

BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

013333 720200 www.balcaskie.com

Information for Balcaskie Estates Tenants

Carbon Monoxide

Balcaskie Estate has fitted a carbon monoxide alarm in your property.

As with any smoke alarms fitted in your property, you are obliged to carry out any required regular testing to carbon monoxide detectors and to replace any batteries contained within the monitors as is necessary. Please read the following practical and straightforward advice on what you can do to minimise the risk from carbon monoxide.

What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood and coal. Carbon-based fuels are safe to use. It is only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced, which is poisonous.

How can Carbon Monoxide affect your health?

Carbon Monoxide is potentially fatal, and even low-levels of the poisonous gas can cause lasting damage to your health. When CO enters the body, it prevents the blood from bringing oxygen to cells, tissues, and organs. The gas can kill quickly and without warning. Levels that do not kill can cause serious harm to health if breathed in over a long period. In extreme cases paralysis and brain damage can be caused as a result of prolonged exposure to CO.

What are the symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning?

The early symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning are similar to many common ailments and can easily be confused with food poisoning, viral infections, flu or simple tiredness. Symptoms to look out for include:

- drowsiness
- headaches
- giddiness
- nausea
- vomiting
- pains in the chest
- breathlessness
- stomach pains

- erratic behavior
- visual problems.

If you experience these symptoms but feel better when you are outside or away from the appliance, you could be suffering from Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

How can people be exposed to Carbon Monoxide?

People can be exposed to Carbon Monoxide fumes from badly installed or maintained heating appliances, or from badly ventilated flues and chimneys. Carbon Monoxide can also be present in smoke from solid fuel, wood or oil appliances

What can you do to minimise the risk from Carbon Monoxide?

Balcaskie Estates has very few LPG gas appliances in its properties, however, if you do have a gas appliance that is owned by the Estate, we will have it checked by an LPG Gas Safe registered engineer every 12 months and we will provide you with a copy of the safety certificate.

If you have a solid fuel appliance, you should empty the ash can daily, clean the flue ways at the back of the boiler weekly and clean the throat plates at the top of the room heater monthly. You should have your chimney swept at least once a year if burning smokeless fuel or at least twice a year if using wood. An alarm is no substitute for regular maintenance and chimney sweeping.

Know how to spot the signs of Carbon Monoxide around your appliance. Look out for signs such as sooting or staining around the appliance, a pilot light that blows out frequently or excessive condensation in the room. If you are using a gas appliance that should have a crisp blue flame, such as a pilot light, look out for changes. If it turns to a lazy orange flame, the appliance may not be working correctly. Report any signs as soon as possible to the Estate Office.

It is dangerous to block ventilation - blocking ventilation or misusing your appliance can lead to Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

Know what to do and who to call in an emergency. If you suspect a Carbon Monoxide leak, stop using the appliance until it has been checked by a competent engineer.

You should open windows to ventilate the area, leave the room to get some fresh air and seek medical advice. If you receive medical attention, be sure to state that you suspect you could be suffering from Carbon Monoxide poisoning to ensure you receive appropriate treatment, and are offered a breath or blood test.

Where can I find more information?

The Solid Fuel Association - www.solidfuel.co.uk

0845 601 4406 / 01773 835400 or e-mail: sfa@solidfuel.co.uk

The Health and Safety Executive - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/co.htm>

BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

013333 720200 www.balcaskie.com

Dampness and Condensation

Please read the following information:

- Most damp problems are caused by condensation; occasionally damp is caused either by water penetrating from roof and gutter leaks or rising from the ground.
- The only way to control condensation is by adequate ventilation at all times. During the cold winter months a quick "blow through" in the morning, by opening windows, is sometimes all that is needed to clear the build-up of damp air that has accumulated overnight.
- The effects of condensation are most visible on window glass, where large amounts of water form on the cold glass. Warm air inside buildings is capable of holding a great deal of moisture and when the air cools the moisture is released, causing condensation, which is characterised by black or grey mould growth. The most common areas for damp and mould growth caused by condensation are at the skirting level where the wall is cooler and in corners of wall and ceiling, or behind furniture where air flow is restricted.
- The average household produces around 14 litres or 24 pints of water vapour per day. This vapour must be allowed to vent to the outside air; if allowed to linger, this amount of water will be deposited into the building fabric causing considerable damage.
- The main sources of water vapour are:
 - Drying clothes
 - Cooking
 - Kettles
 - Washing machines
 - Bathing

It is therefore of particular importance that you ensure that you allow adequate ventilation when the above activities are taking place.

