



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

Protecting Our Community

COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 23

ADVICE FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN HIGH-RISE ACCOMMODATION

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS) wants to reassure tenants that living in high-rise accommodation does not necessarily make you any more at risk from fire. High-rise flats are built to be fireproof; walls, ceilings and doors must all be designed to resist fire, stop the spread of smoke and provide a safe means of escape.

Pre-Planning

- Check the fire safety arrangements for your building; these will advise you on the building's specific fire safety plan and in the event of a fire will determine your emergency plan;
- Make a fire escape plan and practise what you and your family would do if you had a real fire in your flat;
- Make sure stairways and fire escape routes are kept clear of all obstructions and check that doors on escape routes are never locked and can open from both sides;
- Never tamper with internal fire mains (dry or wet riser) inlets on landings. These provide water to firefighters when there is an emergency. It could cost lives if they're not working properly when there is a fire;
- If you see a dry riser vandalised or damaged, report it immediately to the management for the building and to NIFRS;
- Never use or store bottled gas cylinders in high-rise flats; and
- Never park or block access to high-rise flats. Access roads are designed so that fire appliances can get as close as possible to fight fires.

In the Event of a Fire

- If there is a fire elsewhere in the building, then the structure of your flat is designed to give you the appropriate protection; you are usually safer to stay in your flat unless the heat and smoke is affecting you;
- If you stay put, you should still call 999 for advice and to ensure attending crews have been notified;
- If there is a fire inside your flat then the advice from NIFRS is to get out immediately; do not delay your evacuation by trying to extinguish the fire yourself;
- If there is a lot of smoke in your flat, then crawl along the floor where the air is clearer;
- Alert all the people in your flat and close all doors behind you as you exit;
- Follow your fire escape plan;
- Always use the stairs rather than a lift and call 999 as soon as you are in a safe place;
- Never assume that someone else has called 999 and if possible alert neighbours about the fire; bang on their doors on your way out;
- If it is too dangerous to follow your escape route because the hallway and stairs are filled with smoke, stay inside the safest room and dial 999;
- Keep the door closed and pack blankets or clothes around the door to keep smoke out; and
- Hang a towel or similar item out of the window to let firefighters know your location when they arrive.

For further information phone NIFRS HQ 028 9266 4221 or visit www.nifrs.org



#STOPfire