



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Awaab's Law: Guidance to support triaging of hazards



© Crown copyright, 2026

Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with the Crown.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/mhclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, use our [webform](#) or write to us at:

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

For all our latest news and updates follow us on X: <https://x.com/mhclg>

July 2026

Contents

A note on this guidance	5
Triaging	5
General points	6
Frameworks that apply to all hazards	6
 Damp and mould	 9
1. Definition	9
2. Further reading and requirements	9
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a damp and mould hazard?	9
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	10
5. Example prompt questions	10
6. Example scenarios	11
 Excess cold	 14
1. Definition	14
2. Further reading and requirements	14
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to an excess cold hazard?	15
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	15
5. Example prompt questions	16
6. Example scenarios	16
 Excess heat	 18
1. Definition	18
2. Further reading	18
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to an excess heat hazard?	18
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	19
5. Example prompt questions	19
6. Example scenarios	20
 Falls	 22
1. Definition	22
2. Further reading and requirements	22
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a falls hazard?	23
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	23
5. Example prompt questions	24
6. Example scenarios	24
 Structural collapse	 28
1. Definition	28
2. Further reading and requirements	28
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a structural collapse hazard?	28
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	29
5. Example prompt questions	29
6. Example scenarios	30

Fire and explosions	32
1. Definition	32
2. Further reading and requirements	32
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a fire hazard?	33
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	34
5. Example prompt questions	35
6. Example scenarios	35
Electrical safety	37
1. Definition	37
2. Further reading and requirements	37
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to an electrical safety hazard?	38
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	39
5. Example prompt questions	39
6. Example scenarios	39
Domestic hygiene	41
1. Definition	41
2. Further reading and requirements	41
3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a hygiene hazard?	41
4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability	43
5. Example prompt questions	43
6. Example scenarios	43

A note on this guidance

This non-statutory guidance supports the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (as amended) (Awaab's Law). It does not replace the Regulations. Landlords should continue to exercise professional judgement, with reference to relevant legislation, regulatory standards and their own internal processes, governance and oversight arrangements. This document should be read alongside the Awaab's Law [guidance for social landlords](#) to help them understand and navigate their responsibilities, which provides detail on the timeframes for repairs.

Triaging

This guidance focuses on supporting landlords to triage 'significant' and 'emergency' hazards.

The definition of 'significant' and 'emergency' hazard is subject to a 'reasonable landlord' test i.e. would a reasonable landlord make the hazard safe in 24 hours (for an emergency hazard) or 15 working days (for a significant hazard)? This is an objective test of what a notional 'reasonable landlord' would do which the courts can hold landlords to account for.

Landlords should consider the specifics of the case, including the tenants' circumstances, the severity of the hazard and the scale of works required, but they should focus on what a notional 'reasonable landlord' would do, rather than factoring in their own considerations (e.g. budget or staff availability).

Landlords will therefore need to factor in the tenants' circumstances, including the age and physical and mental health of the tenants, as well as what they know about the condition of the home and the nature of the hazard, to assess the likelihood of harm materialising and the potential severity of that harm in the specific circumstances. A tenant does not necessarily have to have a specific vulnerability for a hazard to be deemed a significant hazard: some hazards can pose a danger to anyone.

Landlords must also consider whether a reasonable landlord would be able to make the hazard safe within 15 working days or 24 hours, and should particularly consider where a reasonable landlord would use temporary measures to make a hazard safe. For example cleaning mould and providing a dehumidifier while scheduling wider works to prevent mould coming back, providing temporary heaters while fixing a boiler, or restricting access to an area that was potentially unsafe while a falls or structural collapse hazard was dealt with, would all be measures a reasonable landlord would use to make something safe if a tenant was at risk of significant harm. **To note this does not affect wider requirements under Awaab's Law, and landlords will still need to take action to stop the hazard recurring to Awaab's Law timescales once they have determined an issue is in scope.**

Some issues might only be able to be made safe through large-scale structural work, such as issues with large panel systems. As a reasonable landlord would not be able to make that safe within 15 days this would mean that they would fall out of scope of Awaab's Law. Such issues will instead need to be addressed through other mechanisms in line with relevant legislation: the safety of tenants must remain paramount.

To note this is a change from the previous version of the legislation and will come into force on 30 November (subject to parliamentary approval).

General points

Landlords should take the following points into account when reading this guidance:

- If landlords are concerned about the medical wellbeing of their tenants they should be advised to consult a medical professional or contact the NHS on 111, or 999 in emergencies.
- Landlords should factor the circumstances of tenants (and their households) into their triage process, including their existing knowledge of a tenants' circumstances.
- The prompt questions given for each hazard are intended as a guide to support conversations, rather than an exhaustive checklist, and should be read alongside questions in section 4.6 of the main guidance. Open questions are useful to allow tenants to raise issues so that landlords can satisfy themselves of the circumstances, and if tenants raise something that would put them more at risk this should be factored into the assessment even if it not specifically listed in the guidance.
- There is no requirement for landlords to obtain medical evidence or be medical experts when making a judgment. A tenant does not need to provide medical evidence of any health conditions, although landlords should take this into account if it is provided. Social landlords should generally take any reports of vulnerabilities at face value.
- There will be occasions when multiple hazards will be present at the same time, such as damp and mould and excess cold, or electrical safety and fire. Landlords should generally not worry about classifying which hazard is present and instead focus on fixing the issue.
- This guidance does not include specific thresholds e.g. on specific temperatures, the amount of damp and mould present etc. This is because landlords should use their professional judgement to assess each issue on a person-centred, case by case basis, taking into account individual circumstances, and use risk assessment tools such as the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) where relevant.

Frameworks that apply to all hazards

Awaab's Law works alongside existing legislation by introducing clear timeframes to investigate and address most serious hazards quickly. Interactions with other legislation are set out below.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HHSRS is the tool used to assess health and safety hazards in the home, including damp and mould. An HHSRS assessment will show how dangerous a particular hazard is, with hazards assessed at 'category 1' level being the most dangerous. It is based on an

assessment of a 'notional vulnerable occupant. This is different to Awaab's Law, which focuses on individual circumstances and does not require the presence of category 1 hazards.

Awaab's Law does not require an HHSRS assessment, but the [comprehensive HHSRS guidance](#) will be useful for landlords to familiarise themselves with the revised list of HHSRS hazards as preparation for the extension of Awaab's Law to more hazards. This guidance also includes photos of different types of hazards which landlords might find useful in developing their internal policies.

Housing Act 2004

Under the Housing Act 2004, local authorities must take enforcement action where Category 1 hazards are identified using HHSRS, and may take action for hazards at Category 2 level. Awaab's Law in contrast allows tenants to hold landlords to account directly, and sets fixed timelines for action.

Decent Homes Standard (DHS)

Criterion A of the Decent Homes Standard requires social homes to be free from Category 1 hazards, assessed using the HHSRS. It sets a baseline for acceptable housing conditions across the social rented sector.

From 2035, a new **DHS** will be applied. This includes:

- A criterion on thermal comfort which requires all landlords to provide:
 - A reasonable degree of thermal comfort
 - A heating system that heats the whole home and is programmable by tenants
 - That key building components, including external doors and windows, are in a reasonable state of repair.
- A new criterion requiring that a home should be free from damp and mould.

