

ASTER

GROUP

REPAIRS HANDBOOK

ISSUE 5

June 2019

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ABOUT YOUR HANDBOOK

This is your handbook and it gives you information about your repairs service. It tells you what we need to know so we can sort out your repair, what repairs you must do and how to do some of these yourself.

If you've got any questions, please let us know. If you need this publication in another language, Braille or in large print, on audio tape or CD, please let us know by calling the number in your area, see Getting in touch on page 4.

If your first language isn't English, and you want to talk to us in your own language, please give us a call.

Warning – check identity cards!

Before you let anyone into your home, you should ask to see their identity card. If you aren't sure, make sure they stay outside and phone our repairs hotline on:

Devon & Cornwall, Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire:
0333 400 8222

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BEFORE YOU LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR REPAIR

- We need you to check the type of repair you need. Please look at the list provided and find your type of repair. There are pictures which will help you tell us about your repair. By giving us as much information as you can, you can help us get your repair done quickly.
- When the repair worker visits, make sure there's someone at home who's over 18 years old.

WHEN YOU'RE READY

- Contact us. See Getting in touch on page 4. If it's an emergency, see Emergencies – what to do on page 4.
- Have this handbook available when you talk to us and a pen and paper ready to write down any information we give you.
- Let us know if you've hearing problems or if you take time to get to the door when someone visits your home.

HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE

It's a good idea to have home contents insurance and we recommend that you have home contents insurance. This covers you against damage to your personal items like carpets and furniture, including fire or flood damage. It also covers some items if they're stolen and any accidental damage to your home. You're free to find your own insurance or we can give you a leaflet about an insurance scheme if you wish.



GETTING IN TOUCH

- **REPAIRS HOTLINE**

Devon & Cornwall, Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire: 0333 400 8222

- **EMAIL**

Devon & Cornwall, Dorset, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somerset: contactcentre@aster.co.uk
(Please don't use email for emergencies)

- **WRITE**

Devon & Cornwall:

Envoy House, Longbridge Road Plymouth, Devon, PL6 8LU

Dorset:

Prospect House, Sandford Lane, Wareham, BH20 4DY

Hampshire:

Greenwich Way, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 4BF

Wiltshire:

Horton Avenue, Cannings Hill, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AZ

Somerset:

Flourish House, 2 Cathedral Avenue, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1FD

- **ONLINE FORM**

www.seemydata.co.uk/cgi-bin/index.pl?client=aster

EMERGENCIES - WHAT TO DO

GAS (SMELL, LEAK OR FUMES)

- Call the National Gas Emergency Service straight away on 0800 111999
- Use a phone outside your home. Using one inside, even a mobile, could spark an explosion
- Turn off the gas at the main switch (normally near the gas meter) and open the windows. Turn the handle at the meter to the flat (horizontal) position
- Don't smoke or switch anything electrical on or off until the problem's fixed.

ELECTRICITY

- Turn the mains switch on the fuse box (consumer unit) to OFF
- If you've a power cut, call the emergency number given in your phone book.

SMOKE, FUMES OR YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR ALARM SOUNDS

- If you can smell or see smoke, call 999 or 112 immediately
- If there's no sign of smoke or fire, check whether the alarm's gone off because of something else (see Handy hints on page 26 of the repairs handbook).

WATER

- Turn the mains stoptap to the right (clockwise) to turn the water off. If you've no water supply coming into your home, phone your local water supplier.

Make a note of where your gas meter, electricity consumer unit and mains water stoptap are.

YOUR REPAIRS

BEFORE YOU CALL

Look at the contents page and find the pages dealing with your type of repair.

WHEN YOU CONTACT US, LET US KNOW

- Your name, address and phone numbers so that we can locate your details
- Details of what needs repairing
- We will ask you verification questions
- If there's anything we should know, like if you have difficulties hearing or you'll take time getting to your door.

WE'LL PUT IT ON OUR COMPUTER

- We'll put your repair on our computer
- We'll tell you how soon we'll deal with it.

WE'LL DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR REPAIR

We'll get an order out to a repair worker, or arrange for someone to visit your home and look at what needs to be done.

WE'LL MAKE SURE IT GETS DONE

- For appointed repairs we'll give you a visit date.

WHEN YOU TELL US ABOUT A REPAIR

- Please don't make your repair problem sound urgent if it isn't. If you do, you may be recharged
- Repair workers work from 8am–5pm. At any other times, including public holidays, we'll only send out our repair worker if it's an emergency.

WHEN WORK'S GOING TO BE DONE IN YOUR HOME

- Any flooring or furniture will need to be moved to allow access to carry out your repairs. Please let us know if you're having problems sorting this out
- Someone needs to be at home when your repair worker visits your home because they might need to talk to you about the work
- There must be an adult at home all the time. Our workers are not permitted to work in homes if there is no-one over the age of 18 present
- Please don't smoke when the repair worker visits. If you do, they can stop working in your home

- Make sure our repair workers can get on with their work safely. Remove belongings, pets and children from the work area. If you don't they may not do the repair
- In very bad weather, we'll always make things safe. If more work's needed, we might have to come back another time to finish it.

WHO DOES WHAT?

WHAT WE LOOK AFTER

Outside your home: we repair and look after the building and outside parts of your home, like gutters and roof tiles. We also look after water pipes up to your boundary.

Inside your home: we look after water or gas pipes, wiring, heating and hot water systems, drainage, power and light fittings.

See What you must do on page 7.

Your garden: we look after walls we own, including boundary fences, privacy and new property definitions for fencing and paths. We also look after any paved areas and paths we've put in. If owned by Aster the responsibility will be ours.

Shared areas: we carry out all repairs to these areas. Where not adopted, there may well be Service Charge element.

Please refer to the relevant sections within the handbook for more details regarding who is responsible for repairs and maintenance.

SAFETY

We must, by law, carry out a gas safety check once a year of any gas appliance and pipework we've put in. This is done by a specialist gas repair worker.

You must make sure your own gas appliances are serviced once a year.

You must, by law, let us into your home to do the safety checks. If you don't let us in, we'll take you to court and you'll have to pay the costs for this.

You must make sure air vents don't get blocked.

WHAT REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE ASTER UNDERTAKE

We look after the outside of your home, the building and any fittings and appliances we've put in. We also do the repairs to the shared areas of blocks of flats. Any works to shared areas may form a recharge to all customers using the facilities or where damage has been caused by customers or visitors.

DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR ANY REPAIRS?

If you, or someone in your home, damages anything, you must make sure you get it repaired properly. You might be able to get the money back on your home contents insurance.

See Home contents insurance on page 3.

If we have to do the repair to make you and your family safe, you'll have to pay for this.

See Damage and costs on page 7.



WHAT YOU MUST DO

YOU MUST:

- Allow us into your home to do repairs, safety checks and inspections
- Be considerate and respectful towards our staff and repair workers
- Decorate the inside of your home well, including filling small cracks or holes in walls
- Tell us as soon as you notice a repair job and try to stop it getting worse
- Look after your fixtures or appliances
- Try to stop condensation
- Try to make sure pipes don't freeze or burst in bad weather
- Repair any damage you or your visitors cause
- Make sure a fire doesn't happen in your home
- Get new keys or put on new door locks when keys are lost or broken, or when you get locked out
- Tighten up loose handles on kitchen units
- Fit chains or any extra locks
- Make changes to doors when you have new carpets
- Put up curtain rails
- Put in new light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- Put trip switches back on
- Put up TV aerials (unless it's a shared aerial)

- Test and clean any smoke or carbon monoxide detectors we've put in
- Try to clear blocked sinks, baths, toilets and shower trays
- Get new plugs and chains for baths and sinks
- Clean and get rid of scale from your shower head
- Fit wastes and pipework for dishwashers and vents for tumble driers, if they're not already there
- Put up new clothes lines or rotary driers, but not in a shared area
- Look after any garden paths, fences or other garden items like decking that you've put in yourself, including paths within gardens that are not main entrance paths to the door, keep grassed areas maintained at all time
- Get rid of leaves and rubbish in drainage gully grids
- Keep fan vents and window vents clear.

DAMAGE AND COSTS

If you or anyone in your home, including visitors or pets, cause damage to your home, you must get it repaired properly. If we have to do the repair to make sure you and your family are safe, you'll have to pay for this.

CHANGES YOU'VE MADE

You can make changes to your home but we must agree in writing first. You must look after any repairs to these changes. See changes to make your home better in your customer handbook.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

When you tell us about your repair, we'll tell you how soon we'll do it. You can see on page 28 how quickly we deal with different kinds of repairs.

Our Contact Centre Team will talk to you about the repair and discuss what needs to be done. If it is our responsibility we will arrange someone to visit.

If we are responsible and it is agreed that your repair is an Emergency then we aim to get someone to your home as soon as possible and make everything safe within 24 hours or next working day.

All other Response Repairs reported will be Appointed or Planned.

Appointed and Planned Responsive Repairs that are not Emergencies will be booked in with you and the work will be carried out within an agreed timescale.

We may group repairs together to create a batch of repairs jobs. This means we can minimise the disturbance for everyone in the area and make best use of the money we spend.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

When you tell us about your repair, we'll decide how soon we'll get it done. You can see on page 28 how quickly we deal with different kinds of repairs. Sometimes we might need to visit you to decide what work needs to be done, but we'll agree a time and date for this.

For Emergency repairs, we'll get to you as soon as possible within 24 hours. For everything else we can provide you with a time when the repair worker will call in-between, the timeslots can be anytime between 8am – 5pm.

You must have some repairs done within set times under the Right to Repair regulations. These are health and safety repairs that would be a problem if they weren't sorted out on time.

WHAT IF I CAN'T BE HOME ALL THE TIME?

If you can't be in during our working hours, maybe a friend or neighbour could wait in for you. They must be at least 18 years old. If you can't keep to an agreed date or time, please let us know straight away. If you're not in when we come, we'll leave a card. If you fail to make an agreed appointment and haven't let us know you could be recharged.



WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

OUR REPAIR WORKERS MUST:

- Give you respect and always behave professionally
- Say who they are and show you their identity card before coming in
- Tell you what they're going to do and what this will mean for you
- Protect things in your home from damage, dust and paint
- Let you know how the work's going
- Clear rubbish accumulated from works from your home and make sure electricity, water and gas are put back on after the work's been done
- Close doors and gates when they leave
- Explain how any new things they've put in work.

REPAIR WORKERS MUSTN'T:

- Smoke in or around your home
- Play radios in or around your home without your permission and if you do let them, keep the volume at an acceptable level
- Use mobile phones for personal calls when they're doing your work
- Be in your home with children if there's no adult there (an adult is anyone over 18)
- Take money, services or gifts from customers as a thank you for work
- Keep keys to your home
- Take their lunch break in your home
- Use bad language.

AND THEY MUST ASK YOU IF THEY CAN:

- Use your phone
- Use your toilet
- Go into other rooms in your home.

WHAT KIND OF SERVICE DO WE OFFER

We'll listen and deal with repairs in an efficient and helpful way. Most repairs are carried out by our own repair workers but we sometimes use other workers. Anyone working in or around your home must do what it says in the list called Our repair workers must.

DO YOU CHECK UP ON THE QUALITY OF YOUR WORK?

We work with ORS (opinion research services), our survey partners, who phone some households to talk to them about the service. We and our repair partner do checks to make sure that work is done well. We do this by choosing some repairs and visiting those properties to look at the work that's been done.

WHAT IF I'M NOT HAPPY WITH THE WORK?

Please let us know straight away if you're not happy with anything we've done. We'll try sorting it out as soon as we can.

Contact us via e-mail at:
contactcentre@aster.co.uk
or call the Repairs Hotline:
Devon & Cornwall, Dorset, Hampshire,
Somerset and Wiltshire: 0333 400 8222

If you're still not happy and want to complain, you need to see Complaints in your customer handbook.

*We want to make our services better.
Please let us know if you've any
comments, compliments or complaints.*

BATHS AND BASINS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Try to clear blocked baths, basins, sinks and shower trays
- Get new plugs and chains for baths, basins and sinks
- Clean and get rid of scale from showerheads
- Clean wastepipes and drains from time to time to stop them getting blocked
- It is your responsibility to maintain anything you've installed yourself.

ADVICE

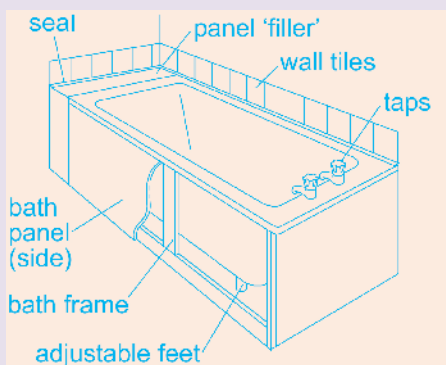
- For water leaks or tap problems, see Pipes and taps on page 19 and Drains and wastes on page 12
- A blocked wastepipe isn't an emergency. You must try to clear it yourself before you call us. See page 22.
We'll charge you for clearing blockages caused by things like toys or hair

- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or pet cause damage and we have to repair it, you will have to pay for this
- If we need to install new bathroom items which are part of a matching set, they'll always be in white, including any tiles.

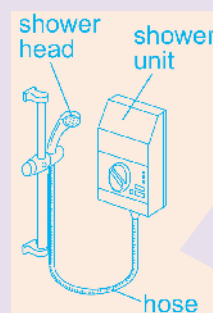
WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, like: basin loose or broken, wastepipe leaking or blocked, wall tiles cracked or broken?
- If a bath panel, is it at the side or end? Is it made of plastic or plywood?
- If a bath, is it plastic or metal?
- If a sink top, does it have an inset top or does the metal cover the whole top?
- If tiles, what shape, size and colour are they?

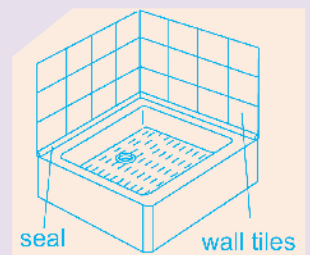
BATH



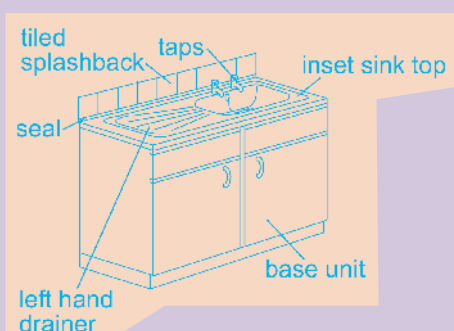
ELECTRIC SHOWER



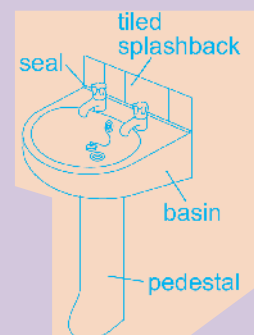
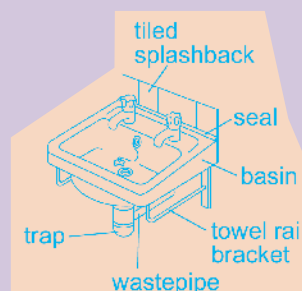
SHOWER TRAY



