

Tenant Guide to Property Health & Safety

OceAn
HOUSING



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Asbestos Advice for Tenants

INTRODUCTION

A number of Ocean homes contain asbestos. Ocean is committed to ensure that all materials containing asbestos are safe. Asbestos containing materials (ACM's) which are in good condition and not disturbed, do not pose a risk to your health.

This information addresses concerns and questions about asbestos in homes. It explains what it is, where it is found, why it might be a problem and how to deal with it.

Asbestos is resistant to heat and chemicals. This led to widespread use in a range of building products and materials from the 1930's to the mid 1980's. Uses included thermal and acoustic insulations, reinforcement in asbestos cement products and fire protection materials. Properties built after 1990 are extremely unlikely to contain asbestos in the building.

What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral (fibrous silicate) that is contained within rock, these fibres are then separated and woven to make asbestos product:

1. **Amosite**
(known as Brown Asbestos)
2. **Chrysotile**
(known as white Asbestos)
3. **Crocidolite**
(known as Blue Asbestos)



Where is asbestos likely to be in the home?

It is not always easy to tell whether a product contains asbestos as modern asbestos-free materials often look similar – remember it is usually older products that contain asbestos. Loft or cavity wall insulation does not contain asbestos.

Below identifies some common areas where asbestos may be found. The list is not all-inclusive as many products contain asbestos.



Exterior

1. Roof tiles/felt
(house, shed or garage)
2. Gutters and down-pipes
3. Fascia/soffit boards



Interior

4. Partition walls
5. Panels beneath windows
6. Cupboards around domestic boilers
7. Panels behind electrical equipment
8. Bath Panels
9. Panels inside fire doors
10. Floor tiles
11. Textured coatings (artex)
12. Panels behind heaters or fires
13. Gaskets and rope seals inside heating appliances
14. Cold water storage tanks

What should I do if I suspect there is asbestos in my home?

Make regular checks of any material you think contains asbestos. Do not touch it, but look for signs of wear and damage such as tears, abrasions or water damage. Damaged material may release asbestos fibres, especially if you often disturb it by working or handling it.

Don't X

Carry out DIY works, sand, drill or strip any products known to contain asbestos

✓ Do

Try not to damage any product known to contain asbestos

Do ✓

Keep activities to a minimum where damaged products may contain asbestos

X Don't

Dust, vacuum or sweep debris that may contain asbestos

**DO NOT TAKE RISKS –
If in any doubt please contact Ocean**

Asbestos Management

Ocean has an Asbestos Policy and a comprehensive asset management register. These set out exactly how Ocean intends to identify and manage asbestos in all Ocean properties.

As part of the ongoing stock condition survey process, Ocean will survey, identify and record any material suspected to contain asbestos.

All asbestos containing material that is in good condition will remain in position and its condition will be regularly reviewed. If material is damaged, Ocean will take the necessary action to seal or have the asbestos removed.



Condensation and Mould in your home

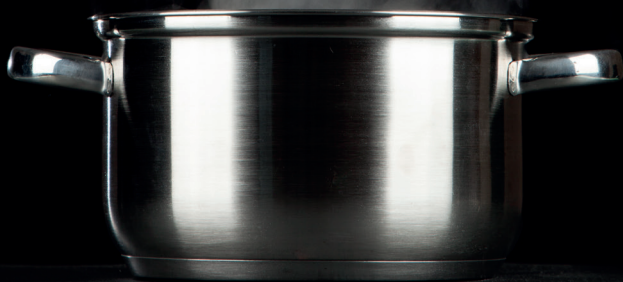
What is condensation and what causes it?

When you have had a hot bath or shower and the cold surface of the bathroom mirror mists over, this is condensation. It happens when warm moist air comes into contact with a cold surface or cold air and produces tiny droplets of water.

Condensation can be more of a problem in the cold winter months, where it is often found next to windows, in the corners of rooms and behind wardrobes. Over time this can cause black mould and damp patches to appear.

