

A Tenant's Guide to Maintenance and Safety

There are many good property owners who help their tenants by ensuring they remain safe and secure in their homes. However, it can be extremely frustrating to have a landlord or property manager that doesn't take maintenance seriously, as it can lead to potential fires. As the regulator responsible for electrical safety in Ontario, the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) has compiled information on tenants' rights and responsibilities related to electrical safety and maintenance.

First and foremost, property owners are required to regularly maintain and repair electrical systems to ensure they are in safe working order. That includes ensuring electrical work is completed by qualified staff and/or a Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC) and that all permits/notifications are obtained, when necessary, from the ESA.

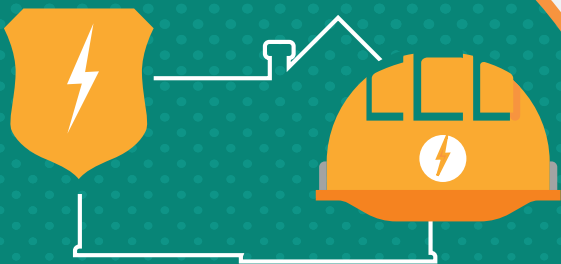
However, good practice doesn't end there. This document provides information to help you understand what you should expect from your property owner and what you should be thinking about to stay safe.



The Landlord and Tenant Act:

In Ontario, there are a number of Acts and regulations that govern safety in multi-residential units:

-  The Landlord Tenancy Act details responsibilities for landlords and tenants for activities such as maintenance and repair;
-  The Ontario Electrical Safety Code details the technical requirements of any electrical work conducted in the province of Ontario; and
-  Local by-laws and the Residential Tenancies Act detail rights and responsibilities related to rental units, including maintenance.



What your landlord/property Manager is responsible for:

- ⚡ Developing a maintenance plan that factors in all building systems, including electrical, plumbing, HVAC and mechanical;
- ⚡ Regularly maintaining and repairing building systems;
- ⚡ Ensuring electrical work is done by qualified staff and/or a Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC), ideally with experience working on similar building type and age;
- ⚡ Referring to manufacturers' service manuals for equipment-specific recommended maintenance procedures and frequency requirements, in consultation with an LEC;
- ⚡ Keeping accurate maintenance records, including recent electrical maintenance and repairs, testing results, and any identified and/or outstanding electrical deficiencies; and
- ⚡ Obtaining the necessary permits/ notifications and requesting inspection of electrical work by the Electrical Safety Authority.

As a tenant you are responsible for:

- ⚡ Ensuring you follow safe practices within your home, including not tampering with the electrical wiring in your unit, throwing out frayed cords or overloading the circuit by plugging in too many devices. Do not use extension cords on a permanent basis.
- ⚡ Informing your landlord or property manager of potential electrical issues in your unit or common areas within the building. Do not complete any repairs on your own without consulting your landlord/property manager. If you have an imminent public safety electrical issue, please contact the ESA.

Who to call?

If you have questions or concerns about your building, please contact:

- ⚡ Your landlord or property management company
- ⚡ Your local city building official
- ⚡ The Landlord and Tenant Board,
1-888-332-3234



What to do When the power goes out

- Turn off appliances to prevent fires when the electricity is restored. This does not include your fridge
- Use flashlights or battery-operated lanterns. If you must use candles, use a secure holder and cover with a glass chimney, away from children and pets
- Portable generators should only be used outdoors and carefully located to ensure that exhaust fumes do not enter the home