Landlords should be preparing to meet the revised DHS introduced in 2035, with Awaab's Law ensuring that immediate issues are addressed in the meantime.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)

The new MEES, which will become part of the updated DHS, requires socially rented homes to meet one of the reformed Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) metrics (fabric performance, smart readiness, or heating system) at band 'C' by 2030, followed by a second metric at band 'C' by 2039, unless a valid exemption applies.

Complying with MEES should help landlords to meet Awaab's Law requirements by lowering the risk of e.g. damp and mould or excess cold hazards. As above, Awaab's Law provides the mechanism for addressing urgent issues.

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act creates an implied term in tenancy agreements that a landlord must carry out certain repairs to the structure and exterior, as well as to

installations such as boilers, pipes and electrics. **The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018** amended the Landlord and Tenant Act, inserting a new section 9A which requires landlords to ensure properties are fit for human habitation at the start of, and throughout, a tenancy, giving tenants the right to take action where this standard is not met. Unlike Awaab's Law, sections 9A and 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act do not take occupiers' circumstances into account.

Building Safety Act 2022

This Act created the Building Safety Regulator and makes clear how higher-risk residential buildings, those that are at least 7 storeys or 18 metres high with at least 2 residential units, should be constructed, maintained and made safe. It introduces the "Gateways" in the building control approval process for HRBS: at the planning, building control approval and completion stages. It requires Principal Accountable Persons (PAPs) to assess and manage building safety risks. Landlords should ensure that they meet both building safety and Awaab's Law requirements.

Damp and mould

1. Definition

Damp is the unwanted build-up of moisture in a property. Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Damp and mould primarily affect the airways and lungs, but they can also affect the eyes and skin. Its presence and effects on physical health may lead to poor mental health. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death.

2. Further reading and requirements

Further reading

More information on dealing with damp and mould can be found below:

- [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK](#)

Other relevant requirements

The revised Decent Homes Standard includes criterion 'E' which requires all homes to be free of damp and mould. Social landlords should be preparing to meet this standard by 2035. Awaab's Law is not intended to enforce this standard: it provides a route to secure urgent action where damp and mould is creating a serious hazard in a specific situation.

While proactive improvements may be required to support compliance with standards such as the Decent Homes Standard or MEES, Awaab's Law focuses on addressing immediate risks to specific tenants rather than long-term upgrades. In the long term, achieving the Decent Homes Standard should mean fewer cases need to be dealt with under Awaab's Law.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a damp and mould hazard?

Significant hazard

When triaging damp and mould cases, we would expect a reasonable landlord to treat as a significant hazard one where the tenants occupying the property are likely to have serious health outcomes if the matter is not addressed within set timescales, including the worsening of existing conditions. This may include situations where damp and mould are adversely affecting living conditions but do not present an immediate risk.

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where the tenant is particularly vulnerable (see below) or is already experiencing symptoms associated with damp and mould exposure.

This may include situations where the condition of the property is contributing to an immediate risk to the tenant's health, for example where damp affects a child's asthma.

Out of scope

Minor or isolated mould (for example small patches on grout or sealant) would not usually be in scope if there are no wider issues and serious health outcomes are unlikely. Landlords should use their judgement to assess the specific circumstances.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

While damp and mould can be harmful to anyone if they are exposed to it over a period of time, the following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing a damp and mould hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Presence of children aged 14 or under
- Pre-existing health conditions (e.g. allergies, asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), cystic fibrosis, other lung diseases and cardiovascular disease)
- Weakened immune systems
- Mental health conditions
- Pregnancy
- Mobility issues leading to high proportion of time spent indoors.

A reasonable landlord would also consider other factors, such as:

- the extent of the damp and mould, the location of the damp/mould and how the room(s) it is present in are used
- how long the damp and mould has been present
- the ventilation in the property and the insulation of the property.

For example, damp and mould in a bedroom will be more likely to be a significant hazard than damp and mould in a hallway of a property, due to people typically spending longer periods of time in bedrooms.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested to support triage of damp and mould issues in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

Prompt questions may include:

- Where is the damp or mould located? How long has it been there, and how extensive is it?
- Is the damp or mould affecting your ability to use any rooms or facilities?
- Has the damp or mould affected anyone's health, and if it has, what has been the impact?
- Is there anything we should know about the people living in your home that might put them more at risk from damp and mould?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	There is widespread damp and mould within the property, most severe in the only bedroom. The mould is concentrated around the window and has spread behind the bed. The property is occupied by a pregnant tenant who has reported respiratory symptoms.	To assess this hazard, a reasonable landlord would consider that the tenant is particularly vulnerable given their pregnancy and would note the fact that they are experiencing symptoms suggests an immediate risk. The mould is widespread and located in a regularly used part of their home. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Emergency (Scenario 2)	A family with a young daughter report ongoing issues with damp in their home. The mould has spread throughout the home but is most severe in the child's bedroom. There is persistent condensation on the walls. Their child's asthma has been affected.	To assess this hazard a reasonable landlord would consider the fact that damp and mould was widespread throughout the home, but particularly in the bedroom where the tenants' child sleeps, meaning they will be exposed to the mould for long periods of time. As a young child whose asthma has been affected, they would be particularly vulnerable to damp and mould and are

		clearly at risk. Therefore, a reasonable landlord would categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Significant (Scenario 3)	There is significant damp and mould within the property, present throughout the home. The tenant has reported concerns about the impact on their health, although no pre-existing conditions have been identified. The property is occupied by two adults who have not reported any specific concerns that might make them more vulnerable to damp and mould.	There is a risk that ongoing exposure to damp and mould could affect the occupants' health if left unresolved, especially as it is widespread throughout the home. Unlike for scenario 2, there are no tenants who have reported specific vulnerabilities, but damp and mould can still have a detrimental impact on health over time. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as a significant hazard, but not an emergency one.
Significant (Scenario 4)	A tenant has reported damp and mould which is particularly severe in the kitchen, where it has spread across the ceiling and walls. The tenant has reported concerns about the extent of the mould and its impact on their health. They spend extended periods in the home due to mobility issues.	A reasonable landlord would take into account that the tenant spends extended periods at home due to mobility issues and therefore is likely to experience a higher level of exposure to damp and mould. Even if the mould is most severe in the kitchen rather than a bedroom as for scenario 3, the fact that it has spread across the ceiling and walls in a place where the tenant spends a lot of time suggests that there is a risk of a significant impact if left unresolved. This means a reasonable landlord would categorise it as a significant hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 5)	There is an isolated patch of damp and mould on the ceiling above the shower in the bathroom of a family home shared by two parents and their grown up child. The tenant has	The mould is minor in extent and confined to a single area, with no wider spread throughout the home. There is no evidence that it is currently posing a

	reported the issue but confirmed that no members of the household have underlying health conditions or vulnerabilities.	significant or immediate risk to health. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise it as out of scope of Awaab's Law. A reasonable landlord would look to address this issue as part of their general improvement/maintenance work.
--	--	--

Excess cold

1. Definition

This hazard relates to the extent to which a dwelling can maintain an appropriate internal temperature, taking into account factors such as heating provision, insulation, ventilation, thermal discomfort and the overall thermal performance of the building.