What we do in our homes has a direct effect on the amount of condensation created. Cooking, washing, drying clothes inside, even breathing puts moisture into the air – but we don't suggest you stop doing that!

The good news is that there are easy steps you can take to prevent condensation and to stop the damp and mould it causes:



Reduce the moisture in your home

- Avoid creating a lot of steam in the kitchen – cover pans and don't leave the kettle boiling
- If fitted, use an extractor fan when cooking or bathing and for at least 30 minutes afterwards
- Shut the bathroom door when bathing or showering
- If you are running a bath, put the cold water in first to reduce the amount of steam
- Dry clothes outside and where this is not possible, in the bathroom with the door closed and windows open or extractor fan on
- Do not dry washing on your radiators
- Ensure the air from your tumble dryer is vented to the outside






















Ventilate your home to keep the air circulating

- Keep a window or trickle vents slightly open when you're using a room.
- Move furniture away from walls to allow air to circulate behind
- Air cupboards and wardrobes and avoid putting too much in them as this stops air circulating

Keep your home at a constant temperature

- In cold weather consider keeping the heating on at a constant temperature all day. Warm walls and an even temperature reduce the likelihood of condensation and damp

You can use this table below to work out how much moisture is produced in your home in a day:

Some of the things that create moisture in the home	Pints of Water produced 
2 people at home for 1 day	  
Cooking and boiling a kettle	     
Having a bath or shower	 
Washing clothes	
Drying clothes	       

Getting rid of mould and damp

Any condensation that forms on surfaces should be wiped off promptly to prevent the risk of damp and mould. If mould still appears in your home, wipe it with a fungicidal wash – you can buy this in most large supermarkets or DIY stores. Alternatively you can use a very weak bleach solution.

Please make sure you wear rubber gloves and follow manufacturer's instructions

Other causes of damp

The only lasting way to avoid severe mould is to reduce condensation in your home by following the tips provided. In rare cases damp can be caused by other factors such as a leaking pipe, missing or broken roof tiles or blocked cavities. In these cases the damp normally leaves a 'tide mark' that can occur at any time of year. If you believe that damp is in your home is caused by such a defect, please call 01726 874450



If using a bleach solution for cleaning please make sure you wear rubber gloves and follow manufacturer's instructions



Gas Safety at home

It is important to take care of your gas appliances. Get your gas appliances checked once a year by our Gas Safe Registered Engineers. Annual maintenance not only helps keep your heating and hot water working properly, it helps keep you safe.



Badly fitted and poorly serviced gas appliances can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions and carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a highly poisonous gas. You cannot see it, taste it or smell it but it can kill quickly with no warning.

If a gas fitter is not registered, they are working illegally and possibly unsafely. Saving pennies may seem like a good idea but using an illegal gas fitter could cost you and your family your lives so don't risk it.

As a landlord Ocean has a legal duty under gas safety law to have gas appliances checked once a year by their Gas Safe registered engineers and will maintain them in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Ocean will also issue a gas safety record following inspections and servicing.

For more information on landlords and tenants responsibilities visit:

www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk/renting

Keep safe in your home with these top tips:

- Only use a Gas Safe registered engineer to fit, fix or service your gas appliances
- Get your gas appliances regularly serviced according to the manufacturer's instructions and safety checked every year
- The poisonous gas carbon monoxide cannot be seen or smelt. Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm. It should be marked to EN 50291 and also have the British Standards Kitemark or European approval organisations mark on it
- Check for warning signs that your gas appliances are not working correctly, e.g. lazy yellow flames, black marks or stains around the appliance and too much condensation in the room
- **Remember the six main signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning:**
 1. Headaches
 2. Dizziness
 3. Nausea
 4. Breathlessness
 5. Collapse
 6. Loss of consciousness





Electrical Safety at home

Much like an MOT for cars it is important that you ensure you carry out checks on the condition of the electrics in your home at regular intervals.

This will help identify any faults or defects which could require improvement and will ensure the continued operation of the installation in a safe and effective manner.

Visual Inspections

A visual inspection is a basic check that can identify any visible signs of defects or damage to electrical systems or appliances. Below is a list of things that can easily be visually checked:

- Consumer unit (main fuse board)
- Sockets
- Plugs
- Light fittings
- Electrical cables and leads
- Signs of wear and tear
- Visible signs of burning/scorching



Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)

An electrical installation condition report (EICR) is an inspection that will be conducted by Ocean's qualified electricians within a 5 year period and identifies any damage, deterioration, defects and/or conditions which may give rise to danger along with observations for which improvements may be made.

As a landlord Ocean has the responsibility to ensure that the electrical installation in a rented property is safe when tenants move in and maintained throughout its duration. If you have any issues with the electrical installation in your property you can contact Ocean on 01726 874450.





Legionnaire's Disease

This information is provided to inform you about the risks of contracting legionnaire's disease, and how to safely prevent it. As your Landlord, we want to ensure that you are aware of possible causes and symptoms of Legionnaire's disease so you can identify problems easily and contact us here at Ocean if you have concerns.

What is Legionnaire's Disease?

Legionnaire's disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia, which can affect anybody. It is caused by inhalation of small droplets of water from contaminated sources containing the legionella bacteria.

Where is Legionella found?

All hot and cold water systems in residential properties are a potential source for legionella bacteria growth.

The main areas of risk are where the bacteria can multiply and increase to dangerous levels and then spread, eg: in spray from showers and taps, even in dishwasher and washing machine pipes.

Conditions ripe for colonisation are where water of between 20°C and 45°C stagnates, and where there is sludge, rust and scale present for the bacteria to feed upon and multiply.

Who is at Risk?

Legionnaire's disease most commonly affects the elderly, or people with chest or lung problems. Not everyone exposed to legionella bacteria becomes ill. Legionnaire's disease is not contagious and you cannot get it from drinking water.

On average there are approximately 500 reported cases of legionnaire's disease a year. The symptoms of Legionnaire's disease are similar to those of flu:

- High temperature
- Fever or chills
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Muscle pain
- Dry cough



There is no need for concern. Legionnaire's disease is easily preventable by putting in place some simple control measures. The information below will help you identify any potential problems.

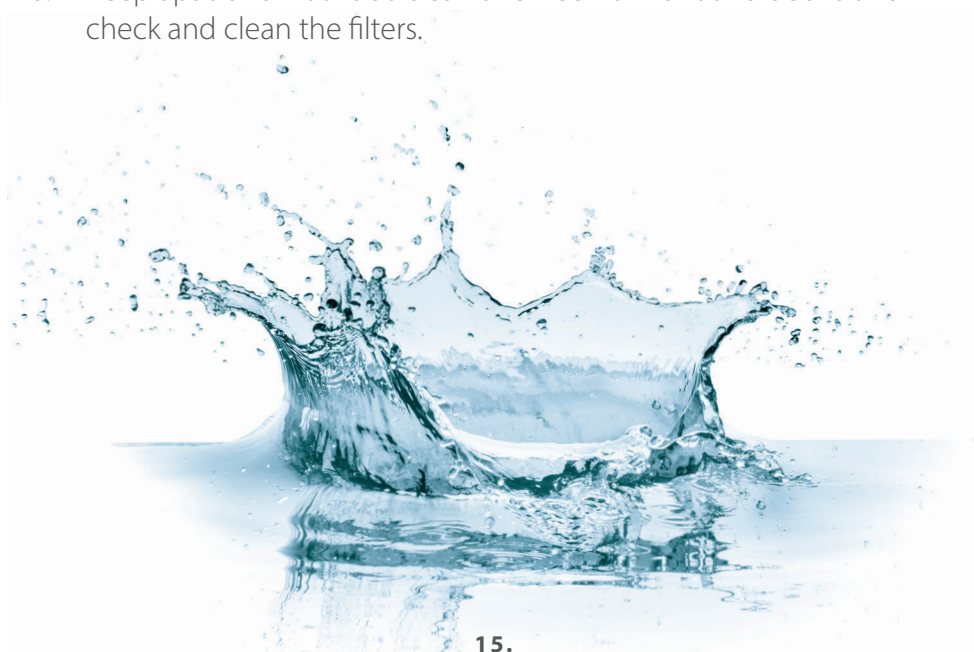
Taking the following simple precautions will help keep you safe:

