



# TENANT HANDBOOK

July 2025



Comhairle Contae an Chabháin  
Cavan County Council



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# WELCOME

Congratulations on becoming a tenant of Cavan County Council.

We hope you can enjoy being part of the community and live in a safe and comfortable environment.

This handbook is an important document which advises you about the conditions of your tenancy. The information provided is for guidance only and does not constitute legal advice or replace a formal tenancy agreement. Your tenancy agreement is a legal binding document and this handbook is intended to supplement, not supersede,

your tenancy agreement. This handbook outlines our Landlord responsibilities and your Tenant responsibilities.

It provides information on everything from how you can pay your rent to issues relating to maintenance of the property.

This tenant handbook will answer any questions you may have in relation to your tenancy and services provided by Cavan County Council.

You should keep this handbook in a safe place where you can easily access it.

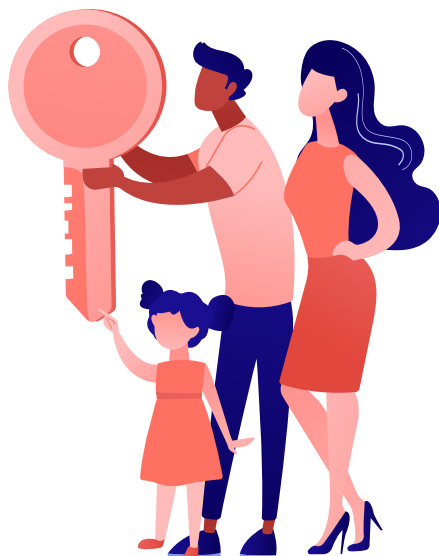
## **Cavan County Council Customer Charter**

*Cavan County Council aims to provide high quality service, in a safe and secure environment. In order to achieve this, we ask our customers to engage with housing staff and contractors in a respectful manner. Full details of the standard of service you can expect from Cavan County Council and what we expect from you the Customer can be found in Cavan County Council's Customer Charter.*



Visit Website

[www.cavancoco.ie/customer-charter](http://www.cavancoco.ie/customer-charter)



# PART 1

## GENERAL INFORMATION & OBLIGATIONS



# YOUR TENANCY



## What is a Tenancy?

A tenancy occurs when a person is assigned a home by Cavan County Council. When you are assigned a home, you must attend Pre-Tenancy Training and sign the **Tenancy Agreement**. You will then receive the keys to your home and are expected to move in immediately.

The conditions of your tenancy are set out in detail in your tenancy agreement, which is a legal contract between you and Cavan County Council. It is an important legal document, so please read it carefully and make sure you fully understand what your obligations and responsibilities are. Make sure that you keep it in a safe place for future reference.

## What are the main points of my Tenancy?

All information in your tenancy agreement is important to you but to summarise the main points;

- The dwelling must be used as your main home. You must not, save with the consent of the Council, cease to reside in your dwelling for more than six weeks in any period of fifty-two weeks, this would be considered that you have abandoned the property, and the Council has the right to terminate the tenancy.
- The dwelling must not be used for business purposes of any kind.
- Rent must be paid in full every week.
- You must give us full details of income and household circumstances and inform us immediately if they change.
- You must look after the dwelling properly and must keep the house and garden in good condition.
- You must not make alterations to it without our permission.
- Authorised Officers of the Council must be allowed to enter and inspect the dwelling at reasonable times or carry out necessary work.
- You must not take in lodgers or sub tenants without prior permission.
- This includes family members who return home or partners moving in.
- You must insure your belongings and the contents in your home but you are not required to insure the structure.
- You must not engage in house swaps with other Council Tenants.

- You must give four weeks' notice should you wish to terminate your tenancy.
- You and your household (including visitors) must not cause nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to neighbours including:
  - Harassment or violence or threats of violence
  - Unreasonably loud noise of any kind

### Am I allowed a pet?

Cavan County Council allows each household to own **one domestic pet**, as long as they do not become a nuisance to your neighbours and that you dispose of waste arising from the keeping of domestic animals daily in a hygienic manner.

Horses, goats, cows, poultry, pigs, and non-domestic birds are not domestic animals. Keeping any of these is a serious breach of your tenancy agreement.

### Am I allowed a dog?

Each household is allowed **one domestic pet**, which includes a dog, however Cavan County Council Tenants are not permitted to keep a restricted breed dog.

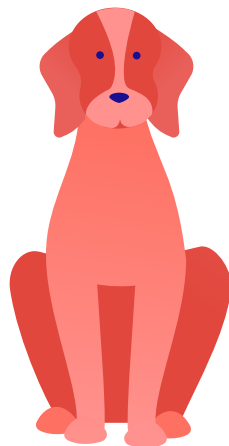
If you want to keep a dog, **do not**:

- Leave it alone for long periods.
- Allow it to bark during unsociable periods.
- Allow it to frighten or disturb your neighbours.
- Allow it to foul in public areas.
- Allow it to roam unaccompanied and without a lead.
- Please note, under the 'Control of Dogs Act', 1986, every dog should be licensed. A license must be renewed annually and is available from your local Post Office. You can be prosecuted if you do not have a licence.



## Dogs identified as restricted breeds are:

- American Pit Bull Terrier
- English Bull Terrier
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier
- Bull Mastiff
- Doberman Pinscher
- German Shepherd (Alsatian)
- Rhodesian Ridgeback
- Rottweiler
- Japanese Akita/ Japanese Tosa
- Ban Dog – a so called ‘Ban dog’ is a cross or mixture of any of the above breeds mentioned or any strain of the above dogs listed.



## Banned Dogs:

- XL Bully

If you are found to have one of the above dogs, you will be deemed as being in breach of your tenancy agreement, putting your tenancy at risk.

## Am I Responsible for Pest Control?

Yes. While local authority officials will be available to provide advice and assistance, as the tenant you are responsible for arranging for pest control services in your home. You can help deter mice and other rodents from your house by:

- Do not leave plastic sacks lying around outside your property
- Using a wheelie bin rather than plastic sacks
- Disposing of your refuse regularly (do not store rubbish inside or outside the house)
- Do not leave food for dogs or cats in your back garden.
- **If the Council is required to intervene and deal with a pest control issue on your behalf due to poor household maintenance, you will be charged for all costs incurred.**

### **Am I responsible for my Waste Disposal?**

You are responsible for disposing of your domestic waste on a regular basis. There are numerous waste service providers in your area which collect waste on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

**If the Council is required to intervene and deal with a waste disposal issue on your behalf, you will be charged for all costs incurred.**

### **Is there allocated Car parking for my property?**

Please be aware that Cavan County Council does not provide car parking spaces when allocated your Local Authority property. It is your responsibility to manage your own parking space without causing any nuisance to your neighbours. You must not use the parking area (if any) of the dwelling for any purpose except for the parking of roadworthy and properly licensed motor vehicles in private use.

### **Am I allowed to park a commercial vehicle at my property?**

You **must not** park commercial vehicles at or in the vicinity of the dwelling without the prior written consent of the Council.

### **What is the status of CCTV in homes?**

You must not install a CCTV system without the prior written consent of the Council.

A domestic CCTV system should only operate in a way that captures images of people within the perimeter of the CCTV operator's own property including the garden or driveway. These are private spaces.

The CCTV system should be installed so that it does not capture footage outside the perimeter of your rented property.

However, please note that a householder who operates CCTV systems must comply in full with data protection law obligations and a warning sign must be on display to persons accessing the property.

Further information on the compliance of data protection law, failure to comply and any other questions or concerns regarding CCTV system operations, can be found online through the Data Protection Commission.

## **Buildings Contents Insurance**

While the Council covers insurance for the structure of the property, it is the tenant's responsibility to insure the contents of the property, including personal belongings such as clothes, jewellery, furniture, electronic equipment, white goods, etc.