2. Further reading and requirements

Further reading

More information on supporting tenants and dealing with excess cold can be found below:

- UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance on staying safe in cold weather: [Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather - GOV.UK](#)
- Government guidance on Cold Weather Payments: [Cold Weather Payment: Overview - GOV.UK](#)
- The Government's Warm Homes Plan: [Warm Homes Plan \(HTML\) - GOV.UK](#)
- Government guidance on household energy: [Household energy - GOV.UK](#)
- National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) guidance on how to safely use space heaters, which might be provided as a temporary measure: <https://nfcc.org.uk/our-services/campaigns/stay-fire-safe-cost-of-living/>

Other relevant requirements

The new DHS includes a criterion which requires all landlords to provide a heating system that heats the whole home and is programmable by tenants. The DHS also includes Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards for the social rented sector which will require homes to meet one of the reformed Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) metrics (fabric performance, smart readiness, or heating system) at band 'C' by 2030, followed by a second metric by 2039, unless a valid exemption applies. More guidance on the DHS will be published in due course.

These requirements might result in larger-scale improvement works to the fabric of the building to bring a property or building up to the appropriate standard, such as upgrades to insulation. Awaab's Law is not intended to drive these improvement works. Instead, it focuses on addressing immediate risks to specific tenants that arise either before or after new standards are met. However, landlords should continue to consider whether energy efficiency measures are required to improve the overall thermal comfort of their tenant's home under MEES.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to an excess cold hazard?

Significant hazard

When triaging excess cold cases, we would expect a reasonable landlord to treat as a significant hazard one where the tenants occupying the property are likely to have serious health outcomes if the matter is not addressed within set timescales, including the worsening of existing conditions, particularly during colder periods. This may include situations where the property cannot be adequately heated or retained at a safe temperature.

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where the tenant is particularly vulnerable (see below) or is already experiencing symptoms of cold-related ill health. This may include, for example, a complete loss of heating during colder periods or where indoor temperatures pose an immediate risk to a resident.

Out of scope

Landlords should ensure that adequate and controllable heating is available, particularly in key spaces such as bedrooms and living areas, but they are not responsible for tenant's energy costs. Landlords can direct tenants to support for heating costs, for example, local authorities or charities such as National Energy Action that can help with this.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

While exposure to excess cold can be harmful to anyone, particularly where it is prolonged, the following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing an excess cold hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Age – older residents (65 or older) or children under 5 are more likely to be affected by excess cold.
- Pregnancy
- People who are undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy, and whose immune systems are weakened and therefore more at risk
- Living with a long-term health condition which makes someone more likely to spend most of their time at home, such as mobility conditions (which would also further reduce their ability to stay warm).
- Living with a long-term health condition which puts someone at higher risk of experiencing cold-related illness – for example a health condition which affects their cardiovascular, respiratory or immune system (including cancer), or mental health.

A reasonable landlord would also consider other factors, such as:

- Whether the risk is likely to be exacerbated by other circumstances (e.g. a broken boiler is likely to be a more severe issue during colder weather).
- Whether the tenant can heat any of their rooms i.e. the bedrooms and living room, or whether the whole home is affected.

Although a particular season should not define the urgency of the hazard, a reasonable landlord would take into account the weather and its impacts on the likely temperature within the home when triaging. Temperatures are typically, but not exclusively, lower during the winter months.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested as additions to support triage of excess cold hazards in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

Prompt questions may include:

- Are there any broken, insecure or faulty windows, doors or openings?
- Are your heaters / radiators / heat system working?
- How often are you using your heating system at the moment? e.g. when, how long for, the temperature of your thermostat?
- Are you able to keep your bedroom / living room warm? Are you using temporary heating methods, such as a portable heater?
- Can you identify any draughts which are making it hard to heat your home?
- Is there anything we should know about the people living in your home that might put them more at risk from excess cold?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	An elderly tenant reported that their boiler had stopped working, resulting in them being unable to heat their home in January, when outside temperatures were low.	A reasonable landlord would consider that the loss of heating would make it impossible to heat the property, which would be a more serious issue during cold periods (noting this is likely to be the case in winter, but not exclusively). The age of the tenant

		would also put them more at risk of harm. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Emergency (Scenario 2)	In February, a tenant reported that their radiators were not heating up. As a result, their home was uncomfortably cold. The tenant also explained that they have coronary heart disease and had been experiencing chest discomfort.	Recognising the health risks posed to the tenant and they had no heating throughout their home during a cold period, a reasonable landlord would categorise this as an emergency excess cold hazard. Note: the symptoms being experienced by the tenant would make this particularly urgent and medical attention might also be needed (see 'general points' above, pg. 6).
Significant (Scenario 3)	A tenant reported that the handle of their living room window was broken, making it impossible to close and allowing heat to escape from the property. The tenant, who suffers from asthma, expressed concerns that exposure to cold, damp air could worsen their respiratory condition.	A reasonable landlord would recognise the potential impact on the tenant's health, particularly given their underlying asthma. However, their symptoms were not being exacerbated and it would be possible to still heat the home to an extent. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise the issue as a significant excess cold hazard over an emergency hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 4)	A tenant reported that their heating, provided through a district heating system was not working. The landlord was not responsible for the heating system which was maintained by the freeholder of the building.	Hazards which are not the landlords' responsibility to fix are not in scope of Awaab's Law, so this would not be categorised as in scope. The landlord should raise the issue with the freeholder to secure action.

Excess heat

1. Definition

This hazard covers threats to health arising from excessively high indoor air temperatures. This may include where the resident cannot cool the home or seek relief due to a defect in the dwelling. It relates to the extent to which it is possible for residents to manage heat in their home, and to cool the home (for example with ventilation or shading).

2. Further reading

More information on managing temperature-related health risks, including practical measures to prevent harm from excess heat and improve thermal conditions in homes, can be found below:

- UKHSA guidance: [Beat the heat: staying safe in hot weather - GOV.UK](#)
- Government Warm Homes Plan: [Warm Homes Plan \(HTML\) - GOV.UK](#)

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to an excess heat hazard?

Significant hazard

When triaging excess heat cases, we would expect a reasonable landlord to treat a significant hazard as one where the tenants occupying the property are likely to have serious health outcomes if the matter is not addressed within set timescales, including the worsening of existing conditions. This may include situations where indoor temperatures are high enough to pose a risk to health because of mechanical or other defects.

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where the tenant is particularly vulnerable (for example, falling into one of the heat-vulnerable groups identified in UKHSA guidance linked above) or is experiencing serious heat-related health impacts.

Out of scope

Awaab's Law does not apply to overheating which is due solely to outside temperatures being particularly high. As such, wider climate adaption work such as installing new insulation or fitting shutters across a whole building or block of flats would not be in scope of Awaab's Law, but landlords should consider these measures as part of their strategies on climate adaptation, and to meet the Decent Homes Standard, which requires homes to be free from excess heat hazards at the most dangerous 'category 1' level.

However, if there is also a defect in the home that exacerbates the effects of the particularly high outside temperatures (e.g. a broken window preventing the home from being ventilated) Awaab's Law may be applicable and the considerations above apply.