SINK & DRAINER



WASH HAND BASINS



DOORS AND LOCKS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Get new keys or put on new locks when keys are lost or broken, or when you get locked out
- Fit chains or any extra locks. See Advice below
- Make changes to doors, for example when you have new carpets or flooring

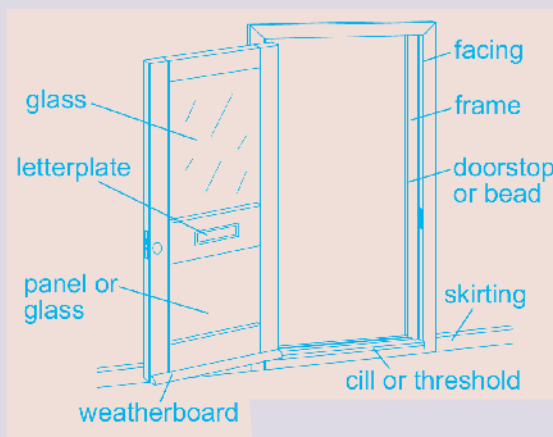
ADVICE

- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or a pet cause damage and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this
- If you're worried about the security of your home, let us know. In some cases we may be able to put on extra locks
- If someone's broken in and damaged anything, you should let the police know and get a crime reference number, otherwise we may charge you for the repair.

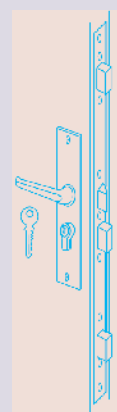
WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: lock stiff, lock or handle broken, door sticking, not closing properly or damaged?
- Which door is it: front, back or side?
- Is it a shared entrance?
What type of lock or latch has it got?
Can you still lock the door?
- What is it made of: wood, plastic (upvc)?
- If glass, what type is it: plain, frosted or wired? Is it double-glazed?
- What type of lock it is: mortice, cylinder mortice, rim lock, multi-point or cylinder rim nightlatch (Yale or Union)?

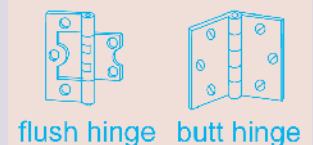
DOOR AND FRAME



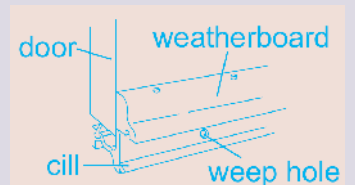
MULTI-POINT LOCK (ESPAGNOLETTE)



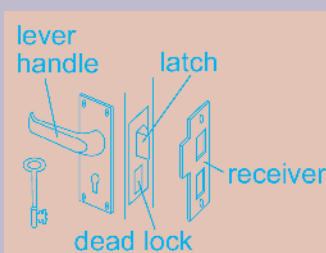
DOOR HINGES



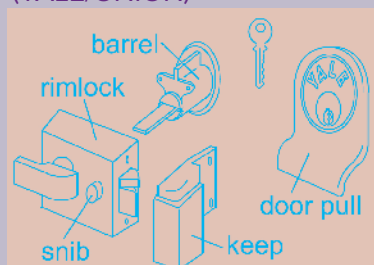
STORMGUARD CILL



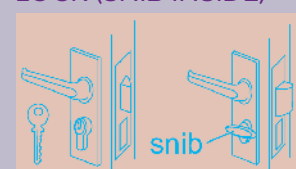
MORTICE LATCH



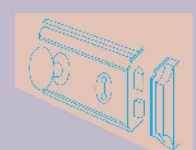
CYLINDER RIM NIGHTLATCH (YALE/UNION)



CYLINDER MORTICE LOCK (SNIB INSIDE)



RIM LOCK



DRAINS AND WASTE

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Try to clear blocked baths, basins, sinks, toilets or shower trays
- Clear blockages or repair leaks from washing machines or dishwashers
- Keep drainage gully grids clean and get rid of leaves and rubbish
- Clean wastepipes and drains from time to time to stop them getting blocked.

ADVICE

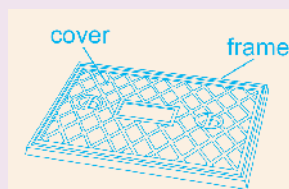
- A blocked wastepipe isn't an emergency repair. You must try to clear it yourself before calling us. See page 22
- A blocked toilet is only an emergency if you have no other toilet
- Keep your wastepipes and drains clear by flushing them from time to time with hot water. See Handy hints on page 22

- Don't pour fat or oil down sinks, toilets or outside drains
- If a blockage is caused by things like nappies, air fresheners, condoms, tampons or wet wipes, these cause major drainage issues, you will have to pay for clearing it.

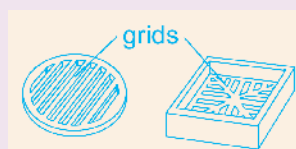
WE NEED TO KNOW

- Have you tried to unblock with chemicals?
- What the problem is, such as: wastepipe or trap blocked or leaking, drain smelling or blocked, gully blocked or grid missing?
- If a wastepipe, which is it: bath, basin, sink, shower or toilet?
- If a wastepipe is blocked: is more than one fitting blocked, or if you live in a flat, are any other flats having a problem?
- If the drain is blocked: is it overflowing?
- If a drainage gully grid, is it round or square?
- What's it made of: metal or plastic?

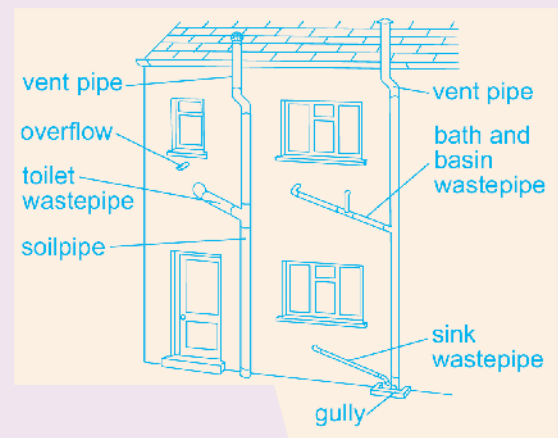
DRAIN INSPECTION CHAMBER



DRAINAGE GULLY GRIDS



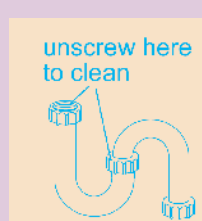
TWO-PIPE SYSTEM



BACK INLET DRAINAGE GULLY



'S' TRAP



'P' TRAP



BOTTLE TRAP



ELECTRICS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Put trip switches back on and turn off your electricity if you need to. See page 25
- Put in new light bulbs and fluorescent tubes (except in bathroom lights with closed covers) and put in TV aerial sockets
- Test and clean any smoke or carbon monoxide detectors we've put in. See page 26.

ADVICE

- Don't touch bare wires
- Don't touch sockets or switches with wet hands. Also, if water is leaking onto anything electrical or any electrical fitting, don't use or touch any switches connected to it. Let us know straight away

- Make sure you know where the trip switches are and you know how to put them on and off. See page 25
- Don't take off, change or add any electrical fitting without our permission
- If you've caused any damage or you call us when you haven't got enough credit in your meter, you'll have to pay for this.

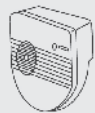
WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: no lights or power in part of, or the whole property; light or sight switch isn't working, socket loose or broken?
- Are other homes having the same problem?
- What type of fitting or socket is it?
- Has it caused any other problems to you or others?

