

martinsproperties

Residential
Customer
Handbook

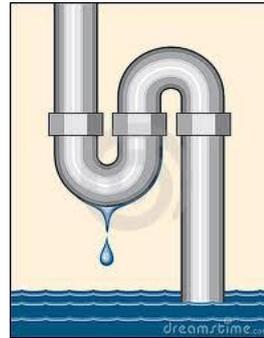
Helpful tips, advice for emergencies

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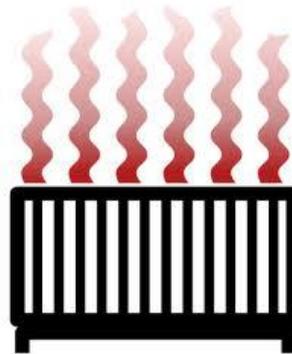
Water



leaks



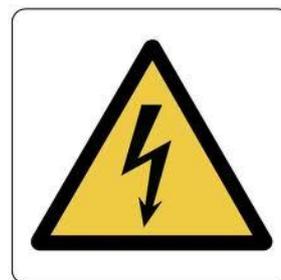
gas



heat



fire



electricity

HELPFUL TIPS

LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME

You are responsible for keeping your home in good condition. To help you do this it is best to carry out small tasks and checks to prevent future problems:

- Wipe down on a regular basis all windows affected by condensation and if any mould has formed, clean it off using a wash of diluted bleach, or an appropriate product from supermarket or DIY shop.
- Clean baths, sinks, shower heads, and taps regularly to avoid Lime scale as there will be a standard charge of £30 + VAT for Martins to remove the lime scale.
- Outside gullies should be kept clear of leaves and other debris so that water drains away easily. This is a tenant's responsibility and if blocked gullies cause leaks or damage to the property, you will be liable for costs. This applies mainly to the Basement flats and houses.
- It is the tenant's responsibility to replace light bulbs during the tenancy. However your Landlord can replace the light bulbs, at a standard charge of £30.00 + VAT.
- Carry out regular Maintenance Washes, with Soda Crystals, to keep your washing machine clean and in good running order. See "Maintenance Washes".
- If you have a kitchen waste disposal unit make sure you run water down it regularly. To keep it from seizing up".
- Defrost your freezer compartment regularly. Excessive ice build-up will prevent your freezer from working properly and may break the door/flap.



CONDENSATION

Condensation occurs when there is an excessive build-up of moisture in the air. There is always moisture in the air, but people create additional moisture in their homes by:

- Cooking, or boiling water
- Taking baths or showers
- Drying clothes indoors

If condensation cannot dry out, it will cause mould to form on walls, in cupboards and on window sills, and mildew to form on clothes and upholstery.

Please follow the following instructions to stop condensation forming:

- Cover pans and turn down the heat when boiling; switch off boiling kettles; and dry clothes outside, or in a well-ventilated room.
- Open a bathroom or kitchen window to let steam escape (or use an extractor fan), and open windows for a while each day to change the air in your property.
- Wipe down anywhere moisture settles.



WASHING MACHINE

To keep your washing machine in good running order, you should carry out a “maintenance wash” once a month, to dissolve any mould or soap scum build up in the machine (see “Maintenance Washes”).

You should ensure that the door to the machine is wiped down after washers, and left open when not in use, to allow the machine to dry out between uses. This will help prevent the formation of black mould.

The tray should be cleaned on a regular basis to prevent build-up of fabric softener and detergent. Warm water should also be poured into the draw to dissolve any build-up of powder.

Be sure not to overload the machine as this prevents the clothes from properly circulating in the wash. If the machine starts to move more than usual it is likely to be because large bulky items, such as towels, become heavy when wet, which then causes the machine to become unbalanced.

Many common problems, such as the machine not draining properly, or not completing cycles, are caused by foreign objects blocking the pump; make sure you empty all pockets before putting the clothes in the machine.

Removing Mould:

Black mould can form on the door seal, particularly if you don’t allow the machine to dry out between washers, or you don’t carry out maintenance washes.

- Don’t forget that most seals have a complex shape and you will need to part the inner and outer parts to get to the large grooves, where mould can form, and foreign objects can lodge.
- Follow with a maintenance wash (see Maintenance Washes above).

Maintenance Washes:

These should be carried out once a month to keep your machine in clean working order. They should also be carried out if you find that mould is forming in your machine, or the machine starts to smell damp.

- Do not put any clothes in the machine.
- Fill the soap dispenser with soda crystals, not normal detergent.

Soda Crystals can be purchased very cheaply from most supermarkets and are a very useful cleaning product and water softener. If you are running a maintenance wash because of mould build up then a small amount can be put directly in the drum also.

- Set your machine to its hottest wash and allow it to complete the empty cycle.

Pump Failure

Many problems, such as the machine not draining properly, or stopping part way through a cycle, are caused by foreign objects finding their way into the pump area. This sometimes happens with small socks or colour catchers, but you should **ensure that collar stiffeners and other small loose objects are removed from clothes before washing.**

Please note that if an object of this sort damages the machine, you would be responsible for the cost of fixing/replacing the machine.