What else can social landlords do to support their residents?

- [Heatstroke](#) is a medical emergency. Residents should be encouraged to contact medical professionals if they are experiencing serious impacts on their health as a result of conditions in their home.

If residents are experiencing significant signs of heat stress, especially where it results in the worsening of any pre-existing conditions, they should consult a medical professional or contact the NHS on 111, or 999 in emergencies.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

Exposure to excess heat can be harmful to anyone, particularly where it is prolonged. Some people may be slower to recognise the impact of heat on their health, or find it more challenging to seek relief. The following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing an excess heat hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Older people aged 65 years and over (note change from previous guidance of 75 years of age and above)
- Babies and children aged 5 years and under
- People who are already ill and dehydrated (for example from diarrhoea and vomiting)
- People taking certain medications
- People who experience drug and alcohol dependence
- People with underlying health conditions particularly heart problems, breathing problems, dementia, diabetes, kidney disease, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, neurological disorders (i.e. Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease), or mobility problems
- Pregnancy
- For further information on factors increasing vulnerability and additional considerations, see the UKHSA guidance ([Beat the heat: staying safe in hot weather - GOV.UK](#))

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are intended as a guide to support your assessment. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations. Prompt questions may include:

- Have you recently been unwell (for example with vomiting, diarrhoea, or dehydration)?

- Do you or anyone in your household fall into a group that may be more affected by heat—for example older age, young children, pregnancy, long-term health conditions or anything else that might make you more worried?
- Has the heat made any existing health conditions worse, (such as breathing difficulties, heart problems, or other medical issues)?
- Are you able to manage the heat in your home and can take measures to seek relief?
- Are there any issues with the property—such as windows that do not open or lack of shading—that make this harder?
- Is there anything else we should be aware of that might make it harder for you to manage the impact of heat?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	The resident lives on the second floor of a low-rise building. In the main living area a broken window lock has prevented the window from being opened. This has restricted ventilation and led to a build-up of heat inside the flat. The property is occupied by an elderly tenant with reduced mobility and a long-term health condition, who spends extended periods inside the home and has reported feeling faint.	A reasonable landlord would consider the high risk to the tenant's health, as the lack of ventilation during hot weather could lead to dangerously elevated indoor temperatures. Given the tenant's age, reduced mobility and health condition, they will be more vulnerable to the effects of excess heat. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard. Note: the symptoms being experienced by the tenant would make this particularly urgent and medical attention might also be needed (see 'general points' above, pg. 6).
Significant (Scenario 2)	There is excessive heat within the property, caused by a fault in the communal district heating system owned by the landlord which cannot be switched off. This has led to persistently high indoor	A reasonable landlord would consider the risk that prolonged exposure to high temperatures could negatively affect the tenant's health, particularly given their asthma. A reasonable landlord

	temperatures. The property is occupied by a tenant with asthma.	would therefore categorise this as a significant hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 3)	There is excessive heat within the property during a period of hot weather, leading to high indoor temperatures. The property is occupied by a healthy young couple with no known vulnerabilities. The tenants are able to manage the heat to some extent by using blinds and curtains to reduce direct sunlight, keeping windows closed during the hottest parts of the day and open in the mornings and evenings, using a fan to improve air circulation throughout the day.	There is elevated heat within the property during a period of hot weather, but this is consistent with external conditions and not caused by a defect. There is no evidence of an immediate serious risk to health. A reasonable landlord would therefore consider that this hazard would not be in scope of Awaab's Law. While the tenants are able to manage the heat to some extent, the landlord should separately consider what adaptation measures are needed to future proof their homes against increasing temperatures.

Falls

1. Definition

Awaab's Law includes all types of falls hazard. These are defined in the HHSRS as falls on the level, falls on stairs, and falls between levels. These definitions are intended to cover all potential falls, and are set out below to support landlords who wish to use the HHSRS guidance to support their assessment.

Falls on the level covers:

- falls on any level surfaces such as floors, yards, paths and gardens, including falls associated with baths, showers or similar facilities.
- falls involving small changes in level of up to 300mm, such as door thresholds, single steps and slight slopes.

Falling on stairs covers:

- any fall associated with stairs, steps and sloping surfaces or ramps where the change in level is greater than 300mm, including internal and external stairs, steps and ramps, including shared access routes and fire escapes.
- sloping sections of gardens and falls over guarding (such as balustrading) associated with stairs, steps and ramps.

Falling between levels covers:

- falls from one level to another where the change in height is more than 300mm. This may occur inside or outside the dwelling, including falls from landings, windows, balconies, basement wells and garden retaining walls.

2. Further reading and requirements

Further reading

More information and supporting guidance on managing fall-related risks in the home, including practical measures to reduce the likelihood of falls and associated harm, can be found below:

- ROSPA toolkit for social landlords: <https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/falls-prevention/professional-falls-advice/falls-and-their-impact-on-social-housing>
- Some tenants may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant: [Disabled Facilities Grants: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Other relevant requirements

Awaab's Law is not intended as a replacement for longer term adaptations that might require an occupational therapy assessment. In situations where there is a deficiency in the property causing an emergency or a significant hazard landlords should take action under Awaab's Law to remove the hazard, with temporary measures if necessary as a starting point. They may need to install more permanent adaptations in the longer term working with occupational therapy.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a falls hazard?

Significant hazard

When triaging falls hazard cases, we would expect a reasonable landlord to treat as a significant hazard one where falls are likely to occur due to the condition of the property (bearing in mind the vulnerabilities of the tenant), so where there is a risk of serious harm if the matter is not addressed within set timescales.

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where a fall is very likely and has the potential to cause serious harm if the matter is not resolved within set timescales, particularly where the tenant is vulnerable (see below).

Out of scope

A reasonable landlord would not address trips and slips arising from everyday activities to Awaab's Law timescales, where these are not exacerbated by defects or deficiencies in the building.

The following are also out of scope:

- Falls resulting from occupiers using ladders, steps or furniture inappropriately.
- Fall resulting from work that tenants have done themselves, such as landscaping in the garden, if that work was done in breach of contract.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

While anyone can be at risk from falls, the following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing a falls hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- For falls on the level and on stairs, those over 60 are most likely to suffer severe harm, due to higher risk of osteoporosis.
- For falls between levels, children under the age of 5 are the most vulnerable group.
- In all cases, some factors might make someone more likely to fall, such as mobility issues, including conditions that impact balance, or other medical conditions or sensory impairments.

