



Seven minute briefing



Hazards in the Home

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Introduction- What are housing hazards?

Housing hazards are features of a home that pose a risk to the health, safety, and well-being of occupants. They can lead to injuries, illness, or even death, particularly for vulnerable adults and children. There are [29 Hazards that the Council assess properties against](#). Private rented properties, registered provider properties (social housing), and owner occupier properties, can all be assessed, under the [Housing Act 2004](#), and action may be taken. Landlords have a duty to maintain and manage properties; owners may also have a duty to ensure their property does not cause harm to themselves or others. Professionals that are going into properties can identify hazards that have the potential to cause harm to the occupiers. The top seven hazards found in properties across Liverpool are - **FIRE, DAMP and MOULD, ELECTRICAL HAZARDS, FALLING ON STAIRS, EXCESS COLD, PERSONAL HYGIENE, SANITATION AND DRAINAGE AND FALLING BETWEEN LEVELS.**

All professionals should be looking out for the following hazards and consider the impact on families

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Fire, Damp & Mold

Missing smoke detectors, smoke detectors that look damaged or covered with plastic bags.



Remember to stay on the safe **SIDE**:

Spread – look for ways fire or smoke could spread throughout the property

Ignition – look for ways the fire could start

Detection – check that smoke alarms are in place and working

Escape – check that exits are clear and accessible

Look for visible signs of black spot mould or damp/wet patches and smells of dampness and the air feeling “stuffy.” The long-term impact of mold can lead to respiratory issues and exacerbating allergies. For those with severe allergies and conditions can even lead to death.

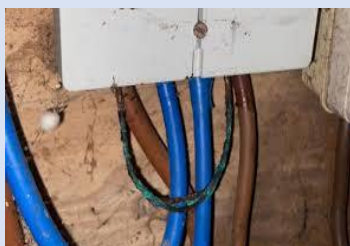


[Damp & Condensation Supporting Guidance](#)

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Electrical Hazards

Electric wires that are exposed, loose sockets, excessive use of extension leads, electric meters that have wires looped across the supply evidencing tampering, can all lead to electrical fires. Electric bikes/scooters being charged in the property have also been a recent cause for concern and raised in the local media.





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Falling on stairs/ excessive cold

Being observant for missing items such as handrails, guarding that can be easily climbed, defective steps, and missing spindles, can all protect a family from injury. Look for portable heaters, excessive use of candles and defective windows too.



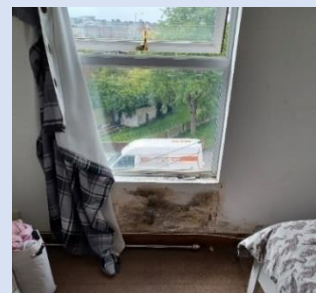
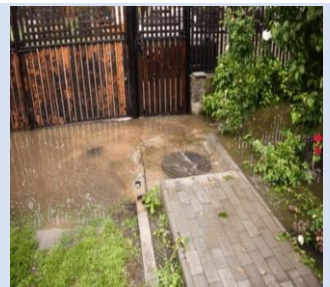
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Sanitation, Drainage & Falls

Poor sanitation significantly increases the risk of disease transmission, leading to illnesses like diarrhoea, cholera, and worm infections. Look for disrepair to toilet, taps drain smells or drains overflowing.

Falls from Height

Falls from windows are a common and serious cause of injury and death, with thousands of children requiring hospitalisation annually. Most incidents happen at home during warmer months when windows are open. Look for unrestricted bottom opening windows, low windowsills that are easily climbable and broken window locks.



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Professional Curiosity

Take time to be professionally curious! Look beyond the obvious and consider what a person's living conditions reveal about their overall well-being and potential risks.

Use reflective questions: When engaging with individuals, ask about their living conditions and ability to manage their home. Examples include:

- "Are you able to keep your home warm enough?"
- "Can you easily access and use your bathroom?"
- "Are there any repairs needed in your property?"
- "Have you got working smoke detectors?"
- "Can you cook and use your kitchen?"
- "Who is your landlord/contact details?"
- "Do you feel safe in your property?"

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What is next?

The referral pathway for advice or to raise any concerns is Privatesector.housing@liverpool.gov.uk. Provide as much information as possible, including any landlord details, occupiers details and include photos if appropriate. Explain to the occupier that you are concerned and you have a duty to raise your concerns/ask for advice.

Further reading-

[Hazard Perception Test for Landlords](#) | [HHSRS Guidance Document](#)

[Home Fire Safety](#) | [Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service](#)

[Electric Bikes and Scooters](#) | [Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service](#)

[Child Accident Prevention Trust](#) | [A safer world for all our children](#)

[The need for our work](#) | [Child Accident Trust](#)

[RoSPA- Preventing accidents to children: Safety tips for parents and caregivers](#)