1. Flush through showers and taps for 10 minutes following a period of non-use (ie: after you have been on holiday or if a room is not in regular use)
2. Keep all shower heads and taps clean and free from a build-up of limescale, mould or algae growth (regular bleaching every 3 months will help sterilise and kill any bacteria)
3. Keep hot water on your boiler system at a temperature of 60°C or greater.



Warning: BE AWARE OF SCALDING!


4. Flush toilets with the lid down following a period of non-use
5. Drain hosepipes after use and keep out of direct sunlight. Flush through for a couple of minutes before filling paddling pools etc
6. Keep Spa's and Hot Tub's clean and free from dirt and debris and check and clean the filters.



What do I do if I think I may have contracted Legionnaire's disease?

If you suspect that you or someone in your home has contracted Legionnaire's disease, contact your doctor immediately. You should also contact Ocean so we can take the appropriate measures.

You cannot get Legionnaire's disease from drinking water.

People catch legionnaire's disease by inhaling small droplets of water suspended in air, which contain bacteria. The bacteria has to be in very small droplets like a spray from a shower or taps. 

In domestic properties the risk of Legionnaire's disease is rated as low risk.



Fire Safety in the home


In case of a fire, keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible

GET OUT, STAY OUT
AND CALL 999





Did you Know?

- You are four times more likely to die in a fire if you don't have a smoke alarm that works
 - Around half of all fires in the home are caused by cooking accidents
 - Two fires every day are started by candles
 - Every six days someone dies in a fire caused by a cigarette
 - About two fires a day are caused by heaters
 - Faulty electrics (appliances, wiring and overloaded sockets) cause around 6000 fires in the home across the UK every year
- 



MAKING YOUR HOME SAFE

Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms save lives

Test your smoke alarm at least monthly

If your smoke alarm is not working, **contact Ocean on 01726 874450 immediately**

Never tamper with or remove your smoke alarms

Ocean will test and check the smoke alarms in your property annually

Make a fire action plan

In case of a fire be prepared by making a plan of escape:

- Plan and escape route and make sure everyone knows how to escape
- Make sure exits are kept clear
- The best route is the normal way in and out of your home
- Think of a second route in case the first one is blocked
- Take a few minutes to practice your escape plan
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes
- Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them

What to do if there is a fire

Don't tackle fires yourself, leave it to the professionals:

- Keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible
- Don't waste time investigating what's happened or rescuing valuables
- If there's smoke, keep low where the air is clear
- Before you open a door check if its warm. If it is, don't open it – fire is on the other side
- Call 999 as soon as you are clear of the building

GET OUT, STAY OUT AND CALL 999

What to do if your escape route is blocked

If you can't get out, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and phone.

- Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out the smoke
- Call 999 then open the window and shout 'Help Fire'
- If you're on the ground or first floor you may be able to escape through a window
- Use bedding to cushion your fall and lower yourself down carefully, don't jump
- If you can't open the window break the glass in the bottom corner. Make jagged edges safe with a towel or blanket.