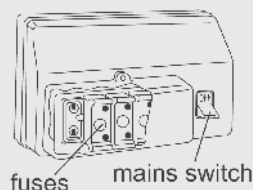
SMOKE DETECTOR



EXTRACTOR FAN



FUSE BOX



CONSUMER UNIT



LIGHT WITH CLOSED COVER

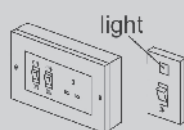


PENDANT LAMPHOLDER CEILING SWITCH

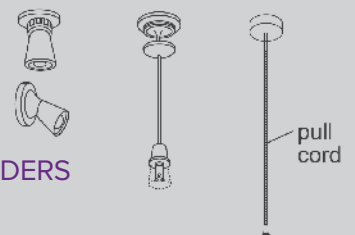
BULKHEAD LIGHT



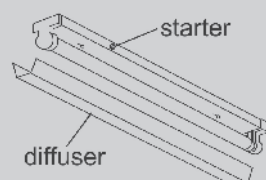
COOKER CONTROL UNITS



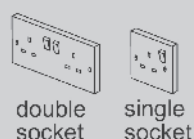
BATTEN LAMP HOLDERS



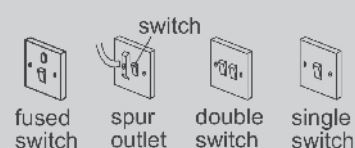
FLUORESCENT STRIP LIGHT



SOCKETS



SWITCHES



FLOORS AND STAIRS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Look after any floor covering you've put down.

ADVICE

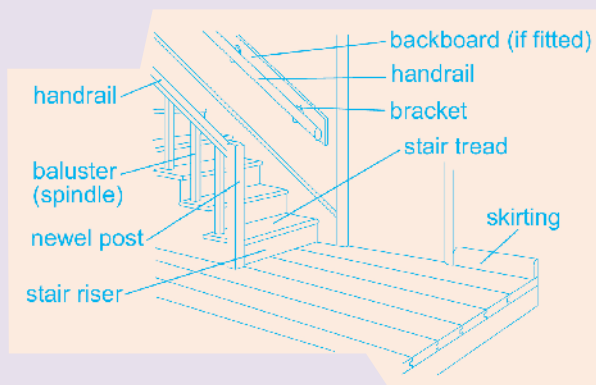
- You must pay for any damage to your floor covering. If our repair worker's done this, please let us know
- We'll put down dust sheets so your furniture and carpets don't get dirty when we work. If we say you need to lift your floor covering, you should do this before the repair worker arrives
- If you put carpets down, it's a good idea to use gripper rods. This makes it easier for you to lift them for repairs
- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or a pet damage anything and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this

- If you have laid and glued a floor covering and we need to lift it for essential maintenance work, we cannot accept liability for any damage caused.

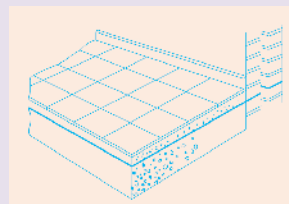
WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, like: floorboard or skirting loose or damaged, tread or riser broken, handrail loose or broken, floor covering lifting or damaged?
- What is the floor made of: floorboards, chipboard or concrete?
- What type of floor covering is it, for example: quarry tiles (what colour?), vinyl tiles or sheeting, or slip-resistant flooring? Is it in a shared area?
- How many boards, panels or tiles need to be looked at?

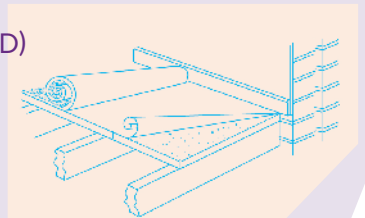
BALUSTRADE



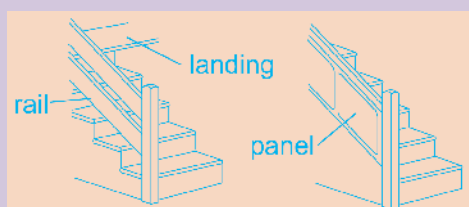
SOLID FLOOR (CONCRETE)



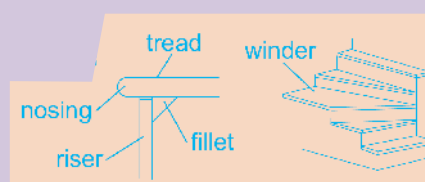
FLOOR (CHIPBOARD)



STAIRS & WOODEN FLOOR



STEP DETAILS



TYPES OF STAIRS

GARDENS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Maintain your garden keeping lawned areas mown and hedges and shrubs pruned
- Repair and replace gates and gate catches
- Replace keys and locks to shed doors
- Look after any sheds you've put up or which have been left in your garden
- Look after any fences not put up by us or that divide individual gardens
- Look after any garden paths not put in by us and other garden items like decking, unless they're in shared areas
- Put up new clothes lines or rotary driers, unless in a shared area.

ADVICE

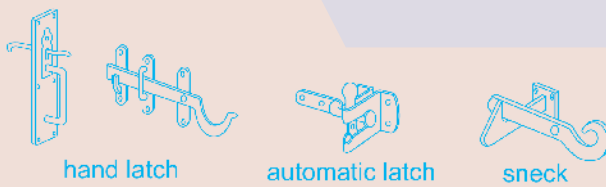
- If someone's broken in or damaged anything, you should tell the police and get a crime reference number, you'll have to claim on your household insurance - otherwise we will charge you for the repair

- Don't grow anything near or next to your outside walls. This can cause problems with the brickwork and make it damp
- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or pet damage anything and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this.

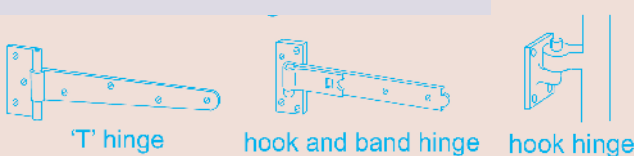
WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: fence loose or broken, gate not opening or closing properly, gate catch missing, path uneven or cracked?
- If a fence, what type is it, for example: close boarded, palisade, post and wire or other type? How much is affected?
- If a post: is it wooden, metal or concrete?
- If a path, which path is it?
- What's it made of, for example: slabs, concrete or Tarmac?

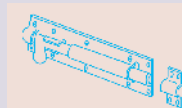
GATE CATCHES



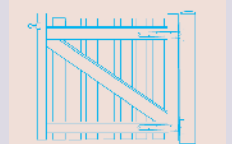
HINGES



BARREL BOLT



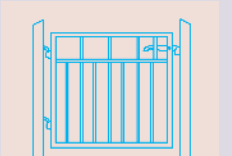
WOODEN GATE



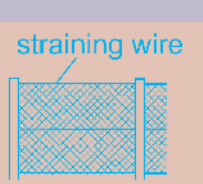
KNEE RAIL



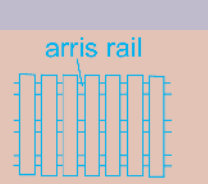
METAL GATE



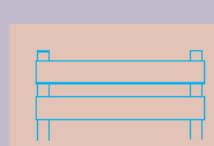
CHAIN LINK



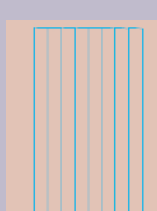
PALISADE



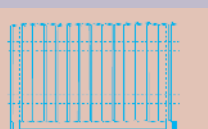
RANCH STYLE



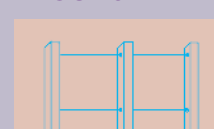
PRIVACY PANEL



CLOSE BOARDED



POST & WIRE



GUTTERS

As part of our repairs service, we will attend to clear all gutters.