## **How do I apply for a transfer?**

Council Tenants can apply to transfer to alternative council owned accommodation in certain circumstances such as;

- Overcrowding
- Downsizing
- Medical/compassionate reasons

Tenants seeking a transfer must fulfil the following requirements to the satisfaction of the housing authority:

- Hold tenancy in their present dwelling for a period of at least two years
- Have a clear rent account
- Have kept their dwelling in satisfactory condition
- Have complied with all conditions of their Tenancy Agreement
- Have no record of anti-social behaviour

You must complete a Tenancy Transfer Application form which is available from the Tenancy Management Section ([lettings@cavancoco.ie](mailto:lettings@cavancoco.ie)) within the Housing Department or readily available on our website ([www.cavancoco.ie/services/housing](http://www.cavancoco.ie/services/housing))

## **Can I change the name on my tenancy?**

To change the name on your tenancy, you need to contact the Housing Section and provide written proof of your name change. Acceptable documents include: *Marriage Certificate; Divorce Decree Absolute; Legal Notification (e.g., changes by Deed Poll)*

## **How can I change my tenancy?**

If you wish to change your tenancy from a sole to a joint tenancy you must complete an application process. Contact the Tenancy Management Team and they will provide all the necessary information.

If you wish to change from joint tenancy to a sole tenancy, both tenants must submit a written request to Cavan County Council. In cases of relationship breakdowns, the tenants will receive relevant information about the implications of this change and tenants are advised to seek legal advice to make independent, informed decisions.

### **Can I add a new occupant to my tenancy?**

To add a new occupant to your home, you must complete a “Change in Household Circumstances” form and submit it to the Housing Section before allowing the person to move in. The Council will consider each case based on:

- Information provided in the application.
- Whether the property is suitable for an extra occupant.
- Ensuring your rent account is up to date with no arrears.
- Confirmation that the new occupant does not have another property.
- Any record of anti-social behaviour.

### **Who can succeed my tenancy?**

Where death or departure of a joint tenant takes place, the tenancy may be transferred to the surviving/remaining joint tenant resident in the property.

Where the death or departure of both joint tenants or a sole tenant takes place, it may be possible for a member of the tenant's household to succeed to the tenancy, provided that he/she is 18 years of age and has been living in the dwelling for at least two years immediately prior to the death or departure of the tenant and has been declared for rent purposes. In cases where a family member and/or occupant has not been declared as residing in the house, tenancy must be surrendered.

Each case will be treated on its individual merits and consideration of succession tenancy applications will follow Cavan County Council's Allocation Policy. The Council will try to ensure the most harmonious settlement to the benefit of the whole remaining household members and their accommodation needs.

### **Can I purchase the property I am living in?**

In certain circumstances, in line with national policy and depending on eligibility and the type of accommodation you are residing in you may be able to purchase your accommodation under the Tenant Purchase Scheme. Details of any such Scheme are available from the Housing

Office at 049-4378300. It is important to note Cavan County Council reserves the right to exclude properties from this scheme for reasons of maintaining property stock and estate management.

### **How can I raise money to buy my home?**

To finance your home purchase, you can apply for a mortgage loan from a financial institution. Cavan County Council also offers financing options through a Local Authority Home Loan.



# PAYING YOUR RENT



## Rents

The Housing Rents Team will assess your rent and deal with queries you may have about your account, method of payments, arrears, or evictions. The responsibility is on you the tenant to ensure your correct rent is paid on time and that your account is up to date.

### How do I pay my rent?

- **Household Budget Deduction**

If you are in receipt of a payment from the Department of Social Protection which is paid via cash at the post office.

- **Bank Standing Order**

Our bank account details are as follows: IBAN No: IE05 BOFI 9032 9317 6848 91

Reference; Your Customer Account Number must be included as a reference to ensure payment reaches your rent account

- **Pay Online via the online payment system**

MyCoCo offers many advantages including statements, receipts and access to Rent account balance. You will be required to register on the MyCoCo Customer Portal to make payments. Please contact the Rents Unit, Housing Department, Cavan County Council at [housingrents@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housingrents@cavancoco.ie) for online PIN.

- **Bill Pay Rent Card**

Can be used to pay your weekly rent in any Post Office or any shop displaying the sign.

- **In person/via telephone at Customer Services Desk**

Address: Ground Floor, Johnston Centre, Farnham Street, Cavan H12 C9K1

Telephone: 049-4378300. Payment can be made by cash, credit or debit card, cheque, or postal order.

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**Please contact the Rents Unit, Housing Department. Cavan County Council at [housingrents@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housingrents@cavancoco.ie) or 049-4378300/049-4378303 for further information in relation to any of the above.**

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### **How is my rent calculated?**

Your rent is calculated using the Council's Differential Rent Scheme. Rents are assessed on total household income and taking into consideration details of all household members including dependants. This ensures that the amount you are charged is fair and does not lead to undue financial hardship. A copy of the Scheme is available on the Council's website.

### **What if my circumstances change?**

You should keep the Council informed of any change in household circumstances which may result in an increase or decrease of your rent payable. For example, you should let us know when:

- A person in your household gets a job.
- A person with an income joins the household.
- A person in the household starts claiming Social Welfare.
- There is a death in the household.
- There is a birth in the household.

### **What if I don't notify the Council when my circumstances change?**

When the Council finds out about changes, it will reassess your rent and backdate your rent to the date of the change. Depending on the nature of the change you could be responsible for large rent arrears and the Council will pursue you for these rent arrears.

### **How do I make arrangements to clear rent arrears?**

You should contact the Rents team, Housing Office or your local Revenue Collector. The next step is to work out a reasonable plan to clear off the arrears and agree this plan with the Housing Office and Revenue Collector. Once you make an agreement, it is imperative that you adhere to it, and your arrears will reduce, and the Council will be satisfied even if it takes a reasonable timeframe to clear the arrears completely.

### **What will happen if I do not deal with rent arrears?**

If you refuse to come to a reasonable agreement or if you do not keep to the agreed plan, the Council will serve the appropriate warning letters and will take you to Court under the terms set out in Part 2 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 and you may lose your tenancy.



**NOTE: If you are evicted by Cavan County Council for non-payment of rent, you may not be eligible for Supplementary Welfare Allowance or be rehoused by any local authority housing.**

### **I am having trouble paying my rent, what can I do?**

You must contact the Rents section immediately, and you can make an arrangement to pay off any arrears on a weekly basis over a reasonable period.

**Contacts:** Telephone: **049 4378300**. Email: **[housingrents@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housingrents@cavancoco.ie)**

### **Moving in and Managing Your Finances**

Moving into a new home can be very stressful. There are a lot of costs associated with moving so it is very important you are prepared.

Once you are allocated a property, you will need to start making arrangements for the move. A checklist is useful to help keep you organised and make sure the move runs smoothly.

Budget for the move and know what you can afford to spend. Ensure that all essential costs are covered and decide what can wait.

The following are some tips about costs you will incur as a part of the move and organisations you should notify:

### **Expenses**

- Having bins in place is essential, ensure you set up an account with a recognised refuse collection company.
- You are responsible for all utility bills including phone, heating and electricity.
- You are responsible for providing electrical appliances, furniture and possibly floor coverings (if you are in receipt of social welfare payment, you may be entitled to an assistance payment from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection).
- All internal decorations such as curtains, rails, blinds etc. must be provided by you.
- You must insure all household contents.
- You may have to pay for furniture removal costs.

## Preparing to Move

Organisations you may need to notify:

- Department of Social Protection
- Tax Office or Schools or Bank, Credit Union etc.
- An Post (re-direct post to new address)
- Motor Tax Office / NDLS (National Driver Licence Service)
- Insurance Company
- Doctor/Dentist
- Health Care Provider

## Managing Your Bills – Help is Available

MABS The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) is a free and confidential service for people who are having problems with money management and debt. MABS money advisers will provide you with advice and practical help on how to manage your bills and will work with you to find solutions if you are finding it difficult to stay in control of your finances. There are various bill payment services which you can avail of such as Household Budget Scheme, Direct Debit, BillPay etc. MABS will offer you advice on how to:

- Organise your bills.
- Make a budget to pay your bills.
- Pay your bills at regular times both weekly and monthly using bill payment services.



# YOUR COMMUNITY



## **Litter and Environment**

Under the Housing Acts and as part of the Council's Estate Management Policy and Tenancy Agreement, tenants are expected to keep their rented house in good condition and keep their gardens in a clean, tidy and sanitary state.

Under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 fines can be issued by the Council's Litter Warden to tenants if they "deposit any substance or object so as to create litter in a public place or in any place".

Under this Act it is also illegal to engage in open burning of waste. Incidents of illegal dumping or open burning of refuse should be reported to the Litter Warden at the Council Offices.

Under no circumstances should domestic refuse or refuse of any kind be allowed to accumulate on Council property, except for refuse awaiting collection.