DRAIN BLOCKAGES

Most blockages are caused by build-up of foreign objects; such as food, grease or hair. You should make every effort to avoid these going down the sink, and hair traps can be bought from most home stores very cheaply.

If a blockage is caused by your misuse in this way, you are likely to be held liable for the full cost of clearing the blockage.



KITCHEN EXTRACTOR FILTERS:

The filters on kitchen extractor hoods should be replaced regularly to ensure that they continue to work. You see the discolouration when the filter needs to be replaced, but as a guide, this should be done about once in 12 months. If you don't change the filter grease will build up around the cooker.

REPLACING YOUR FILTER:

Remove the cover. These usually have catches which can be pushed down or small screws which can easily be removed.

You can buy a replacement filter from most appliance shops or online. You will need to make a note of the make and model numbers of the appliance to ensure you buy the correct filter.



TURNING OFF ELECTRICITY

If you need to turn off all electricity (e.g. because of water penetration), use the main ON/OFF switch on the electricity consumer unit (fuse box).

When a switch is tripped:

Open the cover on the consumer unit to expose the trip switches. Check which switches have tripped to the OFF position and then contact your Property Manager.

Plugs: Overloaded circuits are common causes of a trip or blown fuse. Therefore do not overload plug sockets by using multiple plug adaptors.





CONTROLLING YOUR CENTRAL HEATING

During freezing spells, keep the heating on all the time to prevent the pipes from freezing. If you are out you can turn the thermostat down to around 10°C.

How to control the temperature:

The thermostat maintains the temperature in your property. To set it, turn the dial so that the arrow or marker is against the temperature setting you want. A comfortable temperature is between 18°C and 22°C.

You should also note that on many systems, the individual radiators can be controlled via the turn knobs on the side valves. (see below).



Thermostatic
Radiator Valve



Thermostat

Please refer to the instructions manual in your Tenants Manual.



PEST CONTROL

It is your responsibility to carry out pest control. Traps and bait can be bought from some supermarkets, or DIY stores.

Alternatively, we can provide you with a name of a professional pest control company who you may wish to instruct.

If necessary, in some cases, the landlord will carry out “proofing” of the property, i.e. blockings as many obvious holes, which may be considered a point of entry for rodents, as possible.

MICE

Mice are one of the most common types of pest in London and it can be very difficult to exclude them from properties, particularly conversion flats and terraced houses, as there are so many points of entry. It is generally said that a mouse can enter through a hole about the diameter of a biro pen (about 6mm).

To lessen the likelihood of mice in your property you should ensure that:

- Food is stored in sealed containers and put away in cupboards/on shelves.
- Food crumbs are cleaned away immediately.
- Waste is kept in closed bins and removed from the property regularly for local authority waste collection services to remove.

TROUBLESHOOTING

My electric oven has stopped working:

- You may have accidentally re-set the timer. Check and re-set your clock to “auto” or “manual”. Please check the instructions manual.
- If there is no power at all, check your fuse box to be sure that the circuit hasn’t been broken. (See “Checking your fuse box”).

My Fridge isn’t draining and my food is getting wet:

- The drainage outlet is probably blocked. Take a strong stick that does not snap easily, and try to clear out the drainage hole located at the back inside the fridge.

My washing machine is not draining, or has stopped mid cycle.

- Your pump filter is probably blocked, call your Landlord. Please note that if a foreign objects is found in the pump area and seen to damage the machine, you will be responsible for the cost of fixing/replacing the machine

My sink is draining slowly/not draining at all:

- This is likely to be caused by build-up of food and limescale.

My dishwasher isn’t washing my crockery properly:

- You may need to replace your rinse aid or dishwasher salt. Both can be bought from supermarkets and are easily topped up. Check your appliance manual for further info.

My central heating isn’t working properly.

- Have you checked that the thermostat isn’t set too low and that the timer is set correctly on the boiler? (Please refer to instructions manual”)

EMERGENCIES

The following are suggestions of what to do in case of an emergency situation.



FIRE

In case of fire, **dial 999**

Get everyone out and do not go back for any reason

Close all doors and windows

Warn your neighbours if any of them might be in danger

If you live in a block of flats set off the communal fire alarm.



SMELL OF GAS

Open the doors and windows to get rid of the gas

Check to see if the gas has been left on unlit, or the pilot light has gone out. If so, turn the appliance off, and do not try to relight it until all smell of gas has been cleared from the property.

If the leak cannot be stopped by turning off an appliance, or you are uncertain whether it has been stopped, phone the gas emergency service immediately: National Grid 0800 111 999.

Do not turn electrical switches on or off

Do not use door bell

Do not smoke

Do not use matches or naked flames



BURSTING OR LEAKING PIPE

Call your Landlord, if our office is closed, use the emergency number.



LOSS OF ELECTRICITY

If neighbours are also affected, call your electricity company (check your electricity bill for the number).

Check your fuse box to see if a switch has tripped or a fuse blown.

If none of the above applies and the problem persists, call your Landlord. If our office is closed, use the emergency number.