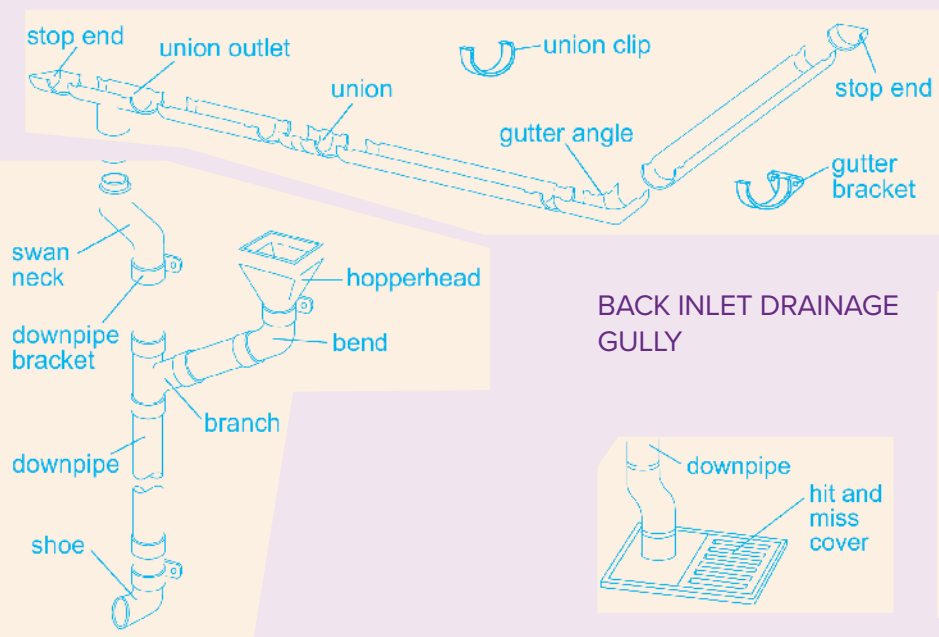
ADVICE

- We need to put up scaffolding for some repairs
- In bad weather, repair workers can't work high up on ladders, scaffolding or on the roof because it's not safe
- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or a pet damage anything and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: gutter or downpipe loose, leaking or blocked; bracket, joint or shoe loose or broken?
- Which gutter or downpipe it is: front, back or side?
- What shape is the gutter: half-round, deep-flow or square? What colour is it?
- If a drainage gully grid: is it round or square? What is it made of: metal or plastic?
- How many floors does your building have?
- What is the gutter or downpipe made of: metal, plastic or concrete?
- Has it caused any other problems?
- Are any other homes having the same problem?

GUTTERS



DRAINAGE GULLY GRIDS



GUTTER PROFILES



HEATING

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- If you smell gas, contact National Gas Emergency Service immediately on 0800 111999. See Emergencies on page 4
- Get your own things like heaters and cookers looked after by trained engineers
- Keep your home properly heated to stop pipes from freezing or bursting in cold weather
- Let in fresh air to try to stop condensation.

ADVICE

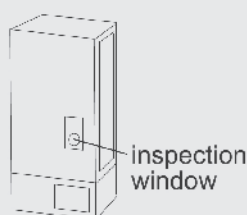
- If you have total loss of your heating and/or hot water we will come out at the next available appointment. If you have a vulnerability that is affected by this loss then we will try to attend the Next Working day or over the weekend in extreme cases. If we can't fix your boiler during this appointment we will offer you temporary heating.

- If you've a solid fuel back boiler and you hear it bubbling or boiling, damp down the fire straight away and let it go out
- If a radiator's leaking or loose because you've been decorating, you'll have to pay for this.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: central heating not working, no hot water, radiator leaking or not getting warm, fire or heater not working?
- What type of heating it is: gas, electric, oil or solid fuel?
- Does it have a boiler?
- If electric, is it a storage, convactor, panel or a fan heater?
- Do you have any other heating or ways to heat your hot water, like an electric immersion heater or solar panels?
- If a radiator: is it warm at the bottom and cold at the top?

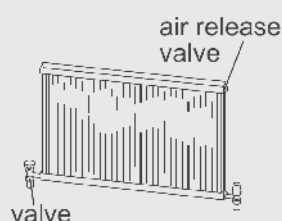
WALL MOUNTED
CENTRAL HEATING
BOILER (GAS OR ELECTRIC)



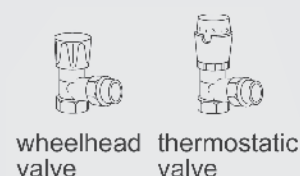
MAINS GAS
HANDLE



RADIATOR



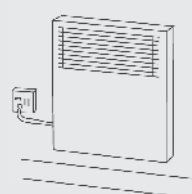
RADIATOR VALVES



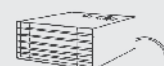
CLOSED FIRE
(WITH BACK BOILER)



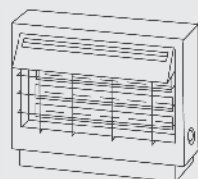
PANEL
HEATER



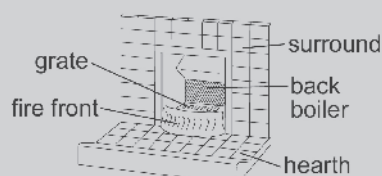
BATHROOM FAN
HEATER



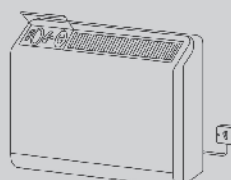
GAS FIRE



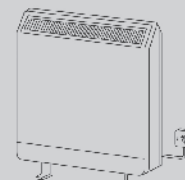
OPEN FIRE



CONVECTOR HEATER



STORAGE HEATER



KITCHENS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Put in your own appliances and any wastes, pipes and vents if they're not already there
- Clear your appliance if it's blocked
- Repair kitchen cupboards you've put in
- Tighten up loose handles on kitchen cupboards.

ADVICE

- If we have to put in new kitchen cupboards or other things like a worktop, drawer or door, we'll try to match the colour if we can
- If you put in appliances, you must look after any water supply, waste or vent connections that you've fitted to them

- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or pet damage anything and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: wall or floor cupboard loose or broken, worktop loose or broken, cupboard door or drawer broken, cupboard hinge or catch broken?
- What type of cupboard is it: wall or floor? Is it a tall one or a corner cupboard? Is it a single or a double cupboard?
- If wall tiles, what shape, size and colour are they?
- If a worktop, how are the pieces joined: with a joint strip or mitred?
- If a door hinge, does it open right back against the cupboard or only half way?

WORKTOPS



DOOR KNOB



'D' HANDLE



HINGES



flush hinge

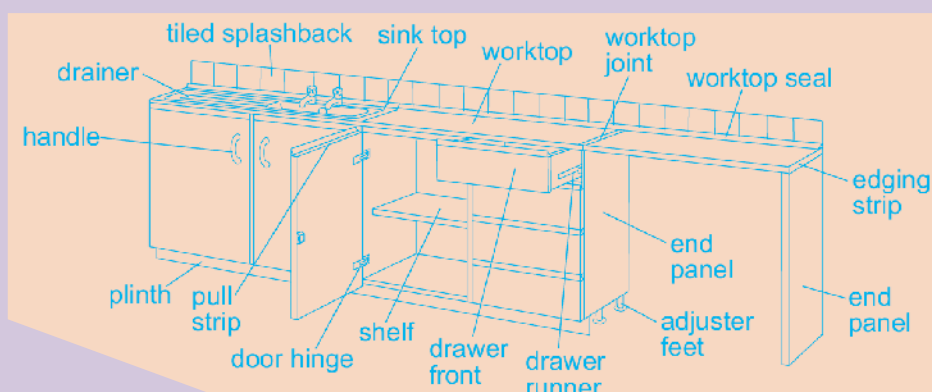


butt hinge



concealed hinge

KITCHEN UNITS



PIPES

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Try to make sure pipes don't freeze or burst in cold weather, especially if you're away from home.
- Fit all pipes for your dishwasher and washing machine, also periodically check for leaks, if they're not already there.