Under the Litter Act, each householder is obliged to keep the footpath and garden adjoining their property free of litter.

## **Disposal of Household Refuse**

Proper disposal of domestic and non-domestic refuse is the responsibility of the tenant. It is your responsibility to keep your house and environs clean and litter free.

Refuse must be stored appropriately until it is collected and collected by a registered collector.

Your refuse is your property. You will be taken to Court and fined for disposing of your refuse incorrectly. You can also be evicted from your home for failure to dispose of refuse in a proper manner.

## **The 3 Rs – Reduce, Re-use, Recycle**

In recent years Cavan County Council has established recycling centres throughout the County to aid householders recycle glass, aluminium cans, newspapers, wastepaper, cardboard, plastic and textiles. You can reduce, re-use and recycle a large proportion of your household refuse by availing of these "Bring Sites". Details of locations are available from Council Offices.



## Tenant Participation in Estate Management

Estate management is ensuring that the residents of Council estates, young and old, can live their lives free from interference or nuisance, and in an attractive physical and social environment. To achieve this objective, the Council will work together with tenants to ensure that dwellings and the landscape are well presented and kept in good condition.

It also means that tenants must be responsible neighbours and respect the peace and quiet of others. We encourage our tenants to be actively involved in their own estate management and be part of a resident's association.

### What is a residents' association?

Residents' associations are organisations formed by groups of people from a specific community who come together to help make their neighbourhood a better place to live. They act as a voice for their local community and try to find opportunities and solutions to improve where they live.

### What does a residents' association do?

A well-organised residents' association can:

- organise summer projects, family fun days, planting days and clean-up days;
- address local issues and find solutions;
- apply for grants from funding providers and from Cavan County Council;
- tell residents about local projects and initiatives; and
- work with Cavan County Council to address local issues such as littering, graffiti, parking and environmental issues.



### Who can be a member of a residents' association?

You can! A residents' association represents everyone in the estate or neighbourhood where you live. Everyone who lives there can join and share the work. It is also good way to get to know your neighbours and other residents.

### **How can we set up a residents' association if we don't have one?**

Try and organise something positive in your estate like a coffee morning or street party and invite people to get involved. Ask people if they see a need for a residents' association and if they would join one. If you are not sure how to do this, you can phone one of our Tenant Liaison Officers. They will be more than happy to advise.

### **Having your first meeting?**

To set up a residents' association, you will need to organise a public meeting and invite all the residents from your estate or neighbourhood to come along.

At the meeting, you will:

- discuss common issues facing your area and ways of dealing with those issues
- agree which issues the residents' association will (and will not) focus on
- get volunteers involved to help run the residents' association.

Specific things you will need to do for your first meeting:

- Set a date
- Arrange a venue (keep it local)
- Set the agenda (what the meeting will cover)
- Invite people from your estate or neighbourhood
- Invite your Tenant Liaison Officer

### **After the first meeting - Congratulations!**

By now, you will have sparked interest in a residents' association in your community and recruited some volunteers. Together, you will need to form a committee and assign roles (decide who will do what). Keep records as you go to help you set an agenda for your next meeting. This is not as hard as it sounds.

### **Vacant Properties – Let us know.**

If there is a vacant property in your estate, please don't assume we know. Vacant properties can become a target of antisocial behaviour so please contact Cavan County Council as soon as possible and let us know. The sooner we find out about vacant properties, the sooner we can arrange to have them re-let.

**If you suspect a property is vacant please report it. Contact the housing department on 049 4378300 or email [lettings@cavancoco.ie](mailto:lettings@cavancoco.ie)**

If you see people interfering with a Cavan County Council property that you know is vacant, please let us know to avoid any damage or possible danger.

### **Abandonment of Property**

If you are away from your home for more than six weeks in any fifty-two-week period, we may consider your property abandoned by you. If after making all reasonable efforts to contact you, we are satisfied that the property is abandoned, we have the right to repossess the property and secure it by changing the locks and boarding up the property if necessary. Any items remaining in the property will only be stored for a maximum period of two months. If we cannot contact you or you don't remove your belongings within this period of time, all items will be disposed of.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Cavan County Council is committed to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour, in order to improve neighbourhoods, and create a safer environment for you and others. Cavan County Council acknowledges that anti-social behaviour can have an extremely negative effect on the day-to-day lives of tenants and their families. The Council will investigate, and endeavour to resolve all complaints on Anti-Social Behaviour it receives.

### **What is Anti-Social Behaviour?**

*It is any behaviour that falls into the following categories:*

- Committing an offence which is likely to directly affect the wellbeing of a member of your household or the general public.
- Behaviour that causes or could cause fear, danger, injury, damage or less to any member of your household, or a member of public.
- Persistent behaviour that prevents or interferes with the peaceful occupation of your household, or neighbours.

*Examples of Anti-Social Behaviour include:*

- The sale, supply and possession of illegal drugs
- Illegal drinking, gambling or prostitution

- Harassment on the grounds of religion or community background, race or ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation
- Any activities that causes a danger, injury or fear to any person living in the vicinity
- Excessive noise or loud music
- Uncontrolled animals
- Keeping a restricted breed of dog, or allowing someone to visit you with such a dog
- Rubbish dumping or damage to property including graffiti
- Disturbances caused by pets or children/teenagers
- Annoyance, and harassment (including domestic violence) of any individuals in the locality
- Obstructing common areas or exist/entrance





## **Who am I responsible for?**

As a tenant, you are responsible for your own behaviour, that of all household members of your household, and any guests or visitors to your home. However, if you are a victim of a serious anti-social behaviour, contact An Garda Síochána.

## **What should I do if I experience Anti-Social Behaviour?**

If you are the victim of, or witness anti-social behaviour, either in your home, or in the neighbourhood, you should notify your Tenant Liaison Officer in the Housing Department either in person, by phone or in writing.

It is important that we are provided with the following information:

- Date (and time if known) of the incident.
- Nature of the incident.
- Details of any witnesses.
- Supporting evidence of the incident from another source.

We will record the incident and acknowledge your report. We may need to obtain further details from you, either in person, or by telephone. We will agree a plan of action with you, and This could involve the following:

- Agreement to discuss the matter with the other tenant involved.
- Obtaining statements from witnesses.
- Seeking supporting evidence and information from other agencies
- Advising you to report the matter to the Gardai.

We will provide help, advice, and take appropriate action against the respondent where it is within our control to do so.

## **Any report of Anti-Social Behaviour will be treated in confidence.**

## **How do I be a Good Neighbour?**

We ask you to treat your neighbours with respect, particularly more vulnerable neighbours. This also applies for respect to their property and yours.

Some ways you can actively be a Good Neighbour is:

- Respect to everyone and everything.
- Accept that we are all different – therefore being tolerant of the lifestyles of others.
- Pay special attention to always keeping noise levels reasonable.
- Take responsibility for your children and your visitors behaviour.
- Respect the rights of children to play in a supervised, safe and happy environment.
- Keep the area you live tidy and free from Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Join your local Residents Association and have good community spirit
- Follow the requirements in your tenancy agreement.

### **How does Cavan County Council deal with Anti-Social Behaviour?**

It is not always within the control of the Council to deal with incidences of anti-social behaviour, and instead it may have to be referred to the Gardai, or other agencies. We will endeavour to keep you informed of progress regarding your reports of anti-social behaviour.

To people who engage in these behaviours we do the following:

- Discuss the matter with the respondent.

It may, in some situations, be possible to resolve the matter by speaking directly to the respondent, and reach agreement with them to reach a solution.

- Complete investigations such as interviews with witnesses, site visits, take photographs, obtain CCTV footage, if possible, seek reports etc;
- Report the matter to the Gardai.

Depending on the nature of the incident it may be necessary to report the issue to the Gardai, and we will support you in doing so.

- Tenancy enforcement

Engagement in anti-social behaviour is deemed to be a breach of tenancy, and as such the Council may take action against the respondent to terminate the tenancy. In the event of serious anti-social behaviour, the Council may serve a Tenancy Warning and seek possession of the home through legal proceedings.

In other cases, the Council may write to the respondent notifying of the breach and allowing a reasonable time period for the behaviour to cease (Tenancy Notification). If the behaviour continues, the Council may then serve a Tenancy Warning to commence Legal Proceedings.

**Could I lose my home due to Anti-Social Behaviour?**

Once a complaint has been received and investigated, appropriate action will be implemented as appropriate. This can include:

- No further action
- Advice offered
- Referrals to other Agencies such as Tusla, An Garda Síochána, HSE
- Mediation
- Warnings
- Exclusion Orders

Given the severity of the Anti-Social Behaviour, the course of action may be a Tenancy Warning which if not adhered to, could result in an application for a Possession Order through the District Court to enable repossession of the dwelling.

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**Tenants evicted for Anti-Social Behaviour will be regarded as having deliberately rendered themselves homeless and will not be re-housed.**  
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**How do I submit a complaint?**

The Council vow to investigate all complaints fairly, impartially, and objectively, to provide a professional service to our residents who are victims of anti-social behaviour and to work towards the prevention and reduction of such behaviour to provide a safe and secure environment for our tenants. All complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner.

If you wish to make a report or complaint to Cavan County Council, Complaints will be accepted in person, in writing or by telephone as follows:

**By Post** marked 'Private and Confidential'  
Housing Section  
Courthouse  
Farnham Street  
Cavan  
H12 R6V2

**By Email** to [housing@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housing@cavancoco.ie) on the prescribed complaints form available on [www.cavancoco.ie](http://www.cavancoco.ie)

**By Phone** 049 437 8300

Please be advised that complaints will not be accepted or investigated in cases of:

- Individual anonymous complaints
- Complaints against unidentified persons

For more information on how the Council tackles Anti-Social Behaviour, the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy is readily available for download on [www.cavancoco.ie](http://www.cavancoco.ie)



# PART 2

## MAINTAINING YOUR HOME



# REPAIRS



## Who is responsible for carrying out repairs to my home?

In general, you are responsible for arranging and paying for all maintenance and repair work to your home.

Each tenant, on the signing of his/ her tenancy agreement, assumes responsibility for repairs and maintenance of a non-structural nature.

In general, Cavan County Council will only carry out structural repairs to your home and they will only deal with major plumbing and electrical repairs.

**Please refer to Maintenance Tables contained in the following pages.**

Cavan County Council is responsible for the carrying out all repairs that come under its responsibility.

The tenant is responsible for the carrying out of all repairs that come under their responsibility.

## Who pays for repairs?

Cavan County Council is responsible for the cost of all repairs that come under its responsibility.

The tenant is responsible for the cost of all repairs that come under their responsibility.

**Please refer to Maintenance Tables on the following pages.**

If the particular repair is the Council's responsibility you should report it to the Council.

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**However, please note that Cavan County Council reserves the right to charge the tenant for any unnecessary callouts for repairs requested by the tenant but which are in fact the responsibility of the tenant.**  
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Please note that the Council reserves the right to amend maintenance responsibilities, as deemed necessary.

Description	Tenant Responsibility	Council Responsibility
<b>Structure</b>		
Missing roof tile or slate – not dangerous		<b>Yes</b>
Missing roof tile or slate – potential hazard		<b>Yes</b>
Leaking roof and water entering into house		<b>Yes</b>
General Maintenance of external portion of chimney & capping's, fascia and soffits.		<b>Yes</b>
Cleaning of chimney which should be undertaken at a minimum once a year	<b>Yes</b>	
General Maintenance of external walls and ceilings of dwelling (including plastering, rendering & blockwork / brickwork), window frames and sashes which are in need of replacement.		<b>Yes</b>
<b>General External Maintenance/Repairs</b>		
Maintenance of gutters, downpipes, fascia and soffit boards	<b>Yes</b>	
Repair of gutters and down pipes. (If the structural repairs are needed due to the lack of cleaning of gutters, the tenant is responsible for the repair cost).		<b>Yes</b>
Repairs to Facia and soffit.		<b>Yes</b>
Replacement of footpaths, fencing and garden walls where necessary due to normal wear and tear as determined by the Council.		<b>Yes</b>
Servicing of septic tanks and treatment systems.		<b>Yes</b>
Maintenance and upkeep of footpaths, garden walls and fences, gardens and hedges	<b>Yes</b>	
Repairs to, or replacement of, fences and garden boundary walls erected by the Council and/or by the Tenant which have been damaged, neglected and not maintained by the tenant. HOWEVER, REPAIR/REPLACEMENT WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNCIL AND CHARGED TO THE TENANT.	<b>Yes</b>	
Repairs to, or replacement of, and re-erection of front gates or side gates or doors leading to garden area which have been damaged, neglected and not maintained by the tenant.	<b>Yes</b>	



Maintenance of fuel sheds or outhouses where provided.	<b>Yes</b>	
Repair of damage to external wall finishes. HOWEVER, REPAIR WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNCIL AND CHARGED TO THE TENANT.	<b>Yes</b>	
Painting of exterior of house. (Permission must be sought beforehand from Cavan County Council) <b>N.B. Painting of brick is prohibited.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
Pest Control	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>General Internal Maintenance/Repairs</b>		
Serious internal dampness due to issues with the fabric of the dwelling and not by inappropriate use of the building e.g. blocking vents or drying clothes indoors with no ventilation, etc.		<b>Yes</b>
Replacement of Fire Blankets.		<b>Yes</b>
Internal door locks, hinges and handles except fair wear and tear as determined by the Council.	<b>Yes</b>	
Non Structural Internal plaster cracks.	<b>Yes</b>	
Repairs to kitchen units, cupboards, wardrobes including their handles, doors, locks and hinges not caused by fair wear and tear as determined by the Council.	<b>Yes</b>	
Damage to the house, including all internal decoration, glazing and sanitary ware.	<b>Yes</b>	
Repairs arising from condensation as a result of the actions or negligence of the tenant. Refer to Section on Condensation in this Handbook.	<b>Yes</b>	
Internal woodwork such as floors, doors, door frames, windows, skirting, architraves, window boards.	<b>Yes</b>	
Wall and floor tiles, floor coverings and maintenance of vent covers, which must be always kept clear	<b>Yes</b>	
Repairs to and replacement of Fire grates and backs not caused by fair wear and tear as determined by the Council.	<b>Yes</b>	

Description	Tenant Responsibility	Council Responsibility
<b>Doors and Windows</b>		
External doors & door frames due to normal wear and tear as determined by the Council, <b>excluding</b> door handles, locks and letterboxes.		<b>Yes</b>
Damage to windows and doors, which is not due to fair wear and tear as determined by the Council.	<b>Yes</b>	
Draught proofing	<b>Yes</b>	
External and internal door locks, hinges, and handles not caused by fair wear and tear as determined by the Council.	<b>Yes</b>	
Replacement of broken glass, internal tiles on windowsills and boards, letter boxes, window stays, catches and restrictors. Where such damage is made good by Cavan County Council, the tenant will be liable for the cost and will reimburse the Council immediately	<b>Yes</b>	
Painting of treated timber work on windows and external doors (at least once every two years), all internal decoration including painting.	<b>Yes</b>	
Any damage to the fixtures and fittings of the house. Where such damage is made good by Cavan County Council, the tenant will be liable for the cost and will reimburse the Council immediately	<b>Yes</b>	
Control of condensation - Please refer to the section on Condensation.	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Electrical Repairs</b>		
Electrical wiring		<b>Yes</b>
Repairs to sockets, light switches, showers installed by the Council, fuse boards. <b>Note: You are not permitted to install showers.</b>		<b>Yes</b>
Installation of Heat, Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors.		<b>Yes</b>

The tenant is responsible for maintenance of adequate fire detection equipment e.g. Replacement of back-up batteries in mains-wired Heat, Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors.	<b>Yes</b>	
The tenant is responsible for the replacement of light bulbs, fuses, light tubes, lampshades.	<b>Yes</b>	
Provision of TV aerial or satellite dish (Permission must be sought beforehand from Cavan County Council)	<b>Yes</b>	
“White goods” such as cookers, fridges, washing machines, tumble dryers etc... and all portable electrical devices.	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>You should not interfere with mains fuses or electrical fittings i.e. sockets, switches, ceiling roses or electric storage heaters.</b>	<b>NOTE</b>	
<b>You will be responsible for any repairs arising from interference with an electrical installation – TENANTS SHOULD NEVER CARRY OUT ELECTRICAL ALTERATIONS</b>	<b>NOTE</b>	
<b>Main fuses are the responsibility of the ESB</b>	<b>NOTE</b>	