- In all cases, other relevant conditions, such as osteoporosis or brittle bones would worsen the impact of a fall, and should be taken into account.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested as additions to support triage of falls issues in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

- Is there an immediate risk of someone falling?
- What would be the consequences of falling? Is it a very high drop, is there anything that makes it more dangerous such as a very hard surface, spiked railings etc. at the bottom?
- Are there any young children or people over 60 in the home?
- Are there people with mobility issues or relevant medical conditions in the property?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	Falls on the level A tenant has raised concerns about the main entrance to their flat. There is a very poorly lit approach to the main entrance across uneven, mossy, stone slabs, surrounded by spiked metal railings and a spiked metal front gate. Water pools in and around the stone slabs making them slippery. The tenant of the property is 75.	In assessing this hazard, a reasonable landlord would consider that the likelihood of a fall was very high, given that the lighting is poor, slabs are slippery and the tenant needs to use the pathway regularly so cannot avoid the hazard. The fact that the tenant is in the vulnerable group, coupled with the potential to fall on metal railings means that the outcome of a fall would likely cause serious harm. It would therefore be reasonable to address in 24 hours, making this an emergency hazard.
Significant (Scenario 2)	Falls on the level The property has a raised concrete patio across the rear of the house with flagstones below.	A reasonable landlord would assess the fact that children, occupy the property and are very likely to use the patio and come to

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
	There is an 860mm drop from the patio to the flagstones below, with no guard rail or barrier. When viewed from the house the change in level between the patio and flagstones below is not apparent. The tenant has three young children below the age of five.	harm. The drop is not easily visible and the presence of hard surfaces increases the likelihood of serious injury if a fall occurs. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as a significant hazard.
Emergency (Scenario 3)	Falling on stairs An 80 year old tenant reports that the handrail on the internal staircase in their home is broken and they are concerned about falling. The stairs are steep and there is no natural lighting at the top. The only bathroom in the home is upstairs.	A reasonable landlord would consider the fact that the stairs need to be used regularly, and the fact that they are particularly steep with poor lighting at the top means the likelihood of a fall is extremely high. The fact that the tenant is in a vulnerable group and that the impact of a fall on stairs would be serious would lead a reasonable landlord to categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Significant (Scenario 4)	Falling on stairs The two-storey property has one flight of stairs. The stairs are not steep and have a handrail but one stair tread in the middle of the flight is cracked and uneven. There is no direct natural lighting and no stair covering. The house is occupied by a family of five, three of whom are young children.	A reasonable landlord would take into account the fact that there are young children in the property and a fall could cause serious harm, but there are handrails and the staircase is otherwise in good repair. A fall causing serious harm is therefore not imminent and a reasonable landlord would categorise this as a significant hazard rather than an emergency.
Emergency (Scenario 5)	Falling between levels The tenant reported that a window in their high-rise flat is broken, and they were not able to securely close and lock it. The tenant has a baby and one young child living in the property and they were worried about the risk of a fall.	In this scenario, a reasonable landlord would assess the potential for a fall and the likely impact as having potentially fatal impact given the fact that the window is in a high rise flat and there are young children living in the flat. A reasonable would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 6)	Falling between levels A tenant reported that the railings on the edge of an external communal walkway have come loose. The walkway is on the third floor and in an area with high footfall.	In this scenario, a reasonable landlord would consider the likelihood of a potential fall to be high, given that the area is in regular use, and the high likelihood of potentially fatal impacts from a fall from the third floor. They would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Significant (Scenario 7)	Falling between levels The landing at the top of the stairs has a 'ranch-style' banister and rail, consisting of three horizontal planks spanning between the top newel post and end post, with gaps of over 200mm in between. It is not held in place properly, moving when shaken. The property is occupied by a couple in their 20s.	A reasonable landlord might consider that adults are aware of the need to be careful, making a fall less likely than if, for example, there were children living at the property. However, if a fall were to happen it has the potential to cause significant harm. A reasonable landlord would therefore treat it as a significant hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 8)	Falls on the level A downpipe discharges water to the path running from the back door to the garden shed. Tenants must use this path in order to access the bins and recycling boxes. The tenant is concerned that if the water freezes they risk slipping on the ice.	A reasonable landlord would consider that a fall would not currently be likely, unless freezing weather was forecast, so this would not be in scope of Awaab's Law. A landlord might log this to be addressed through their routine repairs and maintenance process, to be addressed before the winter months.
Out of scope (Scenario 9)	Falls on the level A tenant reports a loose paving stone in the patio area of their garden. They are in their 30s and do not report any health concerns.	A reasonable landlord would consider that the likelihood of a fall was low if the area could be avoided, and given the tenant did not report any potential vulnerabilities. A reasonable landlord would look to address this issue as

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
		part of their general improvement/maintenance work.

Structural collapse

1. Definition

This hazard covers threats to health arising from the structural failure or collapse of all or part of a dwelling. It relates to the extent to which the building can safely maintain its structural integrity, taking into account the condition of the building fabric and structural elements. This includes the risk of components becoming displaced or falling, both internally and externally.

2. Further reading and requirements

Further reading

More information on building safety can be found below:

- Building Safety Campaign: [Your Home, Your Safety - Making Buildings Safer](#)

Other relevant requirements

The Building Safety Act 2022 applies to higher-risk residential buildings, those of at least 7 storeys or 18 metres high with at least 2 residential units. It introduces “Gateways” in the building control approval process for HRBs at the planning, building control approval and completion stages. It requires Principal Accountable Persons to assess and manage building safety risks in existing buildings.

The Building Act 1984 provides local authorities with powers to deal with dangerous buildings or structures. Section 77 provides a non-urgent legal process to secure a court order mandating repairs or demolition. Section 78 grants immediate emergency powers to fence off, make safe, or demolish structures posing an imminent threat.

In some cases, cracks in internal walls could indicate issues with fire compartmentation, which would need to be addressed by the building’s responsible person, in line with the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022. If following triage this is identified, the landlord should notify the responsible person of this issue, or take appropriate action if they are the responsible person.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a structural collapse hazard?

Significant hazard

When triaging structural collapse cases, a reasonable landlord would treat as a significant hazard one where there is no imminent danger, but there is the potential for serious harm. This may include failures of building fabric, fixtures or external elements which could fall or give way, such as parapets and chimneys.

Examples may include:

- Collapse of large sections of ceiling plasterwork which could fall onto a resident
- Poorly affixed fixtures, fittings or internal finishes that are the landlord's responsibility
- Improperly designed or constructed boundary or retaining walls
- Rotten floors or damaged balconies at risk of collapse while in use

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where structural failure or risk of structural failure poses imminent danger.

Examples may include:

- Large cracks that have appeared suddenly or are rapidly worsening, for instance due to water ingress
- Cracking in ceilings, sagging plasterboard ceilings or walls indicating structural instability
- External features showing instability, such as leaning walls or displaced building elements e.g. roof tiles, chimney, brickwork.

Out of scope

Where the structural issue arises from the fact that the building is constructed from materials or methods with known inherent weaknesses (such as Large Panel System buildings) a reasonable landlord would not make this safe within 15 days as structural risks often require detailed investigation and specialist advice, over longer periods of time. While such issues would still require assessment and possible remediation, they would fall outside the timescales envisaged by Awaab's Law.

Minor or superficial defects (such as superficial cracking in render) would not be in scope where there is no immediate or likely risk of structural collapse, although landlords will want to monitor cracks to see if they get worse.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

Structural collapse hazards can pose a serious risk to anyone and may result in significant injury. However, landlords might want to particularly consider young children who are at more risk from injury, for example from a collapsing garden wall due to their smaller size and the fact that they are more likely to go near dangerous structures, as well as those with limited mobility.

