

## **PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST FIRE**

*Information and suggestions for tenants of rented properties*

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### **Rescue**

Rescue yourself and others whose lives are in danger.

### **Warn**

Warn everyone in the vicinity who may be threatened by the fire.

### **Alarm**

Call 112. Tell them where the fire is and what is on fire, whether anyone is trapped and who you are. Meet the emergency services when they arrive.

### **Extinguish**

Extinguish the fire if you think this can be done without risk.

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### **If a fire starts**

If the fire starts, you have a couple of minutes before your home will be filled with smoke. You must then act quickly and correctly.

- If fire catches hold in the apartment in which you are located, shut off the fire to prevent it spreading and try to get out. Call 112.
- Remain in your apartment if a neighbouring apartment has caught fire or if there is smoke in the stairwell. Do not go into a smoke-filled stairwell. Call 112. Stand in front of a window or balcony so that you can be seen.

### **Get out safely**

Smoke is the greatest threat during a fire. Most people who die in a fire die from smoke inhalation, not the flames. Smoke from the fire will make you drowsy and suffocate you, making it difficult to know exactly where you are if you are trying to get out. Smoke always rises. You will be able to see better and breathe more easily down on the floor, under the smoke, so crouch down or crawl on all fours if necessary.

### **Shut off the fire**

If fire has taken hold in your apartment and you cannot put it out, shut off the fire. Help others, get yourselves out, and close the door behind you when everyone has got out. Avoid smoke-filled spaces where possible, and never take the lift in the event of a fire.

### **Never go into a smoke-filled stairwell**

If fire has taken hold in a neighbour's apartment and there is smoke in the stairwell, stay in your apartment and wait for help. An apartment will normally resist fire for around an hour, and the door to the apartment is usually able to resist fire for half an hour.

### **Extinguish the fire**

Small fires in the home can be put out without any special extinguishing equipment. If a fire starts when you are cooking, you should smother the fire using a lid or fire blanket. Fires in fat, gas and flammable liquids can only be extinguished by removing all oxygen. If you pour water onto burning fat or oil, this may cause a steam explosion that could spread the fire and cause severe burns. You can use water to extinguish fires in timber, paper and textiles or smother the fire using a blanket, carpet or the like.

### **Fire extinguishers**

It is good to have a fire extinguisher in your home to put small fires out quickly. A 6 kg powder extinguisher and fire blanket are good extinguishing equipment to have in the home. You can extinguish most kinds of small fires using a dry powder extinguisher.

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### **How to protect yourself**

There are several things you can do to protect yourself against fire:

- Ensure that you have a smoke detector, fire extinguisher and fire blanket in your apartment.
- Regularly test your smoke detector.
- Avoid storing items in the stairwell and basement corridors.
- Do not leave the kitchen when cooking food.

### **Smoke detectors**

Smoke detectors can save lives if a fire starts when you are asleep. They react to life-threatening smoke, alerting you. Locate smoke detectors so that you can hear them when you are sleeping. A large apartment requires several detectors, for example one in each bedroom. They should be fitted to the ceiling, at least 50 centimetres from the closest wall.

Check the function of smoke detectors at least once a month or after you have been away for an extended period. Test them by using the test button. Change the battery when smoke detectors warn you that the battery is dying or if it is not working.

Clean your smoke detectors once a year. Vacuum and dry the outside of the smoke detector.

### **Avoid locking yourself in too much**

Obviously, you should be able to lock yourself into your home. However, it is much more difficult to get out during a fire if you lock the door from the inside using a key and not just the lock thumb turn. It also makes it difficult for the emergency services to rescue you in an emergency situation.

### **Stove guard**

A stove guard is a sensor that monitors a cooker, which may be a good safety device for you. It has an in-built timer which means that the oven will turn itself off if left on for too long or if a fire starts.

### **Insurance**

Home insurance cannot protect you against fire, but it is good to have insurance that covers what you may have lost if an accident were to happen. It is best to keep photographs and a list of items in your home in a safe place.

### **Communal areas**

A stairwell is an evacuation route and must be kept clear so that the emergency services can get through if required. Therefore, prams, shoes or bicycles must never be left in the stairwell or entrance, nor rubbish bins, furniture or other items. This also applies to basement corridors and outside storerooms. Besides being untidy and impeding access, it may increase the risk of a fire being started deliberately; at least one in four fires are started deliberately.

*Stuff left in stairwells and other communal areas represents a fire hazard.*

### **Hazards in the kitchen**

Fat and oil may start to burn if the temperature gets too high. You should therefore always have a lid to hand when you are frying or deep frying. A fire on the oven must be smothered, and the easiest way of doing this is using the pan lid. Never leave the kitchen when cooking food.

Regularly clean the kitchen fan filter. Fat can accumulate there, and if it catches fire the fire can easily spread in the kitchen and through ventilation channels to other parts of the building.