<b>Description</b>	<b>Tenant Responsibility</b>	<b>Council Responsibility</b>
<b>Plumbing Repairs</b>		
Major leaks and burst pipes		<b>Yes</b>
Minor leaks		<b>Yes</b>
Total loss of cold-water supply		<b>Yes</b>
Partial loss of cold-water supply		<b>Yes</b>
Maintenance and repair of water tanks and ball cocks		<b>Yes</b>
Maintenance and repair of stopcocks, back boilers and hot water cylinders		<b>Yes</b>
External waste pipes and drains.		<b>Yes</b>
Toilet bowls and cisterns cracked or leaking ‘through normal wear and tear’ as determined by the Council.		<b>Yes</b>
Cleaning of gully traps and replacement of trap cover.	<b>Yes</b>	

Clearing of Internal waste pipes & toilet seat replacement.	<b>Yes</b>	
Replacement of stopper and chain for baths and sinks	<b>Yes</b>	
Clearing a blocked house drain where a dwelling is served by a single drain and the apportioned cost of clearing a combined drain. Please note that the flushing of non-biodegradable material (i.e. wipes and nappies etc.) down the toilets and drains of your premises is strictly prohibited. Any problems that are associated with flushing a non-biodegradable material will result in the tenant being charged with the call out charge and repair of same	<b>Yes</b>	
It is advisable the tenant checks pipes and oil tanks regularly for all and any leaks.	<b>Yes</b>	
Connecting washing machine/dishwasher etc	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Water/Heating Appliances</b>		
Servicing of Gas boilers.		<b>Yes</b>
Servicing of Air to water heat pumps.		<b>Yes</b>
Servicing of Bored Wells.		<b>Yes</b>
Repair and / or replacement of immersion heaters		<b>Yes</b>
Servicing of Oil boilers. Please note that annual servicing will help maintain efficiency, reduce oil consumption and thereby reduce your fuel costs.	<b>Yes</b>	
The tenant is responsible for solid fuel, gas and other heating/cooking appliances installed by the tenant, the grate in all fireplaces, damage to heaters through improper use, repair and replacement of fireplace or hearth tiles and the annual maintenance of all appliances they have installed themselves.	<b>Yes</b>	
Total loss of hot-water supply and/or heating		<b>Yes</b>
Partial loss of hot-water supply and/or heating		<b>Yes</b>

## **Neglect of Maintenance Responsibilities**

If the tenant fails to carry out regular maintenance as outlined in Maintenance Tables which results in the premature failure of items such as oil boilers etc., then the Council reserves the right to repair or replace same at the cost to the tenant.

Examples of neglect are described below but are not limited to the following:

### **Non-cleaning of chimneys which may result in a chimney fire**

The cost of damage caused by the fire along with the call out charges from the Fire Service will be borne by the tenant.

### **Non-servicing of oil boilers**

The tenant will be asked for proof of servicing before a repair is carried out. If damage is caused to the boiler due to negligence or misuse, then the cost to repair or replace the boiler will be borne by the tenant.

### **Oil tanks being lifted on their side and/or tampering with pipework**

This may cause damage to the pipework and fittings and may allow dirt to enter the boiler. This may also result in an oil spillage which may cause a serious environmental issues along with damage to the boiler.

### **N.B. The cost of remediating oil spillages can be substantial**

The costs of all resulting damages will be borne by the tenant.

## **Wilful and/or malicious damage**

The tenant is responsible for the repair of any wilful or malicious damage to the dwelling by any person. If the Council undertakes repairs resulting from such damage, the full cost of such repairs will be charged to the tenant.

Any breaches of Tenancy (including rent arrears) may result in the withdrawal of routine maintenance services.

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**The Council may from time to time, in the interest of safety and for the protection of their property, carry out a repair or maintenance work that is the responsibility of the tenant.**

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**In this scenario Cavan County Council reserves the right to charge the tenant the full cost of the repair.**

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## Access for Council Staff, Contractors and Surveyors

From time to time, it will be necessary for Council staff and/or their Contractors and Surveyors, to enter your home e.g. to investigate repair requests or to carry out inspections, work or condition surveys.

In the vast majority of cases this will be a pre-planned visit and we will endeavour to make contact with you in advance of calling.

You will be expected to allow access to your home to facilitate the necessary inspection, construction or survey work.

You must also keep all pets away from staff and workers when repairs are being carried out.

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**Please note all Cavan County Council staff, and agents of Cavan County Council, should have identification with them, and you should ask to see this before allowing access to your home. However, if you have any doubts about the individual(s) calling to your home then you can contact the Council to verify their identity.**

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## How do I log a maintenance repair request?

Firstly, please check the **Maintenance Tables** to find out if the repair is your responsibility or not. If you are satisfied that the repair is not your responsibility and you need to log a maintenance/repair request with the Council, you should contact our Customer Service Desk at **049 4378300** or email **housingmaintenance@cavancoco.ie**

You should provide your name, address, contact number and a brief description of the issue you wish to report.

Your request will then be logged on the system and the Housing Maintenance Team will refer your request to the appropriate member of staff or Council Agent for response.

Cavan County Council will endeavour to respond to your request as soon as possible. However, in the interest of providing an improved housing maintenance service, please note that repairs are categorised as follows and associated targets for our response are as follows:

Category	Response
<b>High Priority</b>	These are repairs where there is a possible danger to human life e.g. smoking fuse board, faulty sockets. We will endeavour to carry out these repairs as soon as possible.
<b>Medium Priority</b>	These are repairs which could cause damage to the dwelling e.g. leaking pipes or leaking roof, no hot or cold water. Contact will be made with the tenant within 48hrs to determine the severity of the repair and we will then give an approximate timeframe for works to be carried out.
<b>Low Priority</b>	These are routine repairs, or maintenance works which include plastering jobs, downpipes, fascia soffit and gutters, external windows and doors etc. Contact will be made with the tenant within 7days and we will then give an approximate timeframe for works to be carried out.

## Useful Tips for Tenants to avoid serious maintenance issues and/or to mitigate damage.

- Clean your chimney a minimum of once per year or if you suspect it may not be functioning properly.
- Service your oil boiler annually.
- **Do not tamper with your oil tank or boiler under any circumstances.**
- **Do not tamper with any electrical sockets, fixtures or fittings under any circumstances.**
- **Do not tamper with any gas fixtures or fittings under any circumstances.**

If you have a gas cooker, ensure it is installed by a Registered Gas Installer and get it checked annually.

- Keep your home heated, especially during the winter.
- Keep your home ventilated, especially during winter.

- Don't put cooking oil, fat or motor oil down sinks or toilets.
- **Only flush toilet roll down the toilet!**  
Don't put nappies, towels, razors, kitchen cloth, paper or any other object other than toilet paper into toilets. If a toilet or sewer blockage is found to have been caused by foreign objects a charge will apply.
- Fit your waste outlet pipe with a mesh filter.
- Know the location of your mains water stopcock and how to shut it off.
- Know how to shut off the electricity and gas coming into in your house.

## Frequently Asked Maintenance Related Questions

### Will the Council carry out any repairs that I request?

The answer is No. A clear division of repair responsibility between the Council and its tenants has been defined.

Please refer to the **Maintenance Tables** to familiarise yourself with the repairs you are responsible for.

### Can I make alterations to my dwelling?

You can make minor alterations, provided you get our written permission.

You must obtain the permission before you commence the work. We wouldn't refuse permission to make alterations or carry out work without good reason, which we will explain to you in full.

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**All alterations must be approved in advance by Cavan County Council. You can write to Housing Repairs, Housing, Cavan County Council Farnham Street, Cavan or email [housingmaintenance@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housingmaintenance@cavancoco.ie)**

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Examples of minor alterations:-

- Erecting a small garden shed – maximum 1.8m wide x 2.4m long.
- Painting the exterior of your house – painting of brickwork is prohibited.
- Installing a TV aerial or satellite dish – may require Planning Permission.



This list is not exhaustive, so it is always best to check with us.

You should also note that if the work you want to do will make the property less safe, reduce its value, or require planning permission, we are unlikely to agree to the proposed alteration.

You **are not** permitted to do the following:

- Build an extension, gazebo or covered area.
- Install showers, fitted kitchen units, bedroom units or bathroom fittings or changing any of these.
- Moving or changing radiators.
- Change your windows.
- Build or change boundary walls or fencing.
- Erect a garden fence.

