



Renting or hiring a house or apartment

Important electrical and gas safety information you need to know before you rent or hire a property.

If you rent or hire a home or apartment, your landlord has a duty under electrical and gas safety laws to ensure the property is safe for you or people who visit or work there.

Does the property have RCDs fitted?

A rental property, including houses or apartments, must have at least two RCDs fitted to protect all lighting and circuits.

Check that these RCDs are installed before entering into a tenancy agreement.

If there are not two RCDs installed:

1. Ask the landlord or property manager to have them installed to comply with the law.
2. If the landlord or property manager does not arrange for RCDs to be installed, send them a written request, and keep a copy of the letter.
3. If, within a reasonable time frame, the RCDs have still not been installed, send Building and Energy a copy of the letter requesting RCDs be fitted, a copy of the rental agreement and a photograph of the main switchboard (where the RCDs should be located) to be.info@dmirs.wa.gov.au or to Locked Bag 100, East Perth WA 6892.
4. An inspection of the property will follow and if RCDs are required an Order will be issued to the property owner.
5. Following the issue of an Order, a landlord or property manager must arrange for RCDs to be installed.



Testing

To ensure their integrity, it is strongly recommended that RCDs are tested every three months by pressing the test button on the front. This will simulate an earth leakage fault. If the RCD is operating correctly it will snap off and all power will be lost to the circuit protected by the RCD.

You should inform the landlord or property manager if the RCD does not operate, and they should arrange for it to be replaced immediately by a licensed electrical contractor. For information on how to test an RCD, watch the Building and Energy [video on testing RCDs](#).



Does the property have smoke alarms fitted?

Owners who rent or hire a property are required by law to have compliant smoke alarms installed and to ensure they are maintained.

This includes ensuring the smoke alarm:

- is in working order;
- is permanently connected to mains power;
- is less than 10 years old, or has not reached its expiry date if one is provided on the alarm; and
- if the use of a battery powered smoke alarm has been approved, the alarm has a 10-year life battery that cannot be removed.

How to maintain smoke alarms

To remain in working order, smoke alarms should be tested and maintained regularly. They should:

- be tested once per month to ensure the battery and alarm sounder are working;
- be checked for build-up of dust and cobwebs and cleaned with a vacuum cleaner every six months;
- be vacuumed with a soft brush attachment around smoke alarm vents;
- be sprayed with surfaced insect spray around the smoke alarm;
- never be painted; and
- have batteries replaced annually (mains powered smoke alarms generally have back-up batteries).

Further information can be found in the [Smoke alarm laws fact sheet](#).

Electric shocks and tingles

An electric shock occurs when a person comes into contact with electricity, causing the electrical current to flow through their body.

Electric shocks from taps, pipes, appliances, or other exposed metallic surfaces are warning signs that something could be wrong with the electrical wiring or appliances.

If you receive an electric shock or tingle, you should:

1. Immediately report the electric shock or tingle, however minor, to your network operator (contact numbers across).
2. Then report the electric shock to your landlord or property manager.
3. Avoid touching any metallic appliances, water taps, gas fittings or metallic surfaces until the network operator determines the cause of the fault.
4. Seek medical attention. Regardless of how minor the electric shock was, you should seek medical attention, as an electric shock can affect your body some time after it occurred.

If the network operator determines that the shock was caused by a problem with their network, they will remedy the fault. If it is found to stem from a fixed appliance or electrical wiring within the property, the landlord or property manager must engage a licensed electrical contractor to fix the fault.

Warning signs

Examples to look out for include:

- an electric shock from water pipes, taps, gas fittings, appliances or any exposed metallic surface;
- unexplained brightening and dimming of lights; and
- unusual performance from electrical appliances (e.g. unusual noises from an air-conditioning unit or fans).

What does the network operator fix and when do I need an electrical contractor?

Network operators are responsible for issues occurring up to the point of connection and the metering section of the switchboard.

Any wiring from where the network connects with the property's electrical wiring, including the main switchboard (but excluding the meter), is the responsibility of the landlord. A licensed electrical contractor will be required to carry out any repairs to this wiring.

Hard-wired electrical appliances such as ovens, stoves and air conditioners are also the responsibility of the landlord. Privately owned appliances connected by plug and cord are the responsibility of the appliance owner.

If there is a power pole located within the property boundary that supports the overhead electricity supply cable to the property, the landlord is responsible for having it repaired or replaced if required by the network operator.