A reasonable landlord would also consider the specific circumstances, for example an assessment of the size of any fixtures at risk of falling, the potential outcomes of a collapse, and how busy the surrounding area is.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested as additions to support triage of structural collapse issues in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

Prompt questions may include:

- When did you first notice the issue?
- Is it getting worse?
- Where is the problem? Is it in an area that [lots of] people use frequently?
- Is there anyone you are concerned would be particularly at risk if something collapsed / fell?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	There is a leak from the bath and water pipes under the bathroom floorboards in a multi-storey house. This has resulted in damage to the bathroom floorboards and the kitchen ceiling below. The ceiling joists are rotten and the bath has sunk into the floor. The property is occupied by a family of five, three of whom are teenagers.	A reasonable landlord would consider that the risk of collapse was high, especially taking into account the weight of a bath. Due to the size of the family, the kitchen below would be very likely to be occupied if a collapse happened, resulting in serious injury. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Emergency (Scenario 2)	The tenant is concerned that their balcony is not safe. Cracks have appeared where the balcony meets the building and they have reported concerns that it will collapse.	A reasonable landlord would consider that if a balcony collapsed, on any floor above ground floor, the chance of serious injury would be high. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Significant (Scenario 3)	There are multiple slipped tiles on the roof caused by rust to the nails holding them in place. The gutter is loose and appears unstable. Immediately below the roof is a terrace at first floor level and the front door at ground level.	A reasonable landlord would consider that there is a risk of tiles falling and other collapse. In most cases they will fall away from areas where people are likely to be, but there is a chance they could fall over the front door or on the terrace. A roof tile hitting someone could cause serious injury. A reasonable

		landlord would be likely to categorise this as a significant hazard. If there was for example a chimney pot that was also loose a reasonable landlord may categorise this an emergency hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 4)	At the back of a house, a couple in their 30s have reported a low fence, which the landlord is responsible for as it is in a communal area, is rotten and is at possible risk of collapse and will need to be replaced.	A reasonable landlord would consider that the risk of the fence collapsing causing harm is low. While the fence will need to be replaced to secure the property a reasonable landlord would not remedy this within 15 working days.

Fire and explosions

1. Definition

This hazard covers threats to health from exposure to uncontrolled fire, smoke and fumes within a dwelling. It relates to the risk of harm from heat, hot gases and explosions, including those caused by combustion or the failure of systems such as boilers. This includes the risk of injury from blast effects, flying debris, and the partial or total collapse of a structure resulting from fire or explosion.

Fire hazards may overlap with electrical or other hazards or present similarly. Landlords should take a common-sense approach and prioritise making the hazard safe, regardless of how it has been initially assessed.

2. Further reading and requirements

More information on managing fire-related risks in the home, including practical measures to reduce the likelihood of fire and explosion related incidents, can be found below

- An overview of guidance for those who have a legal duty for fire safety in a relevant building, including guidance on the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005): [Fire safety: guidance for those with legal duties - GOV.UK](#)
- [Fire safety: Approved Document B - GOV.UK](#)
- [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022 - GOV.UK](#)
- [Guidance on Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans \(Residential PEEPs\): Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans \(Residential PEEPs\) - GOV.UK](#)
- Health and Safety Executive guidance on gas safety regulations: [Approved Code of Practice and guidance](#), and [Landlords - HSE](#)

Relevant requirements

Under the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005 \(FSO\)](#), Responsible Persons (usually the landlord, owner or managing agent) are expected to manage fire risk **in communal areas of buildings** through an ongoing, risk-based process. This includes carrying out and regularly reviewing a fire risk assessment, identifying hazards, putting appropriate fire safety measures in place (such as smoke detector/fire alarms, fire doors, emergency lighting and clear escape routes), and ensuring these measures are regularly maintained and reviewed. Each local fire and rescue authority enforces the FSO in its area, inspecting premises to ensure Responsible Persons are compliant with the requirements of the FSO. Authorities can take informal or formal enforcement action where they identify non-compliance, which will be proportionate and risk-based. Where the authority finds a serious risk that is not being adequately managed it can issue an enforcement notice to say what improvements are needed and by when, being no less

than 28 days. Where a risk is deemed so serious that access to a premises needs to be prohibited, the authority may serve a prohibition notice with immediate effect.

Under Awaab's Law, landlords are expected to identify, investigate, and make safe fire hazards **within individual flats and homes** within clear, fixed timeframes. It does not apply to fire hazards in the common parts in buildings containing two or more domestic premises (i.e. blocks of flats), including for example damaged or missing fire doors or compartmentation issues (unless they are within the flat). Instead, tenants should report fire safety concerns in common parts, such as blocked exit routes, to the Responsible Person for the building. Where concerns are not addressed, they can raise them with the local Fire and Rescue Authority. Fire and Rescue Authorities have powers under the Fire Safety Order to investigate and take enforcement action where appropriate.

Fire hazards in common parts may also fall within the scope of the Housing Act 2004 and can be enforced by local authorities. In addition, tenants may have recourse through the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 where conditions render their home unfit for habitation.

Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (RPEEPs) are required in high rise residential buildings (i.e. at least seven storeys or 18 metres), and 11-18m buildings with a simultaneous evacuation strategy in place. They are managed by the landlord through an ongoing process which centres on a conversation between the landlord and the resident about what would work best to reduce their fire risk, and proportionate, practical mitigations, and fall under the FSO, so that the enforcement regime noted above applies. RPEEPs are not 'required works' under Awaab's Law so landlords are not required to put them in place to Awaab's Law timeframes. However, landlords should continue to assess hazards based on specific circumstances, including taking into account disabilities, and take action if there is a serious or emergency hazard.

The **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations** require landlords to ensure at least one smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of homes where there is a room used as living accommodation. Local authorities have enforcement powers through remedial notices, and Awaab's Law can be used to secure more urgent action where alarms are missing or broken.

Under the [Gas Safety \(Installation and Use\) Regulations](#), landlords must ensure gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition, an annual safety check is carried out on each appliance / flue, and a record of the latest safety check is given to tenants.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a fire hazard?

Significant hazard

We would expect most hazards reported under Awaab's Law to be emergency hazards given the serious consequences of issues that are likely to be reported i.e. broken or missing smoke alarms, gas leaks or potential explosions. There are limited circumstances where a reasonable landlord would treat a fire hazard as a significant hazard, rather than an emergency.

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where there is a serious and immediate risk due to fire safety failures, noting that they might need to rely on temporary measures if necessary.

Examples may include:

- Defective, absent or failing fire detection or alarm systems within the home
- Sub-optimal, inaccessible escape routes or exits due to defects
- Uncontrolled ignition sources e.g. open flames, electrical sparks from light switches and electrical sockets, overloaded plugged-in appliances (please see NFCC guidance for further examples).

The risk of a gas explosion would always be an emergency hazard under Awaab's Law and would require immediate action. If tenants or anyone else smell gas, the National Gas Helpline should be contacted immediately: [Emergency Contacts | National Gas](#)

Out of scope

A reasonable landlord would consider previous fire risk assessments when determining what is in scope of Awaab's Law. For example, if the current fire risk assessment said that a fire suppression system (i.e. sprinklers) was not required, the fact that such a system is not present would not be a hazard under Awaab's Law. However, Awaab's Law would apply where systems that are required are absent or not working, and landlords may choose to install sprinkler systems as a way of dealing with other fire hazards.