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**PLEASE NOTE - YOU WILL BE CHARGED IF WE HAVE TO REMEDIATE UNAUTHORISED WORKS OR WORK THAT IS NOT PERMITTED.**

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### **What if I lock myself out of my property?**

You should arrange to have extra keys cut yourself, but if you subsequently vacate the house, you must hand all keys over to Cavan County Council. If you are locked out and if the Housing Maintenance staff need to help you to get back in, we will have to charge for the service, including any damage that results.

# CONDENSATION



## **What is condensation?**

Condensation is by far the most common cause of dampness in buildings, probably accounting for most dampness problems reported. It affects both old and new properties.

Condensation is directly associated with mould growth and it is this that the occupier first sees and gives an idea as to the potential scale of the problem. The mould is usually found on decorative surfaces. The mould and its spores cause the 'musty' odour frequently associated with a damp house.

The obvious places for condensation to occur are on cold walls and floors but sometimes it can occur in roof spaces. Timber in roof spaces can become susceptible to damage by dry rot or wet rot.

While condensation is obvious when it occurs on impermeable surfaces – most commonly window glass, cold water pipes and ceramic tiles – it will also form on any surface which is at, or lower than, dew point.

The presence of condensation on more absorbent surfaces (such as paint, plaster, wallpaper) becomes obvious when disruption, damage or mould growth forms on that surface.

Mould growth is a typical sign of chronic condensation and occurs as spores which are always present in the air.

Mould is a potential health risk. The high humidity levels associated with condensation also allows dust mites to flourish. The droppings from these microscopic creatures as well as spores can pose potential health risks.

## **What is the main cause of condensation?**

It is a fact that warm air can hold more water as vapour than cool air. So, quite simply, condensation is caused when moisture-laden air comes in contact with a cold surface – the air is cooled to a point where it can no longer hold its burden of water vapour. At this point, (DEWPOINT), water begins to drop out of the air, and is seen as condensation on surfaces.

On impervious surfaces such as glass and paint, beads or a film of water collect, but on permeable surfaces such as wallpaper or porous plaster the condensing water is absorbed into the material. Therefore, the problem is initially not obvious.

If you do not take steps to reduce condensation it can lead to some of the problems associated with damp such as mould on walls and furniture. Damp housing encourages the risk of mould.

### **What is the main cause of condensation?**

Double glazing and improved insulation mean we have warmer homes, but unless a property is adequately ventilated it can become damp.

We ask all tenants to ensure that our properties are sufficiently ventilated by taking a few precautions stated below in order to avoid condensation and the build-up of damp.

### **All Rooms**

Never block up vents

### **Bedrooms**

Ensure trickle vents are always left open. If required, wipe the condensation off windows first thing in the morning, but please do not put the cloth you used on the radiator to dry as this will only create more condensation

### **Shower/Bathrooms**

Ensure full use of extractor fans. Wipe windows, walls and mirrors to remove condensation (a microfibre cloth is the most efficient means of doing this) and dry the shower tray or bath. Keep the door closed while the bathroom is in use to prevent the steam escaping to other parts of the house

### **Living Area**

If a wall appears to be damp, do not put furniture up against it; allow some circulation behind furniture

### **General**

Make sure that ventilation bricks or openings in the building are not obstructed

### **Windows**

Keep glass clear of condensation as much as you can. Wipe away any moisture that has formed using a soft cloth. Leave open any 'trickle' vents in double glazed units. Get into the habit of opening windows to keep the moisture content of the air down and to air the property whenever you can

## Laundry

Never dry clothes on radiators. Avoid drying clothes inside the house. Tumble driers should be vented to the outside or fitted with a condenser

## Heating

Provide a reasonable level of heating (no less than 10 degrees Celsius in unused areas and 16 degrees Celsius in areas in use). Cold rooms are susceptible to condensation. Remember the best way to heat a room and avoid condensation is to maintain a low level of warmth throughout the day, rather than to turn the heating off while you are out and put it on to a high level when you get home

## In Habitable Rooms

- Air the house a couple of times a day by opening windows.
- Do not turn heating off completely in rooms which are not in use.
- Do not place large items of furniture completely up against external walls; the air in the room must be allowed to circulate behind them to prevent the formation of mould spots on the wall.
- Never block up wall vents.

## In Bedrooms

- Air the room and make sure the bedding is aired every morning.
- Turn the mattress occasionally.
- Don't leave bedrooms completely unheated.
- If the windows steam up, ensure better ventilation to the external air or to other rooms in the house.
- Never block up room vents.

## In the Kitchen

- Never block or close vents.
- Use extractor fan at maximum when cooking.
- Putting lids on pans during cooking limits the amount of moisture when cooking.
- Open windows during and after cooking.

## Laundry

- Never block up vents.
- Use extractor fans during showering/bathing. Never turn off humidistat- controlled fans.
- Avoid drying clothes within the house. If this cannot be avoided, ensure ample ventilation.
- Air rooms after showering/bathing.

## Remedies

Mildew may be removed from clothes by using a dry-cleaning process. Remove and kill mould from surfaces by wiping the affected area(s) with a fungicide precisely following the manufacturer's instructions.

Alternatively, a mild bleach solution will have the desired effect, but do test a small area first. If redecorating after mould removal, apply a stain block to the affected area prior to painting.

### ***Remember!***

***It's cheaper to reduce the production of condensation than compensate for it by turning up the heating.***



# ENERGY SAVING AND WATER CONSERVATION TIPS



## Energy Saving Tips

We would strongly encourage you to try some of the following basic energy saving tips:

- Try and heat your hot water using the primary heating system rather than using your secondary immersion, if you have one.
- Turn off lights as you leave the room or in areas of the dwelling that are not in use.
- Reduce heat loss by closing the curtains at dusk.
- Slightly turn down the thermostat (min 18°C). By reducing the heating thermostat one degree, you could save money.
- Use low energy light bulbs.
- Ensure phones, TVs, computers and other electronic devices are turned off at the mains rather than left on standby.
- Use an electric kettle to boil water for cooking instead of the cooker
- Don't overfill your kettle – only as much water as you need.
- Do not run taps while brushing your teeth.
- Use a toaster instead of a grill.
- Cook with lids on saucepans.
- Try to keep gas flames low.
- Use a low flow shower head.

## Water Conservation Guidance

Water conservation is important, especially in areas where there is a shortage of water. By saving water, we can help protect our environment.

Here are some tips to help you conserve water at home:

1. Fix any leaks: Check your taps, pipes, and toilets regularly for leaks. A small leak can waste a lot of water over time.
2. Don't leave taps running: When you're brushing your teeth or washing your face, don't leave the tap running. Did you know, you can save up to 6 litres of water per minute by turning the tap off when you're not using it.



3. Take shorter showers: A five-minute shower can use up to 40 litres of water. So, please try to limit your showers to five minutes or less, or consider, installing a low-flow showerhead.
4. Use a bucket: When washing your balcony/car etc, use a bucket instead of a hose. This can save up to 300 litres of water each time you wash that area.
5. Use a brush/cloth/sponge: Instead of using a hose to clean your balcony, driveway, windows, or patio etc. This will save water and prevent wastage.
6. Water your plants wisely: Water your plants early in the morning or late in the evening when it is cooler. This will reduce evaporation and ensure that your plants get the most water.
7. Collect rainwater: If you can, set up a rainwater collection system to use for watering your garden or washing your car. There is lots of information online on how to collect rainwater in apartments and houses.
8. Only run full loads: Wait until your washing machine or dishwasher is full before running it.

This will save water and energy and potentially money for you! By following these simple tips, you can help conserve water and support our Environment.

Remember, every drop counts!

Lots more information on how to conserve water can be found on [www.water.ie](http://www.water.ie)

# SAFETY IN YOUR HOME



## Fire Safety

Every fire has a cause and most often, there's a common sense, simple method of prevention. Careless attention to or use of cigarettes, lighters and matches, smoking, electricity, fireplaces, heaters, candles and cooking equipment are leading causes of fire-death and injury.

The best way to prevent a fire is to keep fuel sources away from potential heat sources. With that in mind, look around your home to spot any possible fire hazards. Do not allow rubbish to build up in your living room or anywhere else inside your home as this will act as fuel in the event of a fire.

The three Golden Rules to follow to make sure that you and your family are safe from fire are:

- **Prevention:** The best way to be “fire safe” is to make sure that fires never happen.
- **Detection:** A fire alarm that works will give you time to get everyone out of the house.
- **Evacuation:** Help very young, old or sick people to leave the house. Get out and stay out.