- Allowing adequate escape of vapour laden air through partially opened windows or by fans, and keeping the fabric of the building relatively warm will help to prevent condensation forming within the property.
- Prevent moist air from cooking and bathing spreading to other rooms by keeping doors closed to the kitchen and bathroom. Drying clothes in the house creates enormous amounts of moisture, which will cause problems if not controlled.

BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

013333 720200 www.balcaskie.com

Reporting Faults and Repair Requests

Please report all faults to the Estate Office by telephone 01333 720200 or email djamieson@balcaskie.com. The Estate Office is open Monday to Friday, between 9am and 5pm. This enables us to log the fault, report it to the relevant contractor, and monitor progress until it has been resolved. If you report a fault to us, we will do our utmost to resolve it within a reasonable time of being notified.

Emergencies

Most emergencies turn out not to be as urgent as initially thought and, in most cases, nothing can be done until the next working day anyway. However, if you have an extreme emergency that cannot wait until the next working day, you can contact one of our emergency contractors who will ask you as much information about the situation as possible and attempt to assist you over the telephone.

It is therefore important that you know where to find the stopcock and fuse board so water or electricity can be turned off if necessary. If the contractor believes that the problem cannot wait until the next working day, a call out will be arranged to deal with the fault as soon as possible.

- Emergency Plumber: K. Soutar Plumbing & Heating – Ken Soutar 07971 675 013
- Emergency Electrician: D. Gardner Electrical Contractors – Daniel Gardner 07841 819 636
- Emergency Property Maintenance (locks, roofs, windows): Donaldson & Son Joiners - Rab Donaldson 07702 223 611

We hope this service will give you peace of mind in the unlikely event of a genuine emergency.

BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

013333 720200 www.balcaskie.com

Legionella

What is Legionella?

Legionella bacteria are common and can be found naturally in water sources such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs, usually in low numbers. The bacteria are usually associated with larger water systems found in factories, hotels, hospitals, museums, and cooling towers. However, they can be found in smaller water supply systems in the home. The bacteria are sensitive to temperature, but the range of 20°C to 45°C is the most favourable for encouraging their growth. The organisms do not usually multiply below 20°C, and will not survive above 60°C.

How can Legionella Affect Your Health?

Legionella bacteria can give rise to a range of illnesses similar to pneumonia. The most well-known of these is Legionnaires' disease. Most people who are exposed to legionella will not become ill, and the disease does not spread from person to person. Although anyone can be affected, it principally affects those who are more susceptible due to age, illness or existing respiratory conditions, those who have a suppressed immune system or who are smokers.

How can People be Exposed to Legionella?

People can be exposed to Legionella bacteria by inhaling small droplets of water containing the bacteria suspended in air. This is usually from a mist or aerosol of water such as from showers or spa baths. There is no risk from drinking water containing the bacteria.

What can be done to Minimise the Risk from Legionella?

- **Run the water off infrequently used outlets**

For taps or showers that are infrequently used, such as an outside tap or shower in a guest room, run them occasionally to flush through any stagnant water. Legionella bacteria can breed in stagnant water. Do this carefully to avoid splashing the water and creating a mist. For example, if the shower head is attached via a hose, remove the shower head from its holder and lay the head in the base of the shower.

- *When you've been away*

If you have been away for a while (one week or more), run the taps and showers for a few minutes on your return to flush through any stagnant water. When doing this, take care to avoid splashes.

- *De-scale Showers*

Every 3 to 6 months, dismantle, clean and de-scale shower heads and hoses.

- *Set the Hot Water Thermostat to 60°C*

This is a possible precaution. If you have a temperature control switch or indicator gauge on your hot water heating system, you can set it to 60°C – the bacteria will not survive above this temperature. But be careful – this can increase the risk of scalds, so if there are young children, elderly adults or vulnerable persons in the property, this may not be appropriate.

