitted under worktops, it could make getting to sockets difficult. If possible, make sure these appliances have a switched fuse connection unit mounted above the worktop which you can reach it easily.
- Check that leads and appliances such as kettles and toasters are in good condition.
- Don't use any electrical equipment or switches when your hands are wet.
- Don't wrap flexible cables around any equipment when it is still warm.
- Don't clean or try to repair an appliance when it is still plugged in.
- Don't try to remove bread from a toaster unless it's unplugged.
- Don't fill a kettle or steam iron when it is plugged in.

Electrical health & safety in your bathroom

- Don't bring electrical appliances such as hairdryers, heaters or radios into a bathroom. You could be severely injured or killed.
- Sockets are not allowed in bathrooms or shower rooms (apart from shaver-supply units) unless they are fitted at least three metres from the bath or shower.
- Shaver-supply units must be a safe distance from the bath or shower to avoid splashes.
- A ceiling-mounted pull-cord switch with the cord made of insulating material is the safest option for a bathroom. Standard wall-mounted light switches are a possible danger because of dampness and wet hands.
- Central heating is a good way of keeping a bathroom warm. But, if you do have an electric room heater, it must be fixed at a safe distance from the bath or shower.
- Electric and gas water heaters in a bathroom must be fixed and permanently wired, unless they are powered by a socket fitted three metres from a bath or shower.