	Network operator	Electrical contractor
Light fittings, power points and other fixed electrical appliances/equipment		x
RCDs		x
Rectification of network fault causing shocks and tingles	x	
Rectification of fixed appliances, appliances not owned by the tenant or electrical wiring within property causing shocks or tingles		x
Private power poles located within property boundaries		x
Power poles outside property boundary and green domes	x	

Network operator contact numbers

- Western Power 13 13 51
- Horizon Power 13 23 51
- Rio Tinto: 1800 992 777
- BHP Billiton: 1300 632 483 – option 4
- Indian Ocean Territories Power Service (IOTPS) and Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands: 9164 7111
- Building and Energy (where the Network Operator is not known): 1800 678 198

Does the property have fixed gas appliances or bayonets?

If your rental property has fixed gas appliances or bayonets installed there are certain requirements that your landlord must adhere to.

If the property is fitted with a gas bayonet fitting (quick connect device socket) to allow the connection of an indoor flue-less gas heater, the room is required to have two permanent ventilation openings direct to outside. The openings are required to be provided at high and low levels with a minimum vertical separation of 1.5m.

The physical external dimensions of each vent should be not less than the equivalent of 310mm x 170mm (to provide for a minimum open area of 25,000 square mm based on the vent design having an open area of 48 per cent).

If your property has fixed gas appliances, such as a gas heater, gas stove or hot water system, it is recommended that these appliances are serviced at least every two years. If the appliance is more than 10 years old, it should be serviced annually.

Check the service sticker on the appliance, if it is due for a service ask your landlord or property manager to call a licensed gas fitter or service agent.

Did you receive a Gas Safety Certificate in your lease agreement?

It is recommended that prior to a rental agreement being entered into, the landlord or property manager should arrange an inspection of the gas installation by a licensed gas fitter.

The gas fitter will provide the landlord or property manager a completed safety assessment checklist and a gas safety certificate that will provide a compliant, non-compliant or unsafe assessment.

If it is not provided in your lease agreement, ask your landlord or property manager for a copy of the gas safety certificate.

What to do if you smell gas

If you smell gas, you should follow your gas suppliers' instructions. However, the steps below offer general information on making the situation safe.

1. Turn off the supply of gas to the building at the meter or LP gas cylinder. Turning off the gas at the meter may not stop the leak, as it may be coming from a nearby gas main or service.
2. If you consider it necessary, evacuate the building.

3. Eliminate ignition sources by extinguishing any naked flames, do not smoke, or light matches and lighters and do not touch any electrical switches.
4. If lights are on, leave them on.
5. Ventilate the building by opening all the doors and windows.
6. Notify the gas supplier.
7. Do not enter the gas-affected area.

Gas safety tips to keep your family safe

Whether the gas appliance is the responsibility of the landlord or yourself, there are some simple safety tips to help keep you and your family safe.

- Keep gas appliances clean and free of dust.
- Make sure the area where you are using the appliance, is well ventilated.
- Never use outdoor appliances such as barbecues and patio heaters inside
- Gas appliances shall not be installed or operated where the operation of any ventilation system, air distribution system, fan, or air blower could adversely affect the operation of the appliance. Running multiple exhaust fans together with flued gas appliances is capable of drawing flue products back into well-sealed rooms.
- Never modify gas appliances or use them for purposes contrary to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure the appliance is serviced at least every two years. If the appliance is more than 10 years old, it should be serviced annually.
- Make sure that permanent ventilation openings are not blocked.
- Check flues are not blocked or obstructed.
- Check the outer case of your space heater. Is it discoloured? Discolouration is an indication of a faulty flue and that it is time to have it checked by a licensed gas fitter.
- If you have difficulty re-lighting the gas appliance, inform your landlord or call a licensed gas fitter or service agent.
- Check the flame appearance - a yellow flame can indicate that your gas appliance is not operating correctly and needs servicing.

Gas supplier contact numbers:

- ATCO Gas 13 13 52
- Kleenheat Gas 1800 093 336
- Origin Energy 1800 808 526
- Elgas 1800 819 783
- Clean Energy Fuels Australia 1300 292 200
- Supa Gas 1300 275 021
- Hills Gas Supply 9291 5551
- Building and Energy 1800 678 198

Disclaimer – The information contained in this fact sheet is provided as general information and a guide only. It should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations, you should obtain independent legal advice.

Building and Energy | Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

1300 489 099

8.30am – 4.30pm

Level 1 Mason Bird Building
303 Sevenoaks Street (entrance Grose Avenue)
Cannington Western Australia 6107

M: **Locked Bag 100, East Perth WA 6892**

W: www.dmirns.wa.gov.au/building-and-energy

E: be.info@dmirs.wa.gov.au

Regional Offices

Goldfields/Esperance	(08) 9021 9494
Great Southern	(08) 9842 8366
Kimberley	(08) 9191 8400
Mid-West	(08) 9920 9800
North-West	(08) 9185 0900
South-West	(08) 9722 2888

National Relay Service: 13 36 77

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS): 13 14 50

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