HANDBOOK FOR FIRE SAFETY IN HOUSING COMPANIES

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HELSINKI CITY RESCUE DEPARTMENT

ITÄ-UUDENMAAN PELASTUSLAITOS
EASTERN-UUSIMAA EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

KESKI-UUDENMAAN PELASTUSLAITOS
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SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Everyone is responsible for being careful.

This handbook has been compiled for residential buildings that are required to have an emergency plan in place, which include all terraced houses, balcony access blocks, apartment buildings and the like with three or more dwellings. The term means that these residential buildings must have an emergency plan drawn up in accordance with the Rescue Act.

The handbook was prepared in cooperation between the Helsinki City Rescue Department, Eastern Uusimaa Emergency Services Department, Keski-Uusimaa Rescue Department and Länsi-Uusimaa Rescue Department. The Uusimaa rescue departments' cooperation structure agreed under collaboration agreement is familiarly referred to as 'HIKLU'.

In order to make the handbook easier to read, residential buildings required to have an emergency plan are hereafter referred to as residential buildings also where several residential buildings are associated with a housing company or a real estate corporation, or there is an agreement to divide the possession of several dwellings between joint owners.

The party responsible for the residential building refers to the housing company's board of directors, the party responsible for the real estate corporation and the persons responsible under the agreement to divide the possession between joint owners. The party responsible for the residential building is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the residential building's safety, the preparation of the emergency plan and other fire safety measures.

The party responsible for the residential building may appoint a person responsible for safety to support them but may not outsource their responsibility to that person. Some safety issues may be entrusted by contracts to, for example, a property manager or maintenance company. In this case, the responsible party of the residential building shall ensure that the responsibilities mentioned in the agreements are implemented. Rescue departments support the safety work of the parties responsible for the residential building through safety communication and supervision.

By consulting the *Handbook for fire safety in housing companies*, you can check that proper steps have been taken to address fire and evacuation safety, disturbances and accidents, and civil protection preparedness.

EMERGENCY PLAN

An emergency plan required by the Rescue Act must be drawn up for residential buildings with three or more residential apartments. The housing company's board of directors is responsible for drawing up, updating and communicating the emergency plan for the residential building. The board may choose to outsource the preparation of the emergency plan, but not the associated responsibilities.

The emergency plan is a key part of a residential building's self-preparedness, which aims to prevent accidents and protect people, property and the environment in dangerous situations.

It is also a guideline for the residents and property users on how to act in case of emergencies and prepare for independent rescue activities.

An emergency plan is not drawn up for the authorities but to ensure and improve the safety of the inhabitants and other people living or working in the building.

It is important to draw up the emergency plan in view of the specific characteristics of the housing company even when using ready-made plan templates.

The emergency plan must include the following:

1. Conclusions on the assessments of the dangers and risks
2. Safety arrangements of the building and facilities used for the activities
3. Instructions for building residents and other persons on how to prevent accidents and what action to take in accidents and dangerous situations
4. Any other measures related to self-preparedness on the premises
5. Implementation of self-preparedness in emergency conditions
6. Where applicable, due account must also be taken of any abnormal use and temporary change in the way the site is used.

A key stage in the preparation of the emergency plan is the identification and assessment of risks.

The most important thing in the assessment of risks is to identify risks affecting the housing company in, for example, the outdoor areas, indoors, activities carried out in the property or for reasons due to activities carried out entirely outside the property. Once the risks have been identified, the measures to prevent and prepare for them shall be considered. Based on the risk assessment, instructions for actions in case of possible accidents are prepared.

For more information on the emergency plan, see the rescue department website.

§ Rescue Act 379/2011, Section 15§
Government Decree on Rescue Services 407/2011, Sections 1–2

YARD AND OUTDOOR AREAS

It is important in the event of an emergency that help can reach the site as quickly as possible.

Address indication and access to buildings

The address number of the property must be displayed in a prominent place and easy to see also in the dark. The staircases and apartments must also be clearly marked. If the property cannot be seen from an official road, the address number must also be placed on the roadside to indicate the driveway to the property. If there is more than one building on the same plot, consider adding wayfinding signage.

For more information on wayfinding signage on page 6.

Property contact details

Apartment buildings must display in a prominent place contact details of the maintenance company or the property manager or other person able to allow rescue authorities to enter the building without delay and free of charge around the clock.

Safety of the outdoor areas

The yard and outdoor areas must be included as part of the risk mapping of the housing company. Accident risks should be eliminated, and any damage caused by, for example, a storm should be prevented in advance.

- **Adequate lighting** allows for safe moving in the dark time and also reduces the risk of vandalism.
- Slipping accidents are very common. **Adequate sanding** and other anti-slip measures in the yard area and passageways are important not only to improve the safety of residents but also to facilitate the operations of the rescue department in the event of an accident.
- It is important to **maintain play equipment and outdoor furniture in good condition** to ensure safe use of the yard.
- **Trees in poor condition** must be felled because they pose a risk in high wind conditions. It is also advisable to monitor the yard area for any other objects that can come off in high wind conditions and cause damage.
- In winter, the housing company must ensure that **snow and ice accumulated on the roofs** do not pose a danger to the structures or fall on people moving in the area. Dropping of snow should be planned in advance with the maintenance company so that the operations can be started quickly, if necessary. If necessary, movement near the building must be limited such that any snow or ice at risk of falling cannot hit people or vehicles.

Waste collection points and bins

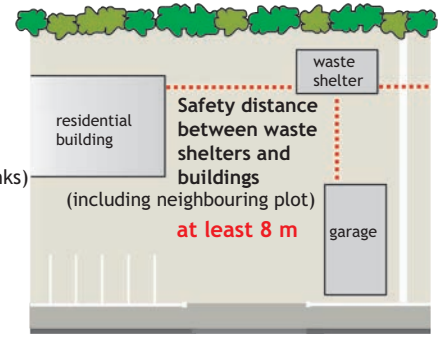
Waste bins and collection points are common targets for arson. The spread of fire must be prevented either by ensuring adequate safety distances or by structural solutions. Rescue authorities view each building as a product of their respective construction time but, in the case of a residential building, you should check the required safety distances from your insurance company's safety guidelines.

The following can be regarded as indicative distances:

4 metres from the building eaves line
- single 240- and 600-litre rubbish bins
- metal waste bins
- deep collection bins/deep tanks (e.g. Molok tanks)

6 metres from the building eaves line
- rows of multiple rubbish bins
- cardboard roller cages

8 metres from the building eaves line
- unpartitioned waste collection points (new construction)
- skips containing flammable material



When building near the site boundary, fire safety and safety distances must also be considered in the direction of adjacent buildings.

Emergency access road

Emergency access roads are driving routes on a residential building plot that are suitable for rescue vehicles as required by the building permit. Not all properties have an emergency access road. If the property has an emergency access road as required by the building permit, it must always be kept in good driving condition. It must not be blocked, for example, by cars, barriers or snow piles. Emergency access roads shall be indicated in accordance with the Road Traffic Decree.

Emergency access road indications may only be used on emergency access roads specified in the building permit documents.

An example of an emergency access road indication.

Emergency access roads must meet certain requirements as regards width and load-bearing capacity, for example. Other routes must not be indicated as emergency access roads. In case of doubt, the building permit documents can be used to check whether the route is an official emergency access road.

For more information on emergency access roads, see the rescue department website (HIKLU emergency access road planning and implementation instructions, in Finnish).

Wayfinding signage

It is a good idea to equip the site with signage if there are several buildings on the plot and not all buildings are limited to the street or its immediate vicinity. It is also advisable to equip the site with signage if the plot's emergency road arrangements are exceptional or difficult to perceive.

The signage must be placed at the beginning of the access route to the site, and it must be visible even in the dark.

If there are several access routes to the site, all of them must be equipped with signage. In the block, all buildings must be equipped with signage informing the arrangements in the whole block.

The signage must be large enough to see the main points without getting out of the vehicle, at minimum 700 x 700 mm. The size of the signage is affected by, for example, the placement of the board and the viewing distance from the roadway. The size of the letters on the signage must be at least 100 mm.

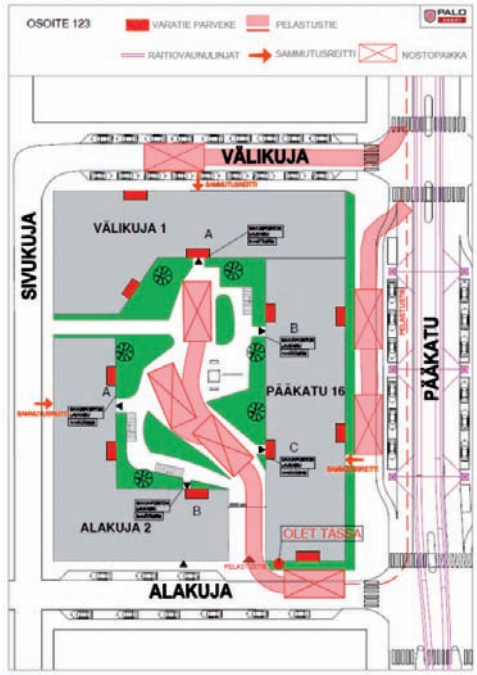
The signage must be oriented according to the viewing direction, not according to points of the compass.

The signage shall indicate the following:

- location of the buildings
- street addresses
- driveways in the area
- “you are here” marking
- staircases
- attack routes to the basement facilities
- routes for the emergency medical service unit
- emergency access roads and the associated hardstanding areas for lifting operations.

Any weight restrictions on the driveways must also be indicated. (Seeexample of wayfinding signage)

Wayfinding signage is usually required in a building permit or by rescue authorities when the building is completed. Wayfinding signage can also be added voluntarily to improve the accessibility of the property.



§ Rescue Act 379/2011, Sections 9 and 14

SHARED AND COMMON FACILITIES

In residential buildings, care must be taken to prevent fire and accident risks and to ensure that evacuation and rescue work can be carried out safely in case of an accident.

The shared and common facilities of a residential building include, for example, staircases, club rooms, common sauna and washrooms, laundry rooms, drying rooms, storage rooms, vehicle shelters and technical rooms. General tidiness and order and adequate operating instructions in laundry rooms and the like increase safety.

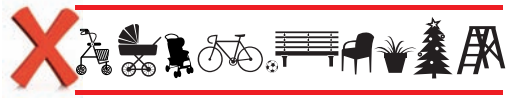
Intended use of the building and its parts

The building and its parts shall be used in accordance with the building permit. For example, a vehicle shelter must not be used as a storage space or an office space as a dwelling without applying for a change in the intended use of the space. A change in the intended use usually requires applying for a building permit. If there is uncertainty about the intended use of a space or the appropriateness of the activities, contact the local building supervision services.

Staircases, basement and attic corridors

The staircase is the main and usually the safest exit route out of the apartments and should not be used to store anything unnecessary. In case of an emergency, unnecessary obstacles endanger the safety of both the residents and rescue personnel.

All kinds of items, such as prams, walkers and doormats, hinder evacuation and rescue operations. Extra material stored in staircases is also an easy target for the potential arsonist and forms a lot of toxic smoke in case of fire, which quickly fills the staircase.



Storage of goods in the staircase does not refer to normal notice boards, door decorations or housing company's doormats located in the staircase. These are not considered to adversely affect evacuation safety or pose a significant risk to fire safety.

Technical rooms

Technical rooms often include, for example, the main distribution board, a heat distribution room, a geothermal heat pump, an oil burner, a water meter and ventilation equipment. Technical rooms are not intended for storage use and must not be used to store anything unnecessary. Only small quantities of items needed for the maintenance of the equipment may be stored there, like replacement air filters stored in the air-conditioning plant room, for example. Excess goods in the main distribution room, for example, significantly increase the risk of a fire starting and spreading.

Common storage rooms

The building must include a separate storage space for movable property. Otherwise, movable property must be stored in dwellings. Subject to housing company rules, one set of car tyres may be stored in an apartment-specific caged storage room. When burning, tyres produce extremely heavy smoke, and it is often difficult to extinguish burning tyres. Storage of flammable liquids, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or other flammable gases in common attic spaces or caged or basement storage rooms is forbidden.

Storage of flammable liquids and gases in a residential building

The table below lists the maximum allowed chemical quantities by room (Government Decree 685/2015, Section 47§).

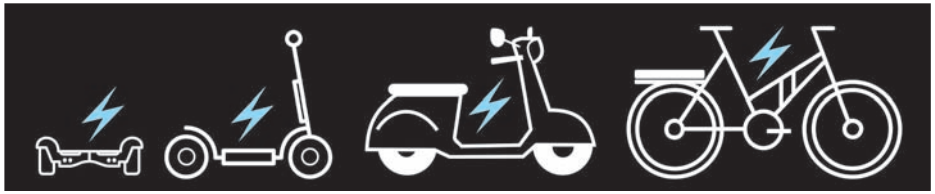
Room	**Flammable liquids and aerosols** such as petrol, spray paint, oil, diesel oil	**Liquefied petroleum gas** (LPG)
Apartment	25 litres in total	25 kg
Attic or basement	No	No
Separate storage room	50 litres in total	50 kg

Storage of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) **and other flammable gases heavier than air is prohibited in basement and attic rooms and other similar rooms in the building.**

Indications

There should be clear indications to the main electricity, water and gas cut-offs all the way from the outside. For example, in case of water damage, it is important to get the water supply cut off as quickly as possible. The clearer the indications, the faster the cut-off is found. If the housing company has a solar energy system in place, ensure adequate indications and safety instructions for that also.

The rescue department does not know in advance where, for example, the main water cut-off is located. With the help of clear indications, it can be found quickly.



Storage and charging of electric mobility equipment in residential buildings

As regards storing, using and charging electric bikes and electric mobility equipment (e.g. electric scooters and mopeds), it is essential to follow the device manufacturer's instructions.

From a fire safety point of view, it is essential and highly recommended that charging should be supervised in order to be able to react to any fault situations. The bike storage facility should be a separate fire compartment or located in a building separate from the residential building. Fire load in the storage facility should be kept to a minimum, and the immediate surroundings of the charging place should preferably be completely clear of combustible materials.

A device with a lithium-ion battery or the battery itself should be stored at normal room temperature and preferably away from direct sunlight. The appropriateness of the electrical charging installations must also be ensured.

It is recommended to have first-aid extinguishing equipment and a smoke alarm in the battery charging and storage room (check the safety guidelines of your insurance company). A sufficient amount of water or, alternatively, a foam fire extinguisher is the best means for first-aid extinguishing a battery fire.

Extinguishing a battery fire can be challenging and the residents should be aware of this

In the event of a fire, exit the room, close the doors and call the emergency number 112. First-aid extinguishing can be attempted if it is possible without endangering oneself.

TUKES has a good guide providing more information on the safe use of lithium-ion batteries:
-Safe use of Li-ion batteries for consumers (in Finnish) - Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (TUKES)

Garage

Designated garage premises are intended for the keeping of motor vehicles, with safety arrangements specifically designed for this purpose. Garages are not designed to be resistant to a chemical fire or large quantities of burning material.

In addition to motor vehicles, garages can be used to store a trailer, caravan or service vehicle (snowblower, lawnmower, etc.). As for storage of other items, it must always be assessed separately whether this increases the risk of a fire or other accident or makes rescue operations more difficult. As a general rule of thumb, if the vehicles fit easily into their designated spaces, the amount of other items is still within a reasonable level. However, it is recommended that nothing but vehicles should be stored in a garage.

Flammable liquids and gases may be stored in a garage as described in the table below.

PETROL	DIESEL	LPG
60 L	200 L	25 KG

Restrictions on the storage of chemicals are garage-specific, not parking space-specific.

The amounts do not include the petrol in the vehicle's tank.

If charging points for electric vehicles have been or are added to an existing garage, the rescue department must be provided with the possibility to de-energise the charging points from one location by, for example, a safety switch or a main switch for the charging points.

- The place intended for charging must be indicated and easily accessible from the outside.
- Separate instructions must be prepared for the rescue department and placed in a visible place in the attack route.
- Charging points should be located close to the exit and access routes to make it easier to tow an electric vehicle out of the garage if needed.

You can find garage fire safety instructions prepared jointly by the HIKLU rescue departments on the rescue department's websites.

Fire compartmentation

The purpose of fire compartmentation is to limit the spread of fire and smoke in the building.

Fire compartmentation is implemented according to the building regulations based on the facilities of the building and their intended use. Each dwelling of a residential building is a separate fire compartment. The staircase of an apartment building also forms a separate fire compartment. Other fire compartments usually include attics, basements, personal property storage rooms, technical rooms, civil defence shelters, waste rooms and garages.

As for terraced houses, current (after 1990) requirements require that dwelling-specific fire compartments extend up to the roof. In the case of older terraced houses, roof compartmentation should be implemented in connection with a roof renovation, for example.

An open fire door is of no use in case of a fire.

Doors between fire compartments (such as apartment entrance doors in apartment buildings) must be fire doors. A fire door can usually be identified by a type approval marking on the hinged side of the door. Apart from the apartment entrance doors, the fire doors shall be self-closing and self-latching. Fire doors must be kept closed unless they are equipped with an automatic closure mechanism.

The fire compartment structures shall be intact and in good condition. Various cables and pipes may pass from one fire compartment to another, but the penetrations must be sealed according to the fire compartmentation class of the surrounding structures.

Attention should be paid to the condition of the apartment entrance doors that act as fire doors, especially in the case of old doors. Factors indicating the need for replacement or maintenance of an apartment entrance door include the wear and tear or disintegration of the door seals, any clearance in or obvious damage to the door or its accessories, such as the mailbox. It is also recommended to replace the apartment entrance door if it is a combination of two door leaves and the fire resistance of the outer door leaf indicated on the type approval mark is only 15 minutes.

Electrical appliances

Installation and maintenance of electrical appliances (e.g. washing machines, mangles, etc.) in shared facilities must be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Lighting in the shared facilities must be properly maintained, and any faulty bulbs replaced without delay in order to prevent further fault situations. Facilities with electrical appliances should be equipped with smoke alarms (excluding damp rooms) and first-aid extinguishing equipment.

It is important for everyone living in the property to know where the property's main electrical switch and main water shut-off are located, how to use them and how to access them in an emergency. Residents should also be instructed in the emergency plan on how to act if water damage occurs in their apartment.

§ Rescue Act 379/2011, Sections 9, 10 and 13

TECHNOLOGY

The fire safety of residential buildings can be improved with a number of technical solutions.

Your building does not necessarily contain all the solutions described in the guide, but the guidelines should be applied to the existing situation.

Ventilation ducts and equipment, fireplaces

The ventilation ducts of a residential building must be swept often enough to prevent a risk of fire. The recommended sweeping interval for ventilation ducts is ten (10) years. Other ventilation equipment should be maintained regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Ventilation shall be stopped, for example, in the event of a fire or if a chemical accident has occurred in the vicinity. The ventilation emergency stop button (in picture) must be accompanied by an indication of the parts of the property affected by the emergency stop (shared facilities/apartments).

Residential buildings with mechanical ventilation usually have a ventilation emergency stop switch in the staircase. The switch must be visibly marked and its location and operation instructed to the residents in the emergency plan's instructions for action, for example.

If the residential building includes a cooking restaurant or a professional kitchen, the need to sweep the grease ducts in the kitchen must be determined regularly, and the ducts swept accordingly. As a rule, the recommended cleaning interval is one (1) year. The filters should be cleaned regularly, usually weekly or monthly. Other ventilation ducts and equipment in the restaurant should also be cleaned annually. The division of cleaning responsibilities should be agreed upon and clearly recorded.

Chimney sweeping

All fireplaces used in the residential building must be swept annually. Chimney sweeping is carried out to ensure the the smokeproofing of the flue and to remove fire debris that may cause fire hazards from fireplaces and flues. The owner and occupants of a residential building and business and industrial operators shall ensure that the ladders, parts of roof walkways and roof safety equipment are kept in such a condition that chimney sweeping can be carried out safely.

The owner and occupants of a residential building and business and industrial operators shall order and agree on sweeping with a sweeping service company of their choice. Upon request, a written chimney sweeping certificate shall be presented to the rescue authorities.

For information on local sweepers, please visit www.nuohoojat.fi

First-aid extinguishing equipment

First-aid extinguishing equipment should also be located in technical rooms and any commercial premises.

Portable fire extinguishers

Portable hand extinguishers must be inspected by a fire extinguisher service company approved by the Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (TUKES) every two years. Portable fire extinguishers that are exposed to moisture, vibration, temperature fluctuations or frost must be inspected yearly.

There are different types of portable fire extinguishers designed for different purposes, but the most common ones used in heated rooms are dry powder extinguishers or foam extinguishers, which must be CE approved.

The most common size for portable fire extinguishers in shared facilities is 6 kg. The extinguishers must be of the appropriate rating. Portable fire extinguishers should be placed along the exit route and at a height that makes it easy to lift them off the bracket.

Fire hose reels

Fire hose reels are first-aid extinguishing equipment connected to the water mains. They should be inspected at least once a year, and the hoses should be tested every five years by a fire extinguisher service company approved by TUKES. In any case, the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance and servicing must be followed.

Fire hose reels are intended for use by the residents for first-aid fire extinguishing. Everyone in a residential building should know how to use the fire hose reels if any.

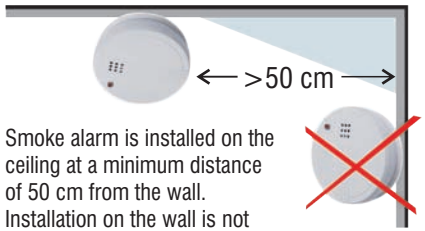
Fire safety equipment

If the residential building has safety technology, the equipment must be maintained and tested in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. It is recommended to keep a logbook of all maintenance and servicing activities done to the equipment.

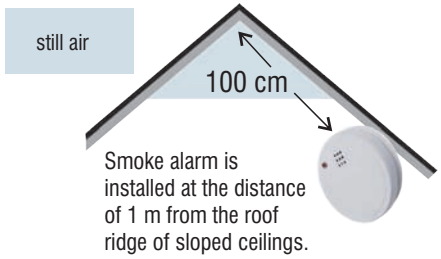
Smoke alarm

Each apartment must have a sufficient number of functioning smoke alarms. The minimum is one alarm for each full or partial 60 m^2 on each floor. A good principle is to install a smoke alarm in every bedroom and in routes leading outdoors.

Residents must be informed of their responsibility for the acquisition and operating condition of the smoke alarms.



Smoke alarm is installed on the ceiling at a minimum distance of 50 cm from the wall. Installation on the wall is not recommended.



Smoke alarm is installed at the distance of 1 m from the roof ridge of sloped ceilings.

Install the smoke alarm in a location where it will detect the smoke from a fire as early as possible (ceiling/highest point in the apartment). In addition to the net floor area, the number and placement of smoke alarms must consider the shape of the protected room and any activities presenting a special risk of ignition.

The alarm sound of the smoke alarm and other fire detectors must be audible to people in all parts of the apartment. If necessary, the audible alarm must be supplemented by another type of alarm.

The most important function of a smoke alarm is to alert occupants of incipient fire

The working order of the smoke alarm must be ensured by testing it regularly.

Smoke alarms connected to the mains

If the residential building has smoke alarms or a smoke alarm system connected to the mains, the equipment must be maintained in accordance with the service and maintenance programme. Maintenance is the responsibility of the owner of the equipment. Dwellings built in 2009 and thereafter must have apartment-specific smoke alarms connected to the mains, the placement of which is planned during the construction phase.

The owner of the mains-connected equipment, usually the housing company, is responsible for the operating condition of the system. A maintenance programme must be drawn up for the alarms to ensure correct operation and regular maintenance (e.g. replacement of the backup battery). Residents must be given clear instructions on how to deal with alarms connected to the mains in different situations (e.g. monthly testing).

Automatic fire alarm system with emergency response centre connection

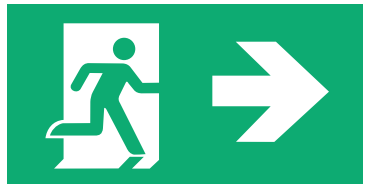
An automatic fire alarm system may be imposed as a condition of the building's building permit based on certain specific criteria. A person responsible for the automatic fire alarm must be appointed and trained. A maintenance programme must be prepared for the system. A maintenance log must be kept at the site. A monthly test alarm must be carried out with the emergency response centre.

Periodic inspections must normally be carried out every three years by an inspection company approved by the Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (TUKES).

Automatic fire-extinguishing system

An automatic fire-extinguishing system may be imposed as a condition of the building's building permit based on certain specific criteria. A person responsible for the automatic fire-extinguishing system must be appointed and trained. A maintenance programme must be prepared for the system. A maintenance log must be kept at the site. The connection to the emergency centre must be tested monthly. Periodic inspections must normally be carried out every two years by an inspection company approved by the Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (TUKES).

Exit route lighting



The purpose of the exit route lighting is to illuminate exit routes by battery power during a power failure. Exit route lighting is implemented using symbols (so-called 'running person') and signs specified by the Ministry of the Interior to indicate the direction of the exit.

Residential buildings may also have emergency lights to support the exit route lighting. The exit route lighting must always have battery backup, and the system must be maintained and tested in accordance with the maintenance and service programme. Faulty signage must be repaired without delay.

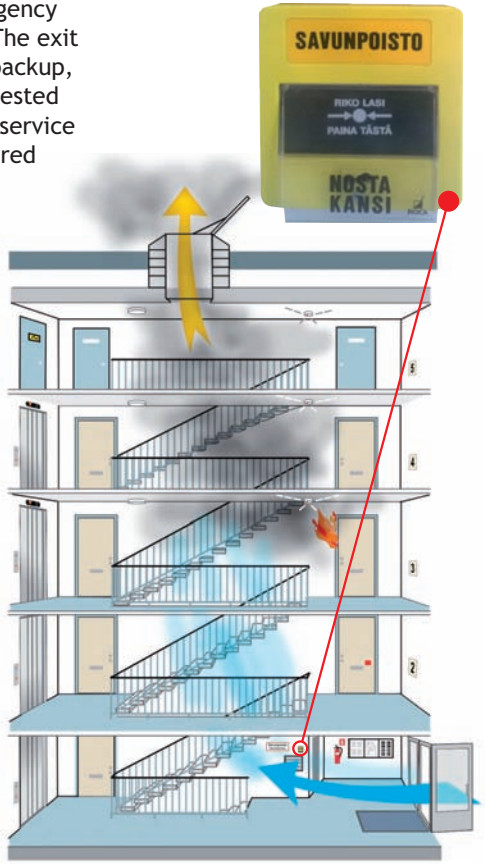
Smoke vents or smoke extraction system

Smoke extraction equipment is intended for use by the rescue department in an emergency.

The operating instructions for the vents or equipment and the areas vented by the vents shall be clearly marked in the place of use.

Smoke extraction equipment should be tested annually, i.e. the vents or similar devices should be opened, and the operating condition checked in accordance with the service and maintenance programme.

§ Rescue Act 379/2011, Sections 12 and 14



CIVIL DEFENCE SHELTER

A civil defence shelter is a separate room or building built in or adjacent to a building with the purpose to protect people in emergency conditions from, for example, radiation, toxic substances, effects of weapons or collapsing buildings.

As a rule, civil defence shelters are reserved exclusively for use in times of crisis and not, for example, in connection with accidents involving hazardous materials under normal conditions. Under normal conditions, civil defence shelters can be used, for example, as storage rooms. Chemicals that could cause odour nuisance must not be stored in civil defence shelters.

The shelter must be ready for use within 72 hours of an order by the authorities. The use of a civil defence shelter during normal times must be such that the shelter structures are not damaged, and shelter equipment remains in working order.

The civil defence shelter and its equipment shall be regularly inspected and maintained. It is the responsibility of the building's owner and occupants to keep the civil defence shelter in good condition and serviceable. The board of the housing company or the owner of the property may appoint a person responsible for maintaining the civil defence shelter and protection by carrying out the required measures.

If the property does not have its own civil defence shelter, general civil defence shelter or regional evacuations are to be used.

The international sign of civil defence, a blue triangle on an orange background, is placed in front of the shelter door.

Civil defence shelters built before 1959

- The condition of the structures should be monitored and attention paid to the condition of the fire compartmentation.

Civil defence shelters built after 1959

- Measures once a year:
  The air handling units of the civil defence shelter should be used once a year for more than five minutes. The maintenance and operating instructions for the equipment are supplied with the equipment. The instructions should be kept with the equipment so that they are always easily accessible.
- Measures every ten years:
  The civil defence shelter and its equipment and accessories shall be inspected and serviced at least every ten (10) years to ensure that the shelter is in good operating condition. The inspection also includes a airtightness test. A dated and signed inspection report shall be drawn up for the inspection.

§ Rescue Act 379/2011, Sections 12 and 76
Ministry of the Interior Decree on the Technical Requirements for Civil Defence Shelters and their Equipment Maintenance, Sections 15 and 20

MINIMISE RISKS AND LIVE IN SAFETY

You are the expert on the safety of your home – you are responsible for safe living practices!

Residents, for their part, are responsible for ensuring that due diligence and care is taken and for addressing any accident risks and near misses observed. Residents shall be informed about whom and how the observations can be communicated to process them and minimise the risks. Your building does not necessarily contain all items (e.g. sauna, balcony) addressed in the guide, but the guidelines should be applied to the existing situation.

Smoke alarm

Battery-powered smoke alarms are replaced at least every ten (10) years unless the manufacturer has indicated a shorter service life for the smoke alarm. The service life is calculated from the time of manufacture of the smoke alarm (marked on the bottom of the device). An alarm device at the end of its service life should be replaced even if the test button indicates that it is working. Rescue departments recommend marking the service life indicated by the manufacturer on the smoke alarm. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.

The housing company is usually responsible for the replacement and maintenance of smoke alarms connected to the mains as part of the property's electrical equipment.

The resident is responsible for testing the smoke alarm once a month.

Fireplaces in the dwellings

Fireplaces and chimneys in use must be swept at least once a year by a chimney sweep. Housing companies can agree whether the organisation of sweeping is the responsibility of the individual resident or to be ordered by the housing company. Residents shall be informed about the organisation and responsibilities of chimney sweeping in the housing company.

Use of electrical appliances

Most fires are caused by human error. Poor maintenance, incorrect use and forgetting to switch off an appliance are the leading causes of accidents. There is a range of safety equipment, such as timers, available for electrical appliances. Consider whether you or your family members should acquire safety equipment.

- Read the instructions before installing and using the appliances.
- Follow the instructions and save them for future use.
- Locate the appliances correctly. Allow enough space around the unit for air circulation and do not block the ventilation openings.
- Make sure you know the location of the main switch on the electrical panel in your apartment.

Refrigeration equipment

- Ensure adequate ventilation around the refrigerator and freezer.
- Vacuum the dust regularly also behind the unit! Unplug the power plug while vacuuming.

Stoves and ovens

- Do not leave the oven or hotplates switched on unattended.
- Always switch off the power after use.
- Make sure that there is no flammable material on or near the stove.
- You can get a timer or a stove guard.
- Clean the cooker hood regularly.

Washing machines and dishwashers

- Do not leave washing machines switched on unattended to prevent fire incidents and water damage.
- Clean the lint filter regularly.
- Protect the appliance from water splashes.
- Close the water tap after use.

Lighting

- Follow the instructions for installing and operating the lighting fixtures. Observe proximity to flammable materials, such as curtains.
- Replace burned-out or flashing fluorescent lights immediately.
- Do not replace the bulb with a bulb that exceeds the recommended rating.
- Keep lighting fixtures clean from dust.
- Fix wall mounted lighting fixtures securely so that they do not fall on the bed or couch, for example.

TV set

- Ensure sufficient ventilation around the TV set. Do not cover the ventilation openings.
- Vacuum the dust regularly from around the ventilation openings.

Charging electronic devices

- Do not leave the device unattended during charging.
- Pay attention to abnormal overheating of the device and the charger.
- Use only chargers approved by the device manufacturer.
- Always unplug the charger from the socket-outlet after charging.
- Stop using faulty devices immediately.

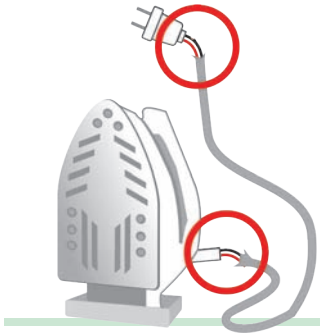
Electric heaters

- Position the heater so that it cannot tip over.
- Do not place the heater too close to curtains, furniture or anything flammable.
- Do not dry laundry on top of the heater or cover it with anything.
- Ensure nothing will fall on or be knocked over the heater.
- Prefer heaters with low surface temperature.

Sauna

- Do not dry laundry or other flammable material above the sauna stove or near it.
- Check that there are no flammable items near the sauna stove before switching it on.
- The stove must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions
- Do not use the sauna as storage. If you do not use the sauna for bathing, disconnect or switch off the fuse of the stove so that the stove cannot be turned on accidentally.
- Have broken or malfunctioning resistors and switches repaired.

Do not dry laundry or other flammable material above the sauna stove or near it.



A faulty appliance must be replaced, or its use stopped.

Please note the following!

- A faulty appliance must be replaced, or its use stopped.
- Ensure sufficient airflow around all electronic appliances.
- Preferably plug your appliances into a wall outlet rather than an extension cord.
- Only appliances with low wattage may be plugged into an extension cord with multiple outlets.
- Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord!
- Always call a certified electrician to do electrical installations.
- Have worn-out or suspicious installations checked.

Always call a certified electrician to do electrical installations.

Solar electricity

If the housing company has a solar energy system in place, ensure adequate indications and safety instructions for that also.

Barbecuing on a balcony

Safety aspects must be considered carefully, as balconies are small and contain combustible material, such as wooden gratings and furniture. Housing companies may provide instructions on barbecuing in their company-specific housing rules and regulations.

Electric grills must be located and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Liquefied petroleum gas grills must be located in a well-ventilated place, away from the sun. The valve of the cylinder must be closed after use. The tightness of the connections must be checked when changing the cylinder. The condition of the equipment must be checked regularly, and worn parts replaced and serviced in good time. If the smell of gas is detected, the valve of the cylinder must be closed, and open flames put out.
The smallest spark can ignite LPG gas!

Candles

Candles must not be left unattended when lit. They must be located in a place where there is no flammable material nearby, and they cannot fall over. Battery-powered candles are a safe way to create ambience.

Smoking

The company's housing rules and regulations can include more detailed smoking rules. Observe the instructions and regulations for handling and using fire.

Emergency supplies kit

An emergency supplies kit ensures that everyday life runs smoothly even with the normal services disrupted for a while. Situations in which an emergency supplies kit may be needed include, for example, illness of yourself or a family member, disruption of retail trade or a situation requiring sheltering indoors or in a civil defence shelter.

The recommended emergency supplies kit includes water and food supplies, essential household items and personal medication for at least a few days.

ACTION IN CASE OF FIRE

If a fire breaks out, it is important to exit the building quickly and safely. Safe exit depends on your know-how and advance planning.

- **Put out** the fire, if you can do it safely.
- **Close** the doors and windows to prevent the fire from getting oxygen and the poisonous smoke from spreading in the building.
- Go to a safe place.
- **Call** the emergency number 112.
- **Warn** others and evacuate those in danger.
- If there is smoke in the room, move low.
- Do not use the elevator.
- **Avoid going to a smoky room.**
  If the fire is in another apartment and there is smoke in the corridor, stay in your own apartment and close the doors leading to the corridor.
- Ventilate your apartment if necessary

Ventilate your apartment if necessary

When you use the application for the first time you need to enter your phone number!

If the emergency number is momentarily busy – do not hang up!
Your call will be answered as soon as possible, and calls are always answered in the order they are received.

If the situation on the scene changes significantly after your emergency call, call the emergency response centre back to report it.

We recommend that you load the 112 Suomi application onto your phone. When you use the application to call the emergency response centre your location data is automatically transmitted to the emergency response centre and help will arrive more quickly. The application also includes general alarm notifications from the authorities.

Visit www.112.fi for further information on how to call the emergency number.

Further information is available at your local rescue department, website and social media.

HELSINGIN KAUPUNGIN PELASTUSLAITOS
HELSINKI CITY RESCUE DEPARTMENT
www.hel.fi/**pela/fi**

KESKI-UUDENMAAN PELASTUSLAITOS
CENTRAL-UUSIMAA RESCUE DEPARTMENT
www.pelastustoimi.fi/**keski-uusimaa**

ITÄ-UUDENMAAN PELASTUSLAITOS
EASTERN-UUSIMAA EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
www.pelastustoimi.fi/**ita-uusimaa**

LÄNSI-UUDENMAAN PELASTUSLAITOS
WESTERN-UUSIMAA RESCUE DEPARTMENT
www.pelastustoimi.fi/**lansi-uusimaa**