- *Checking the Cold Water Storage Tank?*

Where the cold water storage tank can be accessed safely, you can:

- Check that your tank is insulated and that it has a closely fitting lid. By insulating your cold water tank you can ensure that the temperature of the water remains under 20°C and that Legionella bacteria will not breed. This will also ensure that your cold water tank does not freeze in the winter.
- Check the condition of the tank and the water in it. Ideally, there should be no debris in the tank and the water should be clear. If the bottom of the tank contains debris and the water has a film of scum on the top you should clean it out, if possible.

But take care and do not put yourself at risk. The risk from entering an un-floored attic space or using a step ladder to gain access to a water tank is likely to be greater than the risk from legionella.

- *Ensure Hot and Cold Water Pipes are Lagged*

Lagging the pipes will ensure that cold water stays cold and hot water stays hot and minimises the risk from Legionella.

Finally, we would like to reassure you that the risk from Legionella bacteria in domestic homes is extremely low. Because houses are continuously occupied and water is used on a regular basis, there is very little chance of water stagnating. If you follow the tips listed above you will reduce the risk still further and have no need for concern.

BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

013333 720200 www.balcaskie.com

Do's and Don'ts of Septic Tanks

Do

- Act immediately if you find a blockage or any sign of a problem
- Wash dishes in a dishwasher whenever possible (fat is converted into soap in a dishwasher)
- Use toilet fresheners, mild detergents, fabric conditioners and washing powders and liquids in moderation without upsetting the natural balance of the septic tank. All active ingredients in soap and detergents should be biodegradable by law and should be safe for septic tanks in normal use
- Use bleaches and disinfectants – but please use them sparingly – as they can kill the friendly bacteria which make the septic tank work

Don't

- Fats, oils or heavy grease should not be poured down the drain
- Paints, solvents and motor oils should not be put down the drain
- Never dispose of garden chemicals and pesticides into the septic tank
- Don't use the toilet or kitchen sink as a rubbish bin
- Don't empty chemical toilets into drains or septic tanks
- Nappies, sanitary items, plastic or similar items should not be disposed of into the system – "bag it and bin it" instead
- Don't dig or drive over the drainage field, or cover it with a hard surface
- Don't block air vents
- Don't desludge your tank too often
- Don't allow effluent to collect on the surface of the ground
- Don't enter a septic tank – dangerous gases are produced by the natural treatment process

BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

013333 720200 www.balcaskie.com

MULTI-FUEL STOVE INSTRUCTIONS

Fuel

DO NOT BURN petroleum coke fuels (ie House Coal) or household waste.

Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood, that has been cut, split and stacked for at least 12 months.

When stacking the wood, ensure there is free air movement around the sides to enable it to dry out.

DO NOT burn wet, creosoted or unseasoned wood, as this will create tar deposits in the stove and chimney and will produce reduced heat output.

Anthracite is an approved natural smokeless fuel (not processed) but can vary greatly in quality and performance. It should be used in conjunction with other approved manufactured smokeless fuels as per the HETAS approved list, which can be found at www.hetas.co.uk.

Lighting the Stove

- Load the fire with starting fuel (paper, dry sticks and/or firelighters)
- Light the fire at the base with all air controls open
- Once the fire has established, further fuel can be added

Burning Wood

- With a full load of wood, the stove will need to be refuelled approximately once every 1½ hours.
- The wood will burn more efficiently with the primary air sliders in the closed position and the secondary control left open.
- The secondary control will control the burn rate of the stove.

Solid Fuel

- With a full load of fuel, the stove will need to be refuelled approximately once every 4 hours.
- Solid fuel will burn more efficiently with the secondary air control in the closed position.
- The thermostat control will control the burn rate of the stove.

Banking the Stove for Extended Burning

- If using solid fuel, empty the ash pan.
- Open the air controls and let the fire burn brightly for a short period of time.
- Refuel, then close the primary and secondary air controls as required.
- To revive the fire, open the air controls until the fire is burning brightly, then refuel.
- Set the air controls as required.