**Prevention** is the key but in the knowledge that all fires will not be prevented, it is essential every household have an effective system to detect fire outbreak at an early stage, make safe evacuation a simple task.

**Detection** is essential so make sure smoke alarms are installed, maintained and regularly checked to ensure early warning. By having a smoke alarm which is mains operated with battery back-up or a “long life” alarm, you will have early warning devices which give you time to act before you and your family are overcome by dangerous fumes and smoke.

**Evacuation** - Often, when a fire breaks out, confusion and errors follow. If you have a well-practised fire drill you will be better able to deal with an emergency situation. A rehearsed fire escape drill can make all the difference:

- Family members should plan two escape routes to get out of the house;

- Decide one meeting point outside the house;
- Close all doors behind you as you leave;
- The stairs are the primary escape route – keep them clear;
- Do not re-enter the house for any reason;
- Phone the fire brigade from outside the house.

**Smoke alarms are a family's indication of a fire, so please check them regularly to make sure they work.** But once that alarm sounds, a fire can spread quickly, leaving only a minute or two to escape. That's why it's so important to have a plan and practice it.

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**WE ADVISE YOU TO KNOW YOUR EIRCODE – THIS WILL HELP EMERGENCY SERVICES GET TO YOU QUICKER.**

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## **General Fire Safety Information**

Your home is fitted with a smoke and/or heat detection system. Please ensure your fire blanket is situated in, or adjacent to your kitchen appliances, but not too close to a potential fire hazard, as a fire may prevent you accessing the fire blanket. They are best fixed to a kitchen wall in an easily identifiable location.

Please do not tamper with the fire blanket and should it require replacement, please notify your Housing Officer immediately.

If you have chosen to install additional battery powered smoke or heat detectors in your home, you should be checking them regularly and replacing batteries as required (a smoke alarm will “beep” when the battery needs to be changed).

NEVER interfere or tamper with the smoke or fire alarms system, unless it is to check it is working or to change a battery.

Regularly test your fire alarm and/or smoke alarm to make sure it is working, ideally once a week.

At night, keep a torch handy in case of a power outage and make sure your main door keys are close at hand.

NEVER interfere with fire doors in your home by removing door closers, painting over intumescent door seals or replacing with a non-fire-rated door/frame.

Be prepared. Give some thought to what you would do if there was a fire in your home, how would you get out? How would your children get out? Escaping from a fire is a lot easier if you have planned an escape route. Whilst the risk of fire is low it is essential to be prepared in advance!

## **Preventing a Fire Starting in Your Home**

### **Cooking**

- If you are under the influence of alcohol do not cook.
- When cooking, never leave the cooker unattended.
- Keep the area around the cooker clear and free from combustible materials e.g. tea towels, dish cloths, kitchen roll.
- If you grill fatty foods, clean the grill pan every time you use it, as fat deposits build up and can easily catch fire.
- Never use an open chip pan.
- Never leave your cooker, grill or oven on when you go out – even on a timer.
- Never leave electrical wires or cords near the cooker.
- Avoid keeping anything on top of an eye-level grill.
- Never put anything metal in a microwave, including tinfoil.

**Never use a gas cylinder cooker indoors, this is a breach of your tenancy agreement and is not permitted.**

### **Smoking**

- Never leave a lit cigarette or pipe unattended.
- If you smoke, take extra care to ensure cigarettes are fully extinguished in a suitable container.
- Empty ashtrays when they become full into a non-combustible container or bin. Ensure contents are cold.
- Never smoke in a chair/bed if you are tired and think you may doze off. Smoking is one of the main causes of house fires.

If you use oxygen for medical reasons, ensure that our housing staff are aware of this and follow all instructions and guidance provided by your pharmacist or supplier on safe use and storage – **Do Not Smoke When Using Oxygen.**

## Electrical Appliances and Extension Leads

- Never use appliances with worn, frayed or singed leads.
- Don't overload plug sockets or extension leads.
- Avoid using extension leads that are too long but don't 'double up' extension leads that are too short!
- Unplug appliances when not in use.
- Avoid using non-manufacturer supplied chargers, particularly phone and tablet charger.
- Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order, for example lint caught in the lint trap of a tumble dryer should be removed before next use.
- Make sure all appliances have a British or European safety mark when you buy it.
- Always check that you use the right fuse to prevent overloading in a plug or fusebox.

## Candles and Heaters

- Never leave candles on or near any flammable materials.
- Avoid the use of radiant electric fires, these can be easily brushed against and have devastating consequences

If using an open fire, never leave unattended without a fire-guard and make sure chimneys are swept at least once per year.

The storage or use of liquid petroleum cylinder gas/paraffin heaters/cookers is not permitted in your dwelling, the staircase, landing, or any part of the building for health and safety reasons.

If any type of "uncertified" gas installations is undertaken in the dwelling, these would be considered against the law and a breach of your tenancy agreement.

It is your responsibility as the tenant to ensure any gas type installations such as a hob are fully compliant with the RGII regulations and the RGI installer you employ is fully certified. If it is found that you have undertaken “uncertified” gas works to your dwelling a Notice of Hazard will be issued to the RGII, and the “uncertified” gas installation will be shut down.

- Under no circumstances should any type of combustible portable heaters be brought into your home and used.

### Before going to bed

- Make sure the cooker is turned off.
- Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like a fridge.
- Stub out all cigarettes and always empty ashtrays having ensured contents are completely extinguished.
- Close all doors – it can keep your escape route free from smoke and may stop a fire spreading.
- If you use an electric blanket, turn it off when you get into bed and never use an electric blanket and hot water bottle together.
- Never Smoke in Bed: Smoking is one of the main causes of house fires.

### If there is evidence of a fire

- Keep calm and make sure everyone leaves immediately.
- Raise the alarm, dial 999 or 112, ask for the Fire and Rescue Service and tell them your home address and location **including your Eircode**.
- Check doors with the back of your hand before opening them. If it's warm, don't open it – the fire could be on the other side.
- Leave the building using the nearest available fire exit.
- Do not Stop to collect belongings or investigate what has happened.
- Do not delay your exit or block escape routes.
- Do not Return to the building unless instructed to do so by a Fire Officer.

## Gas Safety

Care must be taken with all fuels in the home. Natural Gas appliances should be fitted by a Registered Gas Installer, used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and serviced annually. Natural Gas is a clean, pure fuel.

If you smell gas call the Gas Networks Ireland 24 Hour Emergency Service on 1800 20 50 50 immediately and follow the steps below.

### At Home

- Ensure gas appliances are turned off and have not been left on and unlit.
- Don't smoke, vape or use a naked flame.
- Don't unplug or switch anything electrical on or off.
- Open windows and doors.
- If the smell persists turn off the gas at the meter.
- Call our 24 hour Emergency Line on 1800 20 50 50 no matter who your gas supplier is.
- If you can't get through, dial 999 / 112.

Don't use a phone in the immediate area of the leak, use a neighbour's or call from outside.

### On the Street

If you smell gas on the street, call 1800 20 50 50 immediately. Don't assume that someone else will.

In the interests of public safety all emergency calls are recorded.

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**WE ADVISE YOU TO KNOW YOUR EIRCODE - THIS WILL  
HELP EMERGENCY SERVICES GET TO YOU QUICKER.**  
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## Electrical Safety

For General Home Safety advice, please refer to the ESB Website at: <https://www.esbnetworks.ie/safety/safety-tips/home-safety>

### Be prepared for a power cut or power outage

- Never approach fallen electricity wires or damaged poles, and keep children and animals away - report damage to ESB Networks at 1800 372 999 or +353 21 2382410 and listen to recorded messages carefully.
- Turn off electric cookers, ovens, irons, etc. if electricity supply is lost.
- Leave a light switched on so you know when power has been restored.
- Take extra care if using candles, oil lamps or other naked flames.
- Test smoke alarms with fresh batteries.
- Ensure adequate ventilation if using gas heaters.

### General safety tips

- For your safety, do not interfere with the sealed main fuse and meter units provided by ESB Networks.
- Test your trip switch or Residual Current Device (RCD) twice yearly (when the clocks change) by pushing the test button.

