



Maintenance Problems – A Guide for Tenants

Reporting Maintenance Problems or Repairs

To report a repair or maintenance issue if we are managing your rental, please call us on 01242 603601 and email lettings@adamsestateagents.com. Our office is open Monday – Friday 9am to 5.30pm and 9am to 3pm Saturdays. We will help as soon as we can but we've also put together some information on common problems and troubleshooting tips below which may well help you initially or if there is an issue out of hours.

Emergency Repairs

Please ensure that only emergencies are reported direct to our contractors out of hours – **an emergency is any situation that could cause imminent danger to yourself or others or severe damage to the property. Some examples of such maintenance concerns that cannot wait include: broken water lines or frozen/burst pipes, broken external doors or locks meaning you cannot secure the property, a Gas leak, a severe sewer back-up or flood, Electrical safety issues, Carbon Monoxide detection.**

Advice on how to deal with less urgent and common maintenance issues, however, is listed below and this should be referred to in the first instance and any problems reported to us. Please be mindful on what is and what isn't an emergency, it is not unreasonable to have to wait for some issues to be dealt with in working hours just as a property owner may well have to wait for a plumber to be able to visit on a weekday, a reasonable should be expected - the main exception being when there is water is pouring through the ceiling of course!

Please refer to the tips and advice below which may enable you to resolve minor issues yourself in some instances. If you still believe it's an emergency and you require urgent contractor's assistance to make the property safe, then use our emergency contractor details listed below. If the issue is not deemed an emergency or a landlord responsibility, you may be held liable for paying the contractor's out of hours bill. Wait to speak with us when we are open to resolve your issue whenever possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS:

Gas Emergency

If you smell gas or suspect a gas leak, please call the National Grid service on 0800 111 999 and they will respond immediately. If possible, turn off your gas supply at the meter and ventilate the property and follow their instructions

Plumbing and Heating Engineers (Your gas safety certificate will refer to one of these contractors)

Gary Wills & Co – Telephone 01242 620634 or 07879611614

Rob Shackleton – 01242 602115

Electrician

Ellis Electrical – Telephone Lee: 07973 816523

Locksmith

Select Services – Telephone Steve Castledine: 07840415093

MAINTENANCE SELF- HELP AND ADVICE FOR TENANTS:

Advice on how to deal with common issues that can occur during or out of hours is listed below and should be referred to.

Heating

If you have gas central heating and it stops working, there are a few things to check as, although needing a resolution, it would not in itself be considered an emergency. You should have a user manual at your property to assist but you can normally access the user guide for your boiler online, just search for the make and model.

It may be worth resetting the boiler in the first instance if there is a problem, or an error code, the user guide should explain how to do this.

One of the most common boiler faults on combination gas boilers is low pressure. This means there is not enough water in the system causing it to stop. There is a dial on the front of your boiler to show the pressure. Your boiler may need the pressure topping up from time to time and it should be around 1.5. If you've not done this before the boiler manufacturer will have instructions and often a video guide online. It is often simple to do. You normally just need to switch the boiler off and turn a small dial/tap under the boiler to let more water in to the system, then turn this back to the original position when the pressure is back to 1.5 on the dial. If you are needing to do this on a regular basis let us know as it can mean there is a slight leak to the system. If you have a traditional gas boiler and hot water storage tank this will not apply so, please contact us.

If your radiators are heating only partially but feel cold in some areas they may just need to be 'bled' to be efficient. This just involves letting a little air and water out using a radiator key. These can be purchased at DIY shops and we keep spares in our office.

If you are not comfortable doing any of these things or they do not solve the issue please do contact us for further help. Loss of heating is not considered to be an emergency in itself even out of hours but we will get it attended to as soon as possible. Just as a home-owner would do, a tenant may have to wait until a plumber can attend. Temporary use of an electric fan heater will help. Similarly, temporary loss of hot water is not an emergency.

Any slight plumbing leaks can normally be managed by catching in a container until a plumber can attend. A complete flood/burst pipe however will of course need urgent attention (see below).

Smoke Alarms

If a smoke alarm is beeping intermittently then you may need to change the battery. Mains wired alarms also have batteries. Instructions on how to do this can vary. If in doubt check the user guide online, video tutorials are available online. Sometimes a flat screwdriver is required to pop open the cover of the smoke detector. If you need any help with this, please let us know.

Frozen Pipes

Pipes which come into your property from the outside of the building can sometimes freeze during the winter, this can also happen internally if your property gets very cold. Over the winter, please ensure the heating is left on a low regular setting if you are not at your property to avoid pipes freezing and isolate and drain any outside taps. In the event of a burst pipe please turn off your stop cock and drain water from the system by running the taps and contact us immediately or emergency plumber if we are not available.

Gas Leak - If you smell gas, you should immediately call the national supply service on 0800 111 999, they will assist immediately and investigate the problem. If a fault is detected, follow their instructions and notify us as soon as possible.

Mould and Mildew

If you notice small black spots forming – common places are near windows or in the bathroom – wipe them down with a bleach spray straight away. Your property will need regular heating and ventilation to prevent moisture building up. Windows should be opened to let moisture out, even in winter. Check out our guide to managing condensation or contact us for more advice.

Electrical Supply

If you lose power to the whole of your property, please check in the first instance that the problem is not a supply issue. You should see whether your neighbours have the same problem and contact National Grid if they do on 0800 40 40 90.

If the problem is only with your property check the fuse box in the first instance – a fault or faulty appliance may have caused the circuit to trip. Put any switches to the on position that have moved to off. Each switch covers a circuit of lights or plugs, they are usually labelled (e.g., lights upstairs.)

If this does not work, you may need to ensure each switch and socket within the property is switched off before trying to move the fuse switch again. You can switch each one back on one by one and this can identify the fault. The circuit will trip when the faulty appliance or light is switched back on.

Let us know if your electricity is tripping or if this does not resolve the issue for further advice. There are also video guides on how to reset your fuse box on YouTube.

Leaks and Water Ingress

If there is a leak coming into your property from above you must make the occupier of any property above aware immediately so they can arrange for a plumber to resolve the problem and switch off their water. Let us know as soon as possible. If there is a general leak into your property when it rains, please contact us during office hours.

If you have a plumbing leak or burst pipe in your property let us know as soon as possible and switch off the mains water until a plumber can attend. This will ensure damage is limited. The location of the stopcock, which turns off the mains water supply, is normally on your inventory. Common places are under the sink, in downstairs toilets, outside flat doors. It is worth running taps to empty them and setting some water aside for your use.

Roof Leaks

Please notify us as soon as possible of a roof leak, and collect water in a bucket to limit any damage. Contractors cannot safely access the roof while it is raining so they will need to wait until the rain stops to attend and action any repairs.

Lost Keys

If the office is closed, we are unable to provide spare keys out of hours. Spare keys can be collected during working hours. If you lock yourself out, please contact a local locksmith to let you back in or make arrangements to stay with a friend. If the locks require changing you will be responsible for the cost of this and for providing copies of any new keys.

River or flash flooding - The local Fire Service can assist.

Please contact our approved contractors for out of hours emergencies but if this fails and you absolutely need to make alternative arrangements for an essential emergency repair you can do so – hold onto any receipts or invoices and contact us the next working day.