Awaab's Law only applies to hazards that arise from deficiencies in buildings or land for which the landlord is responsible. Awaab's Law does not apply to fire risks caused mainly by a breach of contract by the tenant, unless the tenant's breach has caused a deficiency in the building or land that poses a risk to social tenants of other homes provided by the same landlord e.g. damaged compartmentation within a flat. Awaab's Law also does not apply to hazards caused by things that are not deficiencies in a building or land (for example storage of e-scooters).

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

While fire and explosion hazards can pose a serious risk to anyone and may result in significant injury, the following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing a fire and explosion hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Residents with limited mobility and others who may find it difficult to evacuate
- Residents with certain neurodivergent conditions, learning difficulties and/or sensory impairments

- Those over 60 may be at greater risk due to reduced ability to identify a fire or evacuate and seek safety.

Landlords should also consider the extent to which a fire would pose a serious risk to life to other residents in a building (e.g., residents of other apartments in a block of flats), who may themselves have increased vulnerabilities.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested as additions to support triage of fire hazards in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

Prompt questions may include:

- How long has the fire risk been present? Did it arise suddenly or over time?
- Is the risk getting worse?
- Where is the risk located?
- Do you have any concerns about yourself or anyone else evacuating if there was a fire?

Tenants may not be fully aware of compounding factors that can increase fire safety risk. Landlords should consider what advice it might be appropriate to provide.

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	A routine inspection finds that there is no functioning smoke alarm within the flat, meaning that in the event of a fire there would be no early warning system to alert the occupants of the property and neighbouring properties. The flat is occupied by a couple with two young children.	The absence of a smoke alarm significantly increases the risk to life, as residents would have little or no warning in the event of a fire, particularly at night. Given the presence of young children, who may be less able to respond quickly, the likelihood of harm was high, but this would likely be an emergency hazard regardless of the tenant's situation. A reasonable landlord would

		therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Emergency (Scenario 2)	There is a suspected gas leak within the property, which has been identified, but not contained. This creates a risk of gas build-up and potential explosion, particularly where appliances are in use or the property is enclosed. This means that in the event of ignition there may be a risk of serious harm to the occupants.	There is a risk that gas could accumulate within the property without being detected, particularly in enclosed spaces or where appliances are in use. If ignited, this could lead to a sudden explosion, causing serious harm to the tenant and others in the vicinity. This means it presents an immediate and severe risk, and a reasonable landlord would categorise this as an emergency hazard. It should be dealt with immediately, and the National Gas Helpline should be contacted immediately.
Emergency (Scenario 3)	The property has a hot water cylinder in the loft, immediately above a child's bedroom. It is not insulated in any way, with no jacket, and has no tank thermostat.	There is a risk the cylinder could explode due to the lack of control over the upper temperature the water can get to. If it does explode the child in the bed below is at risk of scalding. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.

Electrical safety

1. Definition

This hazard covers threats to health from exposure to unsafe electrical installations and equipment within a dwelling.

It includes the risk of harm from electric shocks, burns and other injuries resulting from defects, deterioration, damage or inadequate maintenance in electrical installations, wiring systems, accessories and fixed electrical equipment. The hazard also includes risks arising from defective socket-outlets, switches, consumer units, light fittings and other electrical accessories that may expose the occupants to danger.

Electrical hazards may overlap with fire and other hazards or present similarly. Landlords should take a common-sense approach and prioritise making the hazard safe, regardless of how it has been initially assessed.

2. Further reading and requirements

Further reading

More information on managing electrical safety risks in the home, including practical measures to reduce the likelihood of electrical faults and associated harm, can be found below:

- Electrical Safety Regulations guidance: [Electrical safety standards in the private and social rented sectors](#)
- Electrical Safety First best practice guide for landlords: [Landlords' guide \(England and Wales\)](#)

Other relevant requirements

The **Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020** require all landlords to have the electrical installations in their properties inspected and tested by a qualified person at least every 5 years.

The electrical safety regulations set out specific routes for the enforcement of these requirements. Inspections under the electrical safety regulations may also identify issues which could fall within the scope of Awaab's Law. As Awaab's Law takes into account the specific occupier of the property, timelines to carry out works may be shorter than those set out in the electrical safety regulations. In these cases, landlords should follow the shorter timeline.

Issues may arise between inspections even if the installation has been considered safe. In these cases, Awaab's Law repair timelines will apply.

Investigations should be carried out by someone who, in the reasonable opinion of the social landlord, has the necessary skills, qualifications (where applicable) and experience. For electrical hazards this would likely be a qualified electrician.

If an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) has taken place, electricians will use the following classification codes. These can support triage under Awaab's Law:

- Code 1 (C1): Danger present. Risk of injury. Immediate remedial action is required. It will lead to an Unsatisfactory outcome on an EICR.
- Code 2 (C2): Potentially dangerous. Urgent remedial action is required. It will lead to an Unsatisfactory outcome on an EICR.
- Code 3 (C3): Improvement is recommended. The installation is still be considered satisfactory condition. It will lead to a Satisfactory outcome on an EICR.
- Further Investigation (FI): Further investigation is advised. It will leave to a Satisfactory outcome on an EICR.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to an electrical safety hazard?

Significant hazard

Significant hazards are those that do not pose an imminent danger but there is the potential for serious harm. This could include deteriorated electrical installations that require remedial work, and issues such as defects or deficiencies that do not present an immediate risk but may become dangerous if left unaddressed.

Emergency hazard

Emergency hazards are those where there is an imminent risk of injury from electricity. Examples could include:

- The presence of exposed live parts, damaged socket-outlets, or defective electrical equipment that could result in electric shock or burns and/or create a fire hazard.
- Situations where there is a clear and immediate risk of electric shock, meaning many electrical hazards are likely to be emergencies and may require urgent action.
- Electrical hazards in locations readily accessible to children or other vulnerable occupants where immediate danger could occur.

Out of scope

Risks from electrical appliances that are not part of the building are not in scope of Awaab's Law. Nonetheless, electrical appliances, in particular those containing lithium-ion batteries, can be a fire risk and should be managed appropriately.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

Electrical safety hazards can result in serious injury and may affect any occupant. However, the following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing an electrical hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Some individuals may be more vulnerable to harm or less able to recognise and avoid electrical dangers. For example, children, particularly those under five years of age, may be more likely to touch electrical equipment without understanding the risks. This would also apply to individuals of any age with learning disabilities, some neurodivergent conditions or dementia.
- During pregnancy electric shock may present additional risks to both the individual and the unborn child.
- Tenants who rely on medical equipment that needs charging, such as a CPAP machine or an electric wheelchair.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested as additions to support triage of electrical issues in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

Prompt questions may include:

