

Landlords And Safety

General Safety Norms for Let Houses

Some of the major safety aspects that landlords must address before they allow a tenant to occupy the dwelling are listed below:

Gas appliances, fittings and flues

According to the current laws governing tenancy rights, landlords have to arrange for a gas safety inspection on all gas appliances at least once every 12 months. The servicing / inspection must be carried out by a Council of Registered Gas Installers (CORGI) engineer. A safety check must include all gas appliances and flues. Gas installations and appliances must be given the once over immediately before the start of a new tenancy, even if the gas safety certificate is still current. Engineers will check the gas supply, gas appliances, gas flues and the ventilation before certifying that safety standards are being met.

The landlord must hand over a copy of the CORGI installer's safety check report to every tenant within 28 days of the safety check, and to new tenants before they take possession of the house / flat.

Other Important Gas Safety Measures

Landlords should in addition to the above, take a number of steps to ensure the safety of their tenants and to avoid having to face charges should anything untoward happen at a later date. The following are very important:

The gas meter and cut-off valve must be located within easy reach.

Tenants must be cautioned against carrying out 'repairs' on their own to any gas appliance.

Educate them to immediately turn off the gas supply to the property and call the emergency number if they suspect a gas or carbon monoxide leak.

Advise your tenants not to use any gas appliance they think is unsafe.

Let them know that you must have periodic access to the property (with reasonable notice) to carry out the necessary safety checks and maintenance to the gas appliances which would be in their own interest.

A Few Words of Caution to Landlords

Landlords must make it a point never to allow anyone other than a CORGI registered engineer to take charge of the maintenance of gas installations or appliances. Considering that this is a statutory obligation, the consequences could be serious if this requirement is not complied with.

Landlords stand to save a considerable sum in recurring expenses by adopting some sensible energy saving measures. If, for instance, the boiler is serviced regularly, it will keep the energy consumption down.

Poorly maintained gas appliances and damaged flues can give rise to carbon monoxide leakage which can be life threatening. Carbon monoxide detectors marked with the 'Kite mark' should be fitted in each room that has a gas appliance, for additional safety.

Other Safety Precautions

Although there is no current statutory requirement for electrical safety certification, the landlord may still be considered to have been negligent in the event of electric shock or fire caused by faulty or poorly maintained wiring or electrical equipment. It is therefore important that landlords maintain and update electrical wiring and appliances.

Similarly, fitting kite marked smoke detectors; providing fire extinguishers; ensuring the locking windows have keys located nearby to facilitate escape; adhering to fire safety regulations; ensuring that all furnishings meet current fire retardent standards and ensuring that tenants have an appropriate fire escape plan all fall within the duty of care of a landlord. Equally, the safety of the structure of the building, both internally and externally are paramount. Ensure that there is no loose masonry or tiles; that the floorboards are secure; that bannisters are solid and that there are no potential hazards which may cause injury to tenants and anyone else visiting or indeed passing by the premises.

Conclusion

Landlords in the UK have quite a few responsibilities to their tenants. Whilst the law ensures that many of these are strictly complied with, it is in the interests of all parties that the landlord maintains not only the regulated (gas) appliances in accordance with statutory requirements but that he or she conducts regular safety inspections to identify and eradicate other potential hazards. These include electrical appliances and wiring; the structure of the building; the provision of smoke detection and fire fighting equipment and adherence to fire safety regulations regards furnishings.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Andy Edwards is an independent writer with a focus on consumer, financial and business subjects. You can find impartial advice and further information on [buy to let mortgages](#) at www.1000mortgages.co.uk - where whole of market mortgage brokers do the searching for you.