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Never leave the kitchen when cooking food.

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*The stairwell is your evacuation route. Keep it clear!*

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### **Other considerations**

- Household appliances, white goods and chargers for electrical products may catch fire. You can reduce the risk of such fires by looking after these products and using them correctly.
- Never leave a candle unattended!
- Be careful with smoking, fireworks and flammable liquids.

### **Electrical products**

Chargers, video games, lamps and computers – we have a lot of electrical equipment in our homes that could overheat. This is a common cause of fire, so be careful not to cover them. Electrical equipment needs to be looked after. Ensure that cables and plugs are intact. Do not use bulbs that exceed the wattage permitted for the light fitting.

*Household appliances*

Always remove the plug when you have finished with your coffee maker, iron or toaster.

*Televisions, computers, stereos and mobiles*

A good way of avoiding television fires is to always turn the television off by the switch, not just with the remote control. It is also important not to obstruct televisions, videos, computers and stereos so

that air is prevented from circulating.

Charge mobile phones or tablets when you are at home and awake. Lay the product you are charging on a hard surface and remove items that could catch fire.

#### *Laundry and dish washing*

It is more common for fires to start in washing machines, tumble driers and dishwashers than you think. You should therefore not leave these machines on when you are going to bed or leaving the house.

#### **Flammable liquids**

Flammable liquids, such as petrol, methylated spirits and kerosene, should be stored in their original packaging with their original labels, and in a place where they cannot be accessed by children. It is extremely dangerous to use these liquids to light a grill or bonfire, as they give off fumes that are explosive.

Store as little flammable liquids as possible in your home (no more than ten litres), and never keep them in a basement or attic storeroom. Rags used for, for example, furniture polish, turpentine or teak oil can self-ignite. Wash them in warm water and hang them in an airy place.

#### **Smoking risk**

The most common reason for people losing their lives in house fires is a smouldering cigarette. No fire or flames are required for someone to die in their sleep. All that is required is carbon monoxide which develops when furniture or clothing burns. It is therefore very dangerous to smoke in bed, on your armchair or sofa.

Always ensure that cigarette ends are fully extinguished when you empty an ashtray. A safe way of doing this is to put them into water before throwing them into the bin.

#### **Candles and fireworks**

If you light candles, choose solid candlesticks in non-flammable materials. Textile candle rings represent a risk. Place the candle at a safe distance from materials that may catch fire, and do not allow them to burn down completely. Never put a tea light directly onto a table or bench, nor too close together. Never leave children alone with candles or an open fire. A good rule is that the person who has lit the candle also extinguishes it, or the last person out of the room extinguishes the candle.

Fireworks cause many fires. Follow their instructions and do not fire rockets so that they could end up on someone's balcony, window or another place where they could cause a fire.

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#### **Facts about fire**

##### **How you should extinguish fires:**

###### CLOTHING

If someone's clothes catch fire it is vital to respond very quickly: lay the person on the ground. Smother the fire using a fire blanket or anything else that is available. Apply the fire blanket from the head downwards to avoid the flames going towards the person's face.

###### TIMBER, TEXTILES, PAPER OR FURNITURE

Extinguish using a fire blanket, water or fire extinguisher.

## *Insticksblad till SABOs broschyr Skydda dig mot brand*

*Språk: Engelska*

### OIL OR FAT

If these catch fire on the oven, put a lid on to smother the fire. You can also use a fire blanket. Turn off the fan. Never attempt to use water to extinguish a fire in a saucepan or frying pan.

### STEARIN

Smother the fire using a fire blanket or similar, or use a fire extinguisher.

### ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

First remove the plug. Then extinguish using water or your fire extinguisher. Whenever possible, try to get the equipment out into the open, for example onto the balcony.

### FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS

Extinguish the fire using your fire extinguisher or smother it using a fire blanket or similar.

### **Did you know that ...**

- More than a hundred people die in fires every year, and almost nine out of ten deaths by fire occur in the home.
- Most people who die in a fire die from its smoke not from the flames.

### **Simple suggestions to prevent fires**

- Never smoke in bed.
- Stay at home when the washing machine, dishwasher or tumble drier is on.
- Never cover electrical elements or equipment.
- Ensure that lamps and spotlights are not close to anything flammable or could fall over.
- Replace blinking fluorescent lighting tubes. They may be overheating. Replace starters at the same time.
- Pull out plugs when hair dryers, mobile phone chargers and computers are not being used.
- Take care of cables. A damaged cable could cause a short circuit and fire.
- Place tea lights away from each other. If they are close together, the heat can get so high that all of the stearin ignites, producing a large flame.
- Ensure that there is nothing above lit candles and that they are on a firm base.
- Blow out candles when you leave the room.

### **Common causes of fire include:**

- Food forgotten in the oven
- Fires started deliberately
- Smoking
- Candles