ADVICE

- You should know where your stoptap is so you can turn the water off in an emergency and that you can turn it off. The location of the stoptap may be on a sticker on the consumer unit
- If water's leaking onto anything electrical, don't touch it. Turn off the electricity at your consumer unit (fuse board). See page 27
- If water leaks from your washing machine or dishwasher, we'll charge you for repairing any damage. You may be able to get this

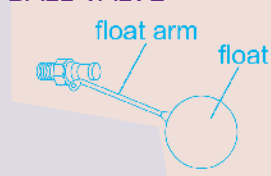
money back on your home contents insurance. See Home contents insurance on page 3

- If you're away from home and the weather's cold, you should leave your heating on low or drain down the water and heating system. This stops water freezing in pipes. If you need help, let us know.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: no water, hot water coming out cold, pipe leaking or burst, overflow running, tap dripping?
- If water is leaking into your property: is it coming from the flat above? What's the address? Are there any other problems?
- If no water: do your neighbours have water or not?

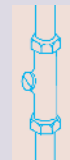
BALL VALVE



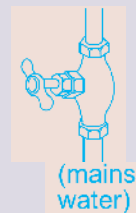
DRAINTAP (DRAIN VALVE)



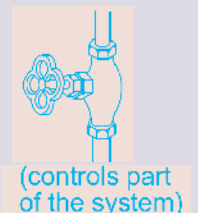
ISOLATION VALVE



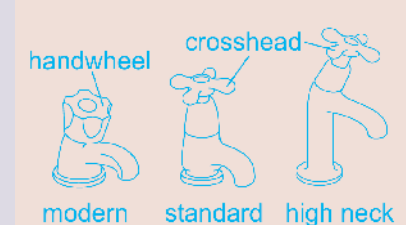
STOPTAP



GATE VALVE



PILLAR TAPS



MIXER TAP



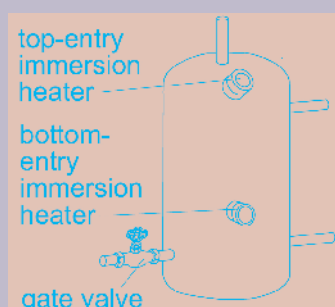
BIB TAP



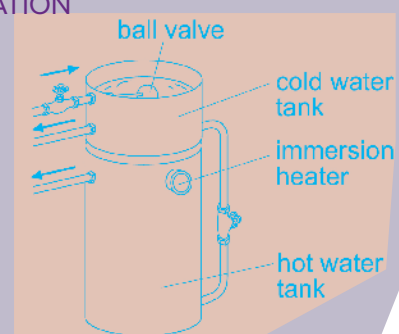
LEVER TAP



HOT WATER CYLINDER



COMBINATION TANK



ROOFS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Put up and maintain, take down TV aerials and satellite dishes, unless it's one of our shared ones
- Look after any aerial or satellite dish you put up.

ADVICE

- We may need to put up scaffolding but when the weather's bad, repair workers can't work high up
- If anything electrical's getting wet because the roof's leaking, don't use any of these switches and let us know straight away
- If you want to put up an aerial or satellite dish we must agree in writing first. You might need to get permission from your local council too.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- How many floors does your home have?
What the problem is, such as: roof leaking; tiles or slates loose or broken, chimney pot fallen or loose, chimney stack crumbling? (We only expect you to tell us about what you can see from the ground)
- What type of roof covering is it, for example: slate tiles, corrugated sheeting, flat felting, asphalt or fibreglass fitted covering?
- If tiles, what type are they?
Flat, ridge, interlocking, hip or verge.
What colour are they?
- Is that chimney shared with another home?
What's the address?

NATURAL SLATE



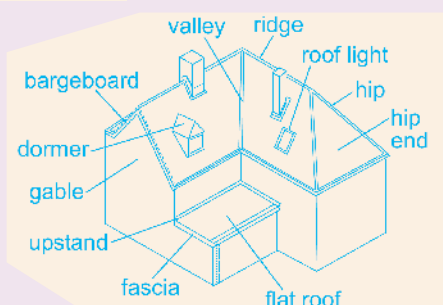
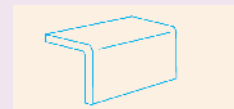
INTERLOCKING TILE



PLAIN TILE



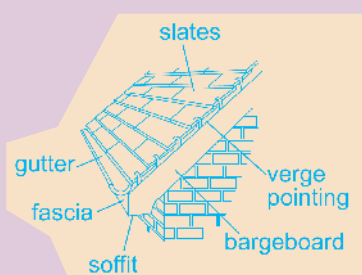
CLOAKED VERGE TILE



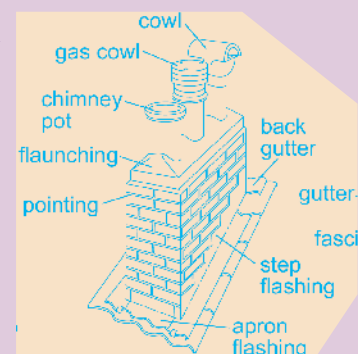
HALF ROUND RIDGE TILE



HIP TILES



CHIMNEY STACK



TOILETS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- It is your responsibility to replace toilet seats
- Try to clear blocked toilets. See page 22.

ADVICE

- A blocked toilet is only an emergency repair if you've no other toilet
- If your cistern doesn't flush, this isn't an emergency. You should pour water into the toilet pan until it's fixed
- We'll charge you for clearing blockages caused by things like nappies, air fresheners, wet wipes, condoms or tampons
- Please clean and clear your toilet from time to time using cleaning products. Always do what it says on the label
- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or a pet damage anything and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this

- If we put in a new toilet which is part of a matching set, it'll always be white.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, like: toilet blocked, overflow running, cistern leaking, pan cracked or leaking, flush handle or chain broken?
- What type of cistern is it: high-level or low-level? If low-level, is it a flush panel, close-coupled or standard type?
- Does it have an overflow pipe?
- What type of handle is it: lever handle, push down knob or chain?
- What colour is the toilet or cistern?
- If your toilet's blocked and you live in a block of flats, are any other flats having problems?

LOW-LEVEL CISTERNS



standard

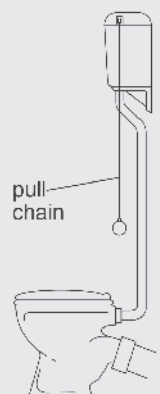


flush panel

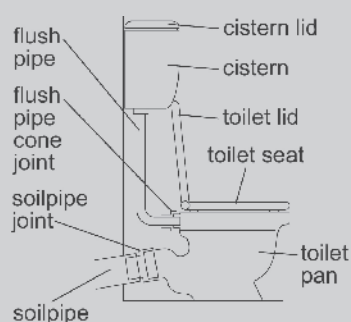


close-coupled

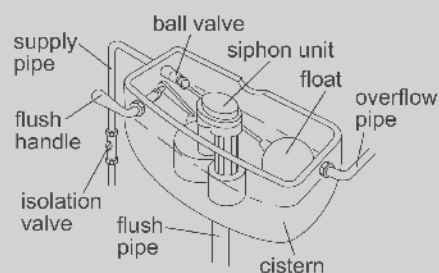
HIGH-LEVEL CISTERN



TOILETS



TOILET CISTERN



CLEARING A BLOCKED WASTE

GENERAL ADVICE

- Blocked basins and sinks are usually caused by waste in the trap: fat, tea leaves, hair, cooking oil etc
- If water is slow draining away, we advise you to clear wastepipes and traps with a cleaning product or plunger. Always follow the instructions carefully. Don't use caustic soda because it breaks down the plastic of the pipes
- The trap always holds water which stops smells coming up the drain but waste can build up in the trap and become stuck
- If more than one fitting (bath, basin, sink or shower) is blocked, the blockage may be in the soil stack or main drain. This will need to be cleared by us
- Blocked toilets are usually caused by unusual objects: nappies, toys or toilet fresheners. You must not use toilets to get rid of rubbish.