What to do if your clothes catch fire

- Don't run around, you will make the flames worse
- Lie down and roll around. It makes it harder for the fire to spread
- Smother the flames with a heavy material, like a coat or blanket
- Remember Stop, Drop and Roll



STOP



DROP

&



ROLL

How to escape from a High Level Building

As with all buildings you should plan and practice your escape route

Avoid using lifts and balconies if there is a fire

It is easy to get confused in smoke, so count how many doors you need to go through to reach the stairs

Check there is nothing in the corridors or stairways that could catch fire – like boxes or rubbish

Make sure the doors to stairways are not blocked

Make sure everyone in the building knows where the fire alarm is

Ensure your smoke alarm is working and report any defects





Bedtime checks

You are most at risk from fire when asleep, always check your home before you go to bed. Here are some very quick and easy checks you can complete before you go to bed:

- Close inside doors at night to stop fire spreading
- Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on like your freezer
- Check your cooker is turned off
- Don't leave the washing machine on
- Turn heaters off and put fire guards
- Put candles and cigarettes out properly
- Make sure exits are kept clear
- Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them



HOW TO PREVENT COMMON FIRES

In the kitchen

Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk.

- Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol
- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob. Keep matches and sauce pan handles out of their reach
- Take care if you're wearing loose clothing - they can easily catch fire
- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob
- Spark devices are safer than matches or lighters to light gas cookers, because they don't have a naked flame
- Double check the cooker is off when you've finished cooking



Take care with electrics



Don't put anything metal in a microwave!

- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water
- Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order. A build up of fat and grease can ignite a fire

Deep fat frying

- Take extra care when cooking with hot oil – it sets alight easily
- Make sure food is dry before putting it in hot oil so it doesn't splash
- If the oil starts to smoke - it's too hot. Turn off the heat and leave it to cool
- Use a thermostat controlled electric deep fat fryer. They can't overheat

What to do if a pan catches fire

- Don't take any risks. Turn off the heat if it's safe to do so.
Never throw water over it.
- Don't tackle the fire yourself



Electrics

How to avoid electrical fires

- Always check that you use the right fuse to prevent overheating
- Make sure an electrical appliance has a British or European safety mark when you buy it
- Certain appliances, such as washing machines, should have a single plug to themselves, as they are high powered
- Try and keep to one plug per socket
- When charging electrical goods, follow the manufacturer's instructions and look for the CE mark that indicates chargers comply with European safety standards
- Keep your eyes peeled for signs of dangerous or loose, wiring circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reasons, or flickering lights
- Check and replace any old cables and leads, especially if they are hidden from view – behind furniture or under carpets and mats
- Unplugging appliances helps reduce the risk of fire, unplug appliances when not being used and when you go to bed

Furniture

- Always ensure that your furniture has the fire resistant permanent label



An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take, so be careful not to overload them to reduce the risk of fire.

Appliances use different amounts of power – a television may use a 3amp plug and a vacuum cleaner a 5amp plug for example



Portable Heaters

- Try to secure heaters up against a wall to stop them falling over
- Keep them clear from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes

Using an electric blanket

- Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded to prevent damaging the internal wiring
- Unplug blankets before you get into bed, unless it has a thermostat control for safe all-night use
- Try not to buy second hand electric blankets and check regularly for wear and tear
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions



Cigarettes

- Never smoke in bed
- Use a proper ashtray – never a wastepaper basket
- Make sure your ashtray can't tip over and is made of a material that won't burn
- Don't leave a lit cigarette, cigar or pipe lying around. They can easily fall over and start a fire
- Take extra care if you smoke when you're tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you've been drinking. You might fall asleep and set your bed or sofa on fire
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach
- Consider buying child resistant lighters and match boxes
- Stub cigarettes out properly and dispose of them carefully. Put them out. Right out!

Candles

- Put candles out when you leave the room, and make sure they're put out completely at night
- Children should not be left alone with lit candles
- Keep pets away from lit candles



**Our Customer Experience
Team are trained to handle
your enquiries**



Telephone **01726 874450**



Livechat www.oceanhousing.com



Email help@oceanhousing.com



Website www.oceanhousing.com



Write Ocean Housing, Stennack House,
Stennack Road, St Austell PL25 3SW



Text Start your text with a word to describe
why you are contacting us, for example:
Repair. Don't forget to include your name
and address. Send to: 07520 632741.



T: 01726 874450
www.oceanhousing.com

Ocean Housing Ltd Stennack House Stennack Road St Austell PL25 3SW