

Cold Weather Precautions



In order to avoid burst pipes, please try to keep your house warm day and night. For houses with no heating upstairs, leave room doors open to allow heat to circulate. Burst pipes can be avoided by keeping your radiators at the frost setting, so please consider this if you will be away from the property during cold spells.

Check on attic spaces, especially if there are water and storage tanks up there. Make sure that the insulation which should cover pipes and tanks has not been accidentally moved.

You should never ignore a minor water leak. A small leak may be okay overnight, but if left for several days, it could cause major damage within your home. If a leak happens, these are the steps you should take:

1. Turn off the water supply. The stop valve is usually under the sink.
2. Switch off the electricity at the mains.
3. Call your local team at Highland Residential to report the emergency.
4. Switch off central heating systems. If you have a solid fuel fire, close the damper and let the fire die out. Do not attempt to drain down the boiler unless the fire has gone out.
5. Use a bucket or basin to catch any water leaking from the burst.
6. Open all taps to sinks and bath (if possible, collect water in the bath for flushing the WC and washing).

If you go away in the winter, please be advised that you should take care to drain your pipes or leave your radiators on the frost setting to prevent damage to your property. If you go away for more than 2 weeks' at one time, you should let the Highland Residential team know you will be away and confirm that they hold a master key to your home, or where a key can be obtained in case of emergencies.

Highland Residential are not responsible for any damage caused to your personal belongings by frost damage or burst pipe or tank.

Insurance

Have you insured your household contents? You must make your own insurance arrangements. Some tenants still have no household insurance. Fire, floods and accidents can mean financial disaster.

Keep warm this winter

To make sure you and your family are warm this winter, please follow this simple advice:

During the day

- Heat your main living room to around 18°C – 21°C (64°F – 70°F) and the rest of your home to at least 16°C (61°F)
- Heat all the rooms you use

- Make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day
- Set your heating timer to come on before you get up in the morning and to switch off after you have gone to bed.
- In very cold weather set the timer to come on earlier rather than turning up your heating, this will ensure your home is warm when you get up.

During the night

- Try to keep the temperature of your bedroom above 18°C (65°F) overnight.
- If you use a fire or heater to heat your bedroom, leave your door or window slightly open to ventilate the room (preventing the build-up of moisture which could cause condensation and damp).
- Unplug electric blankets before you go to bed (unless the manufacturer's instructions state otherwise) and never use a hot water bottle with an electric blanket even if it is switched off.
- For your own safety, get your electric blanket tested every 3 years. Contact your local fire and rescue service for further advice.

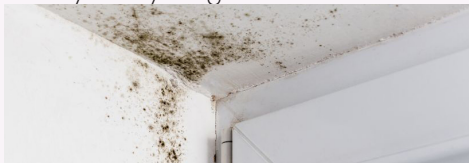
Remember to air your home daily to reduce the risk of condensation and damp.

Condensation

Condensation is caused by warm, moist air coming into contact with cold surfaces and affects millions of homes in the UK.

This leads to mould spore growth, particularly in unheated rooms, behind

furniture against outside walls and in cupboards and wardrobes. The mould and staining produced by condensation can damage wallpaper, wall surfaces and window frames as well as furniture and clothing. It can also be a health risk, particularly for those with existing lung conditions, the elderly and young children.

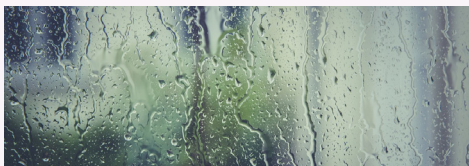


What can be done?

We recognise that condensation is a common problem and we do our best to prevent it. Wherever possible we install ventilation and insulation to improve circulation of air and to make the home easier to heat.

If you produce less moisture there will be less condensation. You can do this by:

- Putting a lid on saucepans when you are cooking
- Avoid soaking clothes and only do so for a minimal amount of time.
- Vent tumble dryers outside.
- Dry clothes outside where possible. If you have to dry them indoors do so in a well-ventilated room with internal doors closed.
- Ensure your clothes are thoroughly dry before you put them away.
- Remove moisture from surfaces with a dry cloth.



Cold weather precautions leaflet Winter 2022

Help with the cost of living

Cost of Living Payments: You could get up to 3 different types of payment depending on your circumstances. You do not need to apply, and these payments will not affect the benefits or tax credits you are entitled to.

- If you receive qualifying benefits or tax credits, you may have received £326 in July with a second payment of £324 due in November 2022.
- If you receive a qualifying disability benefit you may receive £150 by October 2022.
- If you're entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment, you will get an extra £300 for your household paid along with your normal payment.

Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund provides two types of grant to people on low incomes, depending on your circumstances (these do not have to be paid back):

- Crisis grants if you need help quickly because of an emergency or disaster.
- Community care grants help people on low income live independently in the community or to ease pressure on families

Contact The Highland Council on 0800 083 1887 or find out more at www.highland.gov.uk/welfare-fund

Winter Fuel Payment: If you were born on or before 25 September 1956 you could get between £250 and £600 to help you pay your heating bills. If you receive the state pension or certain benefits you will be paid this automatically. Otherwise, you may need to make a claim by calling 0800 731 0160.

Child & Family Payments

A wide range of grants and other forms of support are available for families with children from pregnancy through early years and right through primary, secondary and further education. Full details can be found at www.costofliving.campaign.gov.scot/children-and-families.

Child Winter Heating Assistance: Child Winter Heating Assistance is a benefit from the Scottish Government. It's a payment to help disabled children and young people and their families with increased heating costs over winter. The payment for winter 2022-2023 is £214.10. Find out more at www.mygov.scot/child-winter-heating-assistance

The Warm Home Discount Scheme: An additional £140 energy discount may be available to find out if you receive the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit or if you have a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria. Find out more at www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme