



Property Health and Safety Compliance at Housing and Education Centres

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1. Purpose and Scope of the Policy

Nacro is committed to ensuring that all its premises are safe and fully meet the relevant legislation and regulations in terms of gas, electrical and fire safety and asbestos and legionella. This policy describes the measures that are in place to achieve compliance with the relevant regulations and outlines Nacro's approach where there is discretion based on risk assessments. In developing the policy, the nature of Nacro's housing and education premises stock has been taken into consideration together with the risk profile of the service user group.

2. Gas safety

The risk: gas appliances that are not properly maintained can become dangerous, leading to the release of carbon monoxide which can be fatal to anyone inhaling it.

The regulations: the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1989 require landlords to ensure that gas appliances, pipelines and flues are maintained in a safe condition and that annual safety checks are carried out. The regulations also require landlords to maintain a record of each safety check.

To comply with the gas safety regulations:

- The Maintenance Helpdesk will raise a job order with a Gas Safe registered contractor two months before the annual safety check is due. Where the responsibility for the safety check lies with the owner or landlord of the property, the job order will be issued to them.
- Nacro centre or scheme staff will agree a time and date with the contractor for the safety check to be carried out.
- Housing staff will resolve any difficulties such as ensuring that the contractor has access to the property and, if there is a pre-paid meter, there is sufficient credit on it to enable the safety check to be carried out.
- The Maintenance Helpdesk will keep a central record of all gas safety checks carried out at Nacro managed properties, including copies of inspection certificates.
- Compliance will be monitored and reviewed weekly by the Estates team to ensure that any difficulties in carrying out annual safety checks at individual properties (e.g. access problems) are quickly resolved.
- Action will be taken against any occupants who refuse access to their accommodation for the purposes of a gas safety check.

The target for compliance is 100% every day of the year. This is reported on a monthly basis.

3. Electrical safety

The risk: faulty or poorly maintained electrical wiring installations can lead to electric shocks and fires.

The regulations: under electrical safety regulations, installations in offices and commercial buildings must be inspected at least every five years. The HMO (houses in multiple occupation) regulations also require the same frequency of inspections. Ordinary domestic dwellings must be inspected at least every ten years. To comply with fixed electrical wiring regulations:

- The Maintenance Helpdesk will arrange for a periodic electrical installation condition report (EICR) to be carried out when it becomes due at a property. EICRs must be carried out by a competent and qualified electrical contractor.
- Nacro centre or scheme staff will to agree a time and date with the contractor for the safety check to be carried out.
- Housing staff will to resolve any difficulties such as ensuring that the contractor has access to the property
- The Maintenance Helpdesk will arrange for any repairs or remedial works identified in the EICR to be addressed.
- The Maintenance Helpdesk will keep a record of all EICRs carried out at Nacro premises, including copies of the inspection reports.
- The Maintenance Helpdesk will arrange for inspections and tests to be carried out during the intervening period if faults are reported or it is suspected that installations have been tampered with.

The target is 100% compliance and this is monitored monthly.

At offices and commercial premises, portable appliance tests (PATs) must also be carried out on electrical equipment such as computers, kettles, refrigerators and televisions. The regulations do not specify the frequency for such tests as this will be determined by a risk based approach taking into account the type of equipment and frequency of use. Nacro policy is for PATs to be carried out by qualified staff or external assessors at least every two years.

PATs are no longer routinely carried out at housing schemes. Instead, the policy is for regular visual checks of appliances to be carried out by housing staff when visiting the property. This is in line with Health and Safety Executive guidance.

4. Fire safety

The risk: fire is potential hazard in all properties with a significantly higher risk in houses in multiple occupation. Individual service users can also present a higher fire

safety risk due to their chaotic behaviour or lifestyle and associated issues such as alcohol or drug misuse.

The Regulations: The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006 set out the duties for employers and landlords in terms of fire safety. Nacro is committed to fulfilling these duties and minimising the risk of fire in its premises.

To comply with fire safety regulations:

- All Nacro offices, commercial premises and housing schemes must have adequate fire detection systems and fire fighting equipment. The type of equipment will be determined by the relevant fire safety regulations. At housing schemes, Nacro policy is to adhere to the guidance issued by LACORS (Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services) and approved by the Department of Communities and Local Government. This specifies the type of fire detection system and fire fighting equipment required for different types of property. Guidance is available from the Estates team on fire safety requirements in Nacro Housing schemes.
- Details of fire systems and fire equipment at each property will be held on the central property database and subject to periodic audit to check accuracy.
- The Maintenance Helpdesk will arrange for equipment to be checked and serviced at least every six months.
- Each property will have a designated responsible person for fire safety.
- Exits, emergency routes and fire doors must be checked weekly and a Witten record. Kept in the fire folder.
- Fire evacuation drills must be carried out regularly. The frequency will depend on the risks associated with the building and nature of the service user group but must be carried out at least every six months. Fire evacuation drills will not be required at individual flats and houses with less than five occupants. At all housing schemes a fire safety walk around must be carried out with new occupants when they move into their accommodation and at periodic intervals thereafter, the frequency of which will be determined by an individual risk assessment.
- Fire detection systems must be tested at least fortnightly.
- Fire log books recording details of inspections and testing of fire safety equipment must be kept up to date.

- A fire risk assessment (FRA) must be carried out at all premises. External assessors will be used to carry out FRAs on offices and commercial premises and HMOs with five or more units of accommodation. Qualified Nacro staff will carry out FRAs on residential properties with 3-4 units of accommodation and project staff will carry them out on 1-2 bed flats and houses using the standard Nacro FRA template.
- The FRA will assess the hazards within the building, including those associated with its layout, and those presented by the nature of the service user group.
- The FRA must be reviewed annually or whenever changes are made to the building or to the service user group. The frequency of reviews must be increased to six monthly at housing schemes with service users who present a higher safety risk due to factors such as a history of alcohol/ drug misuse or the chaotic nature of their lifestyle.
- All employees and service users must receive fire safety induction training.

The target is 100% compliance and this is monitored monthly.

5. Asbestos

The risk: Exposure to asbestos presents a serious health risk. Around 5,000 people die each year of asbestos related illnesses.

The regulations: The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 sets out the legal duties for managing the risk of asbestos. The use of asbestos in building construction was significantly reduced in the 1990s and ceased altogether from 2000 onwards.

To comply with regulations for pre 2000 buildings:

- Asbestos management surveys will be carried out on the property or, where appropriate, survey reports obtained from the owner or landlord of the property. Surveys must be carried out by a competent person and Nacro uses qualified external surveyors for this purpose.
- The survey report must include a management plan.
- Maintenance contractors must be notified when asbestos containing materials (ACMs) are present at a property.

- A refurbishment asbestos survey, which involves taking and testing samples of materials, must be carried out before any intrusive works are undertaken that may expose or disturb ACMs.
- A copy of the asbestos report must be available at the property.
- The condition of any property components with ACMs must be regularly monitored by housing or education centre staff and recorded in the health and safety folder.
- Licenced asbestos removal companies must be used on all occasions where removal is required.

The target is 100% compliance and this is monitored monthly.

6. Legionella

The risk: bacteria, including the legionella bacteria, can proliferate in water systems. The risk is higher where there is stagnant water such as in storage tanks and pipes with dead legs.

The regulations: Owners or managers of buildings have a legal duty to ensure that there is safe water supply. Bacteria, including the one which causes Legionnaires Disease, can proliferate in stagnant water such as in storage tanks and dead legs in pipes.

To manage and minimise the risk:

- Risk assessments will be carried out at each property. In-house risk assessment assessments will be carried out on one, two and three bedroom properties. The Health and Safety Executive guidance states that the risk is low, or even insignificant, in ordinary domestic dwellings.
- Water temperatures at hot and cold outlets will be taken and recorded monthly.
- Shower heads will be replaced every six months.
- Water systems will be adequately flushed when a property has been unoccupied for more than two weeks.

The target is 100% compliance and is monitored monthly.

7. Staff training

Nacro is committed to providing appropriate training for staff to enable them to carry out their health and safety responsibilities.

8. Monitoring and reporting compliance

The Head of Property has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for regularly monitoring and reporting on compliance. Internal health and safety audits will also check compliance at individual centres/ schemes.