WHAT TO DO

You need:

- Bowl or bucket
- Jug or cup to be used as a scoop
- Cloth
- Plunger - for the toilet you can use a toilet brush
- Rubber gloves.

To unblock a bath, basin or sink:

- Scoop out most of the water
- Hold the cloth tightly over the overflow opening
- Put the plunger over the plug hole and pump it up and down quickly.

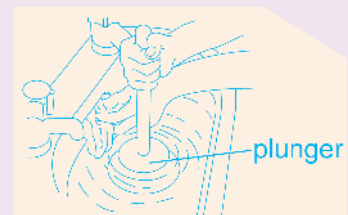
To unblock a toilet:

- If the pan is already full, take out some water using a scoop, for example a jug or cup and put it into a bucket
- Push the brush or plunger to the bottom of the pan
- Pump it up and down quickly about 10 times. This should shift the blockage
- Flush the toilet to see whether the blockage has gone.

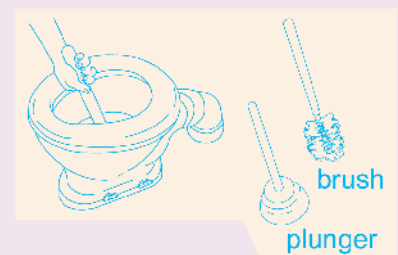
You may need to do this more than once before the toilet flushes normally. If you still have problems, you should contact us.

After you've finished, wash your hands and everything you've used.

UNBLOCKING A BASIN OR SINK



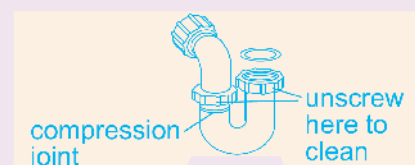
UNBLOCKING A TOILET



BOTTLE TRAP



'P'TRAP



WALLS AND CEILINGS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Fill small cracks and holes
- Make sure water is mopped up/wiped down to avoid condensation build up.
- Keep air vents and extractor fan vents clear and use the fan (if you have one)
- Keep your home in good decorative order.

ADVICE

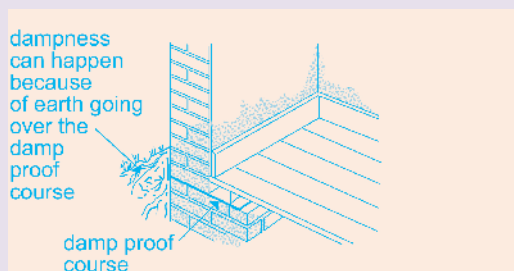
- If you fix things to the wall, you must take them down and fill in all the holes if you move out
- If you want to put a satellite dish on your outside wall, you must get our agreement in writing first. You might need to get your local council to agree too
- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or pet damage anything and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this

- Don't grow anything near or next to our outside walls. This can cause problems with the brickwork and make it damp.

WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: plaster loose, crumbling or bulging; condensation or mould on walls or ceiling; outside cladding falling off?
- Is there any damage caused by water leaking?
- If an inside wall, what is it made of: plasterboard or brick?
- If an outside wall, what is it made of: brick, tiling or concrete blocks and does it have a covering?
If so, what type is it: rough cast, cladding boards or timberboards?

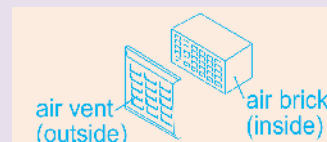
DAMP/MOULD



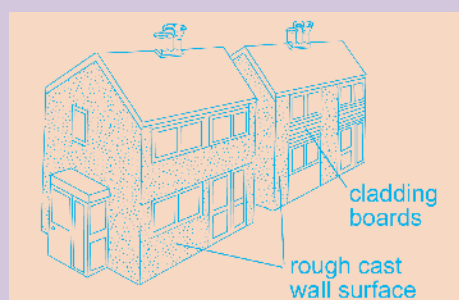
EXTRACTOR FAN



AIR FLOWING



WATER AND MOULD



WINDOWS

WHAT YOU MUST DO

- Keep window trickle vents clear and use them to help reduce condensation
- Wipe down condensation every day, dispose of the cloth

ADVICE

- If you damage the window or glass, or there's been vandalism or a break-in, we will repair all broken windows and we will charge you for the repair
- If you, a member of your family, a visitor or a pet cause damage and we have to repair it, you'll have to pay for this.

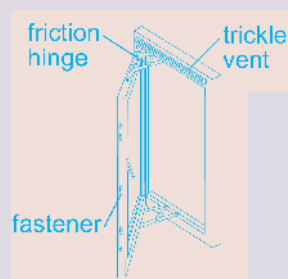
WE NEED TO KNOW

- What the problem is, such as: glass cracked or broken, frame loose or jammed, stay or fastener broken?
- What type of frame is it: wooden or plastic (upvc)?
- What style of window is it: casement, sliding sash, pivot or top-hung?
- If glass, what type is it, for example: plain or frosted? Is it double-glazed?
- If a fastener, what type is it, for example: multi-point, casement or other type?
- If a child restrictor, where is it: on the bottom of the frame, the side of the frame, or on the window itself?
- Has it caused any other problems?

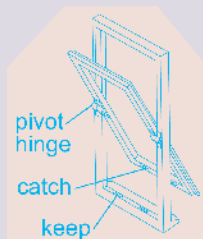
WINDOW VENT



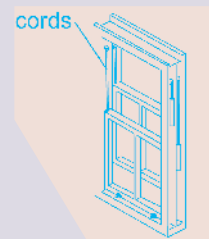
UPVC WINDOW (WITH CASEMENT OR MULTI-POINT FASTENER)



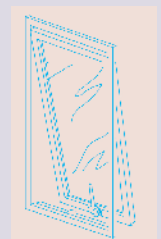
PIVOT WINDOW



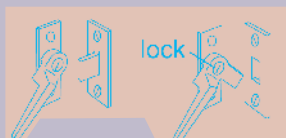
SLIDING SASH



TOP-HUNG



LOCKABLE UPVC HANDLE



CASEMENT FASTENER

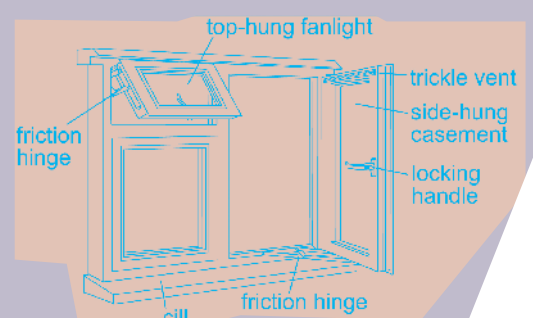
CHILD RESTRICTOR



MULTI-POINT FASTENER



CASEMENT WINDOW



RESETTING A TRIP SWITCH

If your lights or power go off, it means your trip switches are working properly.

You can find out what caused the problem and sort it out quite easily.

GENERAL ADVICE

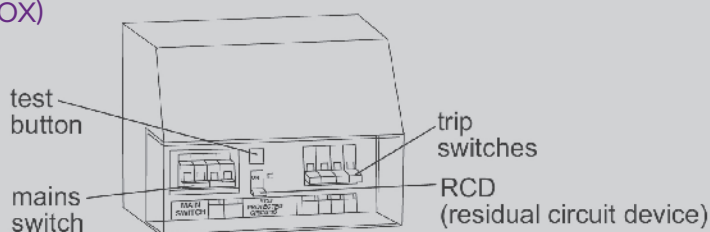
- Modern electric circuits are fitted with circuit breakers called trip switches. If there's a problem with your electrics, a switch is tripped and the circuit is broken
- All fuses or trip switches are located in the consumer unit or fuse box. Some consumer units have buttons rather than switches
- A trip switch or button usually operates because:
 - A light bulb has blown
 - There are too many appliances on a circuit and it's overloaded
 - An appliance is faulty or hasn't been used properly, for example, a kettle has been over-filled or toaster not cleaned
 - Water has leaked into a circuit or spilt onto a plug
 - There's a problem with your immersion heater
- Always have a torch handy if you have a power cut
- If there's a problem with one of your electrical appliances, leave it unplugged and get a qualified electrician or service engineer to check it
- If there's a problem with your wall or ceiling light, keep it switched off (put some tape over the switch) and let us know straight away
- Make sure your hands are dry when you touch electrical fittings.

To reset a trip:

(This advice is only for modern consumer units. If you've an older 'fuse box' type with rewirable cartridges, don't touch it and contact us immediately.)

- Open the cover on the consumer unit so that you can get to the trip switches/buttons
- Check which switches/buttons have tripped to the OFF position and which rooms (circuits) have problems
- Put these switches/buttons to the ON position.
- Check all the rooms and check which set of lights or sockets isn't working
- Unplug all appliances on that problem circuit, and switch off the immersion heater
- Switch the 'tripped' switch to the ON position (press in if it's a button)
- Plug in the appliances or switch on each light, one at a time, until the trip goes again. Don't use adaptors or multi-plug extensions when testing appliances.

CONSUMER UNIT (OR FUSE BOX)



ABOUT YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR

The smoke detector in your home is connected to the main electricity wiring.

We'll do a safety check once a year.

IF THE ALARM GOES OFF

- Take your family to where it's easy to escape in case there's a fire
- Check all rooms for signs of smoke
- Feel around each door before opening it.
- If there's any sign of heat, smoke or noise, don't open the door.

IF A FIRE HAS BROKEN OUT

- Don't try to put it out yourself. Smoke and fumes can kill in minutes
- Get everyone out of the house and call the fire service (999 or 112) unless you live in a scheme where there is a 'stay put' procedure

- Don't go back in for any reason.

IF THERE'S NO SIGN OF SMOKE OR FIRE

Something may have made the alarm go off by mistake and you may need to reset it.

This can happen if:

- A heater or clothes drier is too near it
- Someone smokes a cigarette or pipe near it or a spray is used near it
- There's too much steam or fumes from cooking, roasting meat or burnt toast
- There are strong draughts from nearby doors or windows
- Some insects have flown close to it
- The back-up battery (if any) is low.

If you can't find out why it's gone off, contact the repairs hotline.

Never disconnect the alarm. This will put you and your family at risk.

TO RESET THE ALARM

- If it has a HUSH button, press the button.
- The alarm will stop for 10 seconds, but it then beeps every 40 seconds. If the problem doesn't clear after 10 minutes, the alarm will keep going
- If there's no HUSH button, turn off the electricity supply at the consumer unit for at least 15 minutes. Then switch the electricity back on

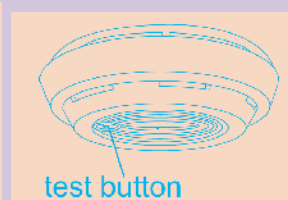
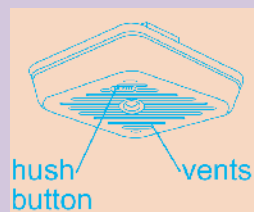
TO TEST YOUR ALARM

- Press and hold the test button for a few seconds. The alarm should sound
- If the alarm doesn't sound, try cleaning it and test again
- If the alarm still doesn't sound, contact the repairs hotline.

TO CLEAN YOUR ALARM

- Use the nozzle of your vacuum cleaner to get rid of any dust from the vents.

SMOKE DETECTORS



PREVENTING BURST PIPES

GENERAL ADVICE

- Find out where the mains stoptap is and write it down. The location of the stoptap may be on a sticker on the consumer unit
- Know where the gate valves for the hot and cold water tanks are. They are usually by the hot water and cold water tanks
- Make sure you can easily turn all the stoptaps and valves. If they're stiff, try applying some WD40 or oil to loosen them. If you're unsuccessful, don't force the tap but contact us
- In very cold weather, you should take action to prevent a freeze up. If you can it's a good idea to leave the heating on all the time on a very low heat.

WHAT TO DO

If you're going away for several weeks

- You should turn off your water supply at the stoptap, turn off your heating or hot water system and turn off your gas supply at the mains. You should also let us know who to contact if there's a problem while you're away
- But, if you go away during cold weather, it's best to leave everything on and set the heating for an hour each evening on a low temperature. Note - we can drain down the whole system for you but there'll be a charge.

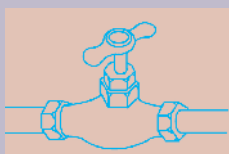
FROZEN PIPES

- Contact us immediately and turn off the water at the main stoptap
- It's probably best to leave the pipes frozen, but you may try to thaw them using a hot water bottle. Don't use a blow lamp
- If the hot water system is frozen, don't light the boiler (or if it's already on, turn it off) and turn off any water heaters.

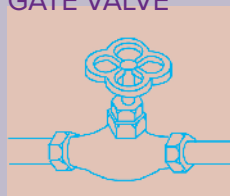
BURST PIPES

- Contact us immediately and turn off the water at the main stoptap
- Turn off any water heaters and put out any coal fire that heats a back boiler
- Turn on all taps to drain water from the system. This may take about 15 minutes.
- When the water stops running, turn all taps off
- If electrics are getting wet, don't touch. Turn off electricity at the consumer unit/fuse box
- If water leaks and makes the ceiling bulge, place a bucket under the bulge in case water leaks through.

STOPTAP



GATE VALVE



REPAIRS CARRIED OUT IN EACH RESPONSE CATEGORY

Here's a list of repairs and how urgent these are. We aim to follow this list in most cases but it is a just a guide.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

These would be any repair problem which puts the health, safety or security of you or anyone else at urgent risk, or which causes problems to the building. In the event of an emergency we will attend to make safe in the first instance and a follow up visit may be required.

Some emergency repairs might be:

- No water in your home
- Burst water main
- Flooding
- Severe storm damage
- No electricity in your home (after checking with your supplier)

- Major / unsafe electrical faults
- Breaches of security to outside doors and ground floor windows
- Blocked mains drains, soil pipe or if the only WC in your home is blocked.

Appointed and Planned Repairs:

These would be any repairs that are not classed as an emergency and do not require immediate attention. These might include:

- Small plumbing leaks or problems
- Blocked sinks, basins and baths
- Small electrical faults
- Gutter repairs
- Severe condensation and mould issues
- Communal TV aerials
- General carpentry repairs



The background of the slide features large, abstract geometric shapes in shades of grey and purple. The word "ASTER" is written in a large, dark blue, sans-serif font, with "GROUP" in a smaller, purple, sans-serif font directly below it.

ASTER

GROUP