### Outdoor safety tips

- Always check for overhead electricity wires.
- Never approach or touch fallen electricity wires, they may be live.
- Never attach anything to an electricity pole or wire.
- Don't carry out work near overhead wires or poles.

### Other tips

- Never carry out electrical alterations or improvements to the property.
- Never interfere with the electrical system in your home.
- Unplug any appliances that are not in use.
- Don't overload sockets or have trailing extension leads.
- Don't put nails or fittings in a wall near a socket, switch or light fitting as there may be electrical wires behind the plaster.

Don't under any circumstances run power cables from the house to an external building.

## **Advice in Case of Severe Freezing Conditions**

During severe prolonged freezing conditions frost penetrates deep into the ground and householders may experience problems due to frozen water pipes.

The two most common sources of the problem are:-

- Either a service pipe between the watermain and the house, which because of the depth at which it has been laid, has frozen, or
- A pipe in an attic has frozen.

Because of the diverse nature of each individual case, it is not feasible to give "one size fits all" advice.

Tenants experiencing problems with frozen pipes are advised to contact Cavan County Council.

Tips which might help to avoid frozen pipes are:

- Wrap a towel/blanket around an outside tap.
- Open the attic trap door to allow heat into the attic.
- Leave a light on in the attic.
- Leave heating on longer than normal.

In the longer term, when the thaw sets in, some of the frozen pipes may have burst and may need repair.

With this in mind, householders should now familiarise themselves with the location of their external and internal stopcocks, ensure there is access to both stop cocks and know how to turn both off.

Early action to turn off water will reduce the potential for damage, particularly from burst pipes in the attic, however in the case of back boiler heating only, water should not be turned off.

## Water Hygiene

Our aim is to give you information on what precautions you can take within your home to protect you from Legionnaires disease.

Legionellosis is a collective term for diseases caused by Legionella bacteria including the most serious Legionnaires disease, as well as the similar but less serious conditions of Pontiac fever and Lochgoilhead fever. The risk of Legionella causing illness is low, but awareness is important for resident's wellbeing.

Legionnaires disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia and everyone is susceptible to infection. The risk increases with age, but some people are at higher risk including:

- people over 45 years of age.
- smokers and heavy drinkers.
- people suffering from chronic respiratory or kidney disease, diabetes, lung and heart disease.
- anyone with an impaired immune system.

The bacterium Legionella pneumophila and related bacteria are common in natural water sources such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs, but usually in low numbers. They may also be found in purpose built water systems such as domestic hot and cold water systems, spa pools and evaporative condensers. If conditions are favourable, the bacteria may grow increasing the risks of Legionnaires disease and it is therefore important to control the risks by introducing appropriate measures outlined in: Legionnaires disease – The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems (ACOP L8).

### Where does it come from?

Legionella bacteria are widespread in natural water systems, e.g. rivers and ponds. However, the conditions are rarely right for people to catch the disease from these sources. Outbreaks of the illness occur from exposure to Legionella growing in purpose built systems where water is maintained at a temperature high enough to encourage growth, e.g. hot and cold water systems, spa pools, cooling towers and evaporative condensers used in all sorts of premises (domestic, work and leisure).

## How do people get it?

People contract Legionnaires disease by inhaling small droplets of water (aerosols) suspended in the air containing the bacteria. Certain conditions increase the risk from Legionella if:

- The water temperature in all or some parts of the system is between 20°C – 45°C, which is suitable for growth.
- It is possible for breathable water droplets to be created and dispersed, e.g. aerosol created by shower heads, water outlets, spa baths.
- Water is stored and/or re-circulated.
- There are deposits that can support bacterial growth providing a source of nutrients for the organism, e.g. rust, sludge, scale, organic matter and biofilms.
- Outlets are used infrequently.
- The system contains dead ends or unused pipe work.

## Reducing the risk of Legionella

The risk of Legionella causing illness in small domestic properties is exceedingly low.

Possibly the biggest risk is when you have been away from the property for more than a week or so, e.g. on holiday, or there are additional taps/showers/toilets that are not used daily.

Good practice in this situation is simply:

- Run the hot water taps (a very unlikely source anyway) for a minimum of 60 seconds.
- Flush shower heads for a minimum of 60 seconds (to do this, remove from holder before turning on the shower, then hold down over plug hole to lessen risk of inhaling sprayed droplets).
- Shower heads should be dismantled and cleaned of scale and debris every 3 – 6 months.
- Keep the hot water on your boiler system at a temperature of minimum 50°C – 60°C.
- Flush toilets twice to circulate fresh water.

## **Your responsibility under Health and Safety.**

A new Guide called “New responsibilities for homeowners under Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013” was issued by the HSA (Health and Safety Authority) in August 2013.

This Guide can be found at:

[www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications\\_and\\_Forms/Publications/Construction/Guide\\_for\\_Homeowners.html](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Construction/Guide_for_Homeowners.html)

The purpose of this document is to outline what responsibilities are put on the homeowner, or tenant of a Local Authority property, in relation to carrying out construction works in the home.

Where such works are not being carried out personally by the Tenant, but by a contractor on your behalf, the regulations require the appointment of competent contractors and may, depending on circumstances, carry other liabilities and/or responsibilities.

Maintenance and repair of your residence as set out in your Tenancy Agreement/Tenant Handbook may require compliance with the regulations.

### **Compliance is the responsibility of the tenant.**

Failure to comply with the requirements of the regulations will be viewed as a breach of the Tenancy Agreement and will be subject to the appropriate remedies which may include termination of tenancy and/or action to recover any losses arising.

If you have any queries regarding your responsibilities for construction/maintenance at your residence, please refer to your Tenancy Agreement and your Tenant Handbook.

In the event that you have any other queries regarding these regulations, please contact the HSA at 0818 289 389 or [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

Note: This does not constitute legal advice or advice on the interpretation, scope or application of these regulations.

Responsibility for compliance rests with the tenant.

**Please also ensure that any contractor working for you has appropriate insurance cover in place to cover the work they are carrying out.**

# CONTACT DETAILS



## CAVAN COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES

Cavan County Council

Address: Farnham Street, Cavan, H12C9K1

Phone No. 049 4378300

Email: [info@cavancoco.ie](mailto:info@cavancoco.ie)

Social Media: Follow us on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, or **Instagram** to stay up-to-date on our events and latest news.

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## GENERAL HOUSING QUERIES (049) 4378300

Housing general | [housing@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housing@cavancoco.ie)

Housing repairs | [housingmaintenance@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housingmaintenance@cavancoco.ie)

Housing rents | [housingrents@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housingrents@cavancoco.ie)

Tenancy management | [lettings@cavancoco.ie](mailto:lettings@cavancoco.ie)

Housing grants/loans/tenant purchase | [housinggrants@cavancoco.ie](mailto:housinggrants@cavancoco.ie)

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## EMERGENCY/OUT OF HOURS NUMBERS

Contact: 087 611 8116.

Emergency repair issues which occur outside of office hours may be referred to the telephone number above. Please note that a charge may be incurred by the tenant if an emergency call out is deemed not to be an emergency.

This line is for urgent matters requiring immediate attention related to council services. For life-threatening emergencies such as fire, ambulance, or Gardaí, always dial 999 or 112.

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## LOCAL SERVICES

Cavan Garda Station | 049 436 8800

Doctor on Call North East | 1850 777911

Irish Water | 1890 278 278

Dog Warden | 049 433 7545

Illegal Dumping | 049 437 8409 | [waste@cavancoco.ie](mailto:waste@cavancoco.ie)

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## SOCIAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Local Social Welfare Office | [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie) 049 4331909 |

[CWSCavan@welfare.ie](mailto:CWSCavan@welfare.ie)

## **HSE (HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE)**

Cavan General Hospital | 049 437 6000

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## **HELP, ADVICE AND SUPPORT**

Cavan Citizens Information | 049 4372017 | [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)  
The Samaritans (24 HOUR HELPLINE) Phone 116123 | Text 087 2609090  
Cavan Advice & Budgeting Service | 0818 072 410 | [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie)  
Women's Aid 24hr National Freephone Helpline | 1800 341 900  
Cavan Domestic Violence Service (SAFE Ireland) | 047 72311

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## **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

An Garda Síochána, Fire Service, Ambulance 999  
ESB Emergency Number | 1800 372 999  
Bord Gáis Emergency Number | 1800 205 050







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**Comhairle Contae an Chabháin**  
Cavan County Council