

## Heating

This fact sheet has information on heating provided in Homes Tasmania properties.

### Types of heaters

Homes Tasmania makes sure there is a suitable, working heater in the main living space of Homes Tasmania properties when tenants move in. We will fix or replace this heater when it stops working due to normal use.

Homes Tasmania will decide on the size and type of heater for properties.

### Properties in gas zones

Where a property is in a natural gas zone, Homes Tasmania will install a natural gas heater.

New tenants moving into properties in gas zones will sign a tenancy agreement that includes a Gas Schedule. New tenants will need to contact a gas retailer to arrange a gas connection. We have details of gas providers for new tenants.

### All other properties

Where a property is not in a gas zone and/or we cannot install a gas heater, Homes Tasmania will install a heat pump.

When a heat pump cannot be installed, Homes Tasmania will install a direct electric heater.

Homes Tasmania will not put in additional heaters in properties except in special cases such as group homes.

Homes Tasmania will also make sure the property has the right insulation for the type of heating installed.

If you would like to check that the house you live in has the right insulation, please contact Homes Tasmania on 1300 665 663.

## Can I put in my own heater in?

You can buy and use your own heater that plugs in to a power point. These heaters are the tenant's responsibility.

You cannot install a heater that needs to be wired in by an electrician without receiving permission.

## Approval to put in a second heater

If you have been given approval to put in an additional heater in the property and you paid for it, you must fix that heater if it stops working.

When you move out, you might need to remove the heater you put in and make sure the property is returned to its original condition at your own cost.

## My heater broke. Can I choose the new type?

We have three types of heaters that we install when we need to replace one that isn't working. Homes Tasmania pays for the heater and the cost of replacing the broken heater if it has stopped working through normal use.

- If you are in a natural gas zone, a suitable gas heater is installed where possible.
- If you are not in a natural gas zone a direct electric heater or a heat pump will be installed.

Homes Tasmania makes the final decision about what heater we install.

If someone has deliberately broken the heater we provide, the tenant may have to pay some or all the cost to fix it or install a new one.

## More information about gas heaters

If a gas heater is installed, you may need to sign up with a gas retailer to get your heater working. We can give you information about this if we install a gas heater.

If your property has a gas heater and/or gas appliances, it is your responsibility to get a final reading and disconnect from your gas provider when you move out.

## What if I need a certain type of heater?

If you need a special type of heating because of your health or disability, you need to talk to us first.

We will ask you for information from a health professional that explains what heating you need and why. We don't allow letters from your GP because they usually haven't visited your home.

Not all types of heaters can be installed in all types of houses, so what you ask for may not be possible and might not be approved. We will make a final decision based all the information available.

If you are transferring to a different Homes Tasmania property and you had an approved, extra heater in your old home, we will check if you still need the extra heater and decide. We might ask you for current health information to help us decide.

Homes Tasmania does not replace electric or gas heating with a wood heater. We will not approve requests for a tenant to install a wood heater at their own cost.

## **What if my heater stops working?**

If your heater is broken and/or stops working, you need to let us know straight away.

Call Homes Tasmania on 1300 665 663.

## **Do I need to clean my heater?**

Yes, you need to clean your heater often to make sure it is free from dust.

Heat pump filters need to be cleaned once every three months.

A wood heater flue must be cleaned once a year.

A dusty or unclean heater can stop working properly and can be dangerous.

If you are unsure how to clean the heater you have, call us on 1300 665 663.

## **Wood heaters**

Homes Tasmania is removing wood heaters from Homes Tasmania properties.

This is because wood smoke is bad for the environment and can be bad for some people to breathe. Also, there are rules about wood smoke in the environment.

Many of the wood heaters in Homes Tasmania properties do not meet the required standards. We are removing these and replacing them with either an electrical or gas heater as we can. We do not replace an old wood heater with a new wood heater.

# What if I installed my own wood heater?

If you have installed heating without approval, you will need to pay the cost of removing it as well as the cost of repairing any damage caused during its removal. This could also include repairing any smoke damage to other parts of the property.

You might need to do this during your tenancy or when you move out. This may be expensive for you, so it is important you do not make any changes without approval.

## Reducing heating costs

There are many simple things that you can do:

- Stop heat leaving your house by closing the doors and windows when your heater is on. This blocks off the area you are trying to heat.
- Don't try to heat your whole house. Closing doors to rooms you are not using helps to cut down on the space you are trying to heat.
- If you have any north-facing windows, open your curtains as wide as possible during the day to let in the sunshine. Sunshine is a great free way to warm your house.
- Close curtains and blinds after the sun goes down.
- Put a draft stopper against the bottom of doors to keep any drafts out. A dry, rolled up towel works well.
- Wear warm clothes or put a rug over your knees when sitting down.
- Set the heating temperature as low as you feel comfortable during winter (around 19 or 20 degrees Celsius). Every degree increase adds around 10 per cent to your heating costs.
- Use fans on heaters only every now and again. Fan heaters use a lot of power. If you have a Pureheat heater, use the fan and radiant bars to warm up the room but then turn the fan off. Remember that the heater can be used with either one, two or three radiant bars.
- Make sure you clean any filters and heaters often. If your house is dusty, you might need to do it more often.
- Report any problems with your heater Homes Tasmania as soon as possible on 1300 665 663.

**NEVER dry clothes close to or on top of your heater.**

**This is very dangerous and can cause a fire!**

For more information visit the Tasmania Fire Service website for home heating safety tips at <https://www.fire.tas.gov.au/>