- Is there an immediate risk of a person coming into contact with an exposed live part?
- Have any of the switches in the consumer unit ('fuse board') tripped? Has electricity stopped working in all or part of the home?
- Are there young children, anyone relying on medical equipment or anyone who is pregnant in the home, or anyone you are particularly worried about?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident. These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	The tenant reports a damaged socket-outlet, with accessible live conductors visible. They have two children, one of whom is under five years of age.	A reasonable landlord would consider the immediate risk of electric shock arising from accessible live conductors, and the fact that the presence of young children increases the likelihood of contact with the

		hazardous part. Electric shock from exposed live conductors can result in serious injury or death. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard requiring immediate action.
Significant (Scenario 2)	Following an inspection, carried out in line with the requirements under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020, the tenant has been provided with the Electrical Installation Condition Report and has raised concerns. It sets out several C3 classification codes, where remedial work is not required. However, the tenant is pregnant and has a 2-year-old child. In particular, they are worried that there is no surge protection device, which is not immediately dangerous but which the electrician strongly recommended is remedied. In addition, the consumer unit is of the older type, lacking modern safety features.	A reasonable landlord would consider that there are multiple areas where improvement is recommended to the system and the vulnerability of two of the occupants of the property. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as a significant hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 3)	An EICR identifies that a consumer unit does not meet the latest edition of BS 7671 and records a Code C3 observation recommending improvement. The consumer unit shows no signs of damage, overheating or deterioration, and the electrical installation is otherwise assessed as satisfactory.	The C3 classification code indicates that improvement is recommended but does not require remedial work to be taken for the installation to be considered satisfactory. A reasonable landlord would look to address this issue as part of their general improvement/maintenance work.

Domestic hygiene

1. Definition

This hazard covers threats to health arising from conditions that prevent a dwelling from being kept clean and hygienic. It relates to the risk of harm from poor design, layout or construction, pest infestation, and inadequate provision for waste storage and disposal. This includes the risk of infection from unsuitable facilities for food preparation, personal and clothes washing, and sanitation and drainage, as well as potential impacts on mental health.

2. Further reading and requirements

Further reading

More information on managing hygiene hazards can be found below:

- British Pest Control Association cost of best practice on pest surveys:
[BPCA Code of Best Practice for Surveys V2 August 2020.pdf](#)

Other relevant requirements

The **Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949** means landlords must keep land and buildings free from rats and mice, so far as practicable and avoid conditions that may attract or harbour pests, such as poor waste management or structural defects.

The **Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984** means landlords must avoid conditions in their properties that could give rise to a risk to public health, including accumulation of refuse or filth and poor sanitation or drainage and conditions that may facilitate the spread of disease.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Statutory Nuisance) means landlords must ensure that properties do not give rise to statutory nuisance, including conditions such as accumulation of refuse or filth; pest infestations; damp, mould, or emissions prejudicial to health and defective drainage or sanitation.

3. How would a reasonable landlord respond to a hygiene hazard?

Significant hazard

When triaging domestic hygiene, sanitation and pest cases, a reasonable landlord would treat as a significant hazard one where the tenants occupying the property are likely to have serious health outcomes if the matter is not addressed within set timescales, including the worsening of existing conditions. This includes situations where disrepair, poor design, or management failures prevent the property from being kept clean or free from pests.

Examples may include:

- Ongoing pest presence linked to building defects or inadequate refuse storage which poses a threat to health
- Inadequate or unreliable toilet or washing facilities
- Drainage issues (such as persistent blockages, slow drainage, or leaks) that prevent effective cleaning and increase the likelihood of illness
- Poorly maintained shared facilities, such as shared bathrooms or kitchens

Emergency hazard

An emergency hazard would be one where conditions pose an immediate and serious risk to health, including unavailable essential sanitation facilities.

Examples may include:

- Serious pest infestation which poses an immediate threat to health
- Escape of raw sewage
- Failure of drainage, soil pipes, or sanitation systems
- Loss of usable toilet or washing facilities
- Disrepair to food preparation areas meaning they cannot be cleaned effectively

Out of scope

Hazards not related to deficiencies in the property, such as general clutter or untidiness where there is no associated build-up of rubbish, pests, odours, or contamination would not be considered an Awaab's Law hazard (but landlords should consider the guidance referenced above if relevant).

Pest hazards may require both preventative measures to reduce routes of entry and action to address the conditions that allow infestations to persist. Landlords remain responsible for maintaining the property and carrying out appropriate repairs. Effective resolution may also require support or engagement with residents to identify practical steps that support a safe and healthy home.

In all circumstances it is important that landlords prioritise action to keep residents safe, rather than looking to apportion blame.

4. Circumstances increasing vulnerability

While anyone can be at risk from hygiene hazards, the following circumstances are examples of what should be considered when assessing a hygiene hazard. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Adults aged 65+
- Babies and children under 5
- People with reduced mobility
- People with long term health conditions: respiratory, gastrointestinal, skin, chronic illness, compromised immune system or cognitive impairment
- People with mental health conditions, which may include depression, anxiety, or phobias.

Landlords should also consider the specific circumstances – such as the location or a hygiene hazard (e.g. in the kitchen or bathroom) or the extent of a pest infestation. Pest infestations and other hazards affecting a food preparation area might be particularly urgent and more likely to be an emergency hazard.

5. Example prompt questions

The following questions are suggested as additions to support triage of hygiene issues in particular. They are not mandatory, nor do they represent the only way to comply with the requirements set out in these regulations.

Prompt questions may include:

- Are you able to use basic facilities in your home, such as the toilet, washing, and food preparation areas?
- What, if any, signs of contamination have you noticed (for example sewage, droppings, or gnawing)?
- How are you currently managing things like rubbish and waste while repairs are being arranged?
- Are there any health conditions, ages, or support needs in your household that could be affected by this?
- Is there any impact beyond your home, such as in shared or communal areas?

6. Example scenarios

The following examples illustrate situations that could amount to significant or emergency hazards, taking into account both the condition of the property and the individual resident.

These are for guidance only and do not replace an assessment of risk in each individual case.

Categorisation	Scenario	Reasoning
Emergency (Scenario 1)	A tenant contacted the landlord to report that foul water was leaking from the soil stack at the rear of the property and had begun entering the ground-floor bathroom.	Based on the initial report, a reasonable landlord would consider the immediate exposure to sewage, and the risk of gastrointestinal disease. This would likely be the case regardless of who was living at the property. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Emergency (Scenario 2)	A tenant with young children in a maisonette reported numerous sightings of live rats in the kitchen, including droppings in cupboards and gnawed food packaging. They had seen rats were entering the building through a hole in the wall.	A reasonable landlord would consider the risk to the tenant and their young children from rats actively contaminating food storage and preparation areas. A reasonable landlord would categorise this as an emergency hazard.
Significant (Scenario 3)	A tenant living on their own reported mice in their home, in the living areas. The presence of mice was causing significant distress, impacting their mental health, making it difficult for them to relax, sleep or feel safe in their home.	A reasonable landlord would assess that the presence of mice in the home in the living area, created a significant hygiene risk due to the likelihood of contamination from droppings, urine, and contact with surfaces. A reasonable landlord would also consider the impact on the tenant's mental health, which affected their ability to safely use and feel secure in their home. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise as a significant hazard.
Significant (Scenario 4)	An older tenant with mobility issues reported that their boiler had broken down during the summer months, leaving the property without any hot water. While there was no immediate impact on space heating, the loss of hot water affected washing, cleaning, and basic hygiene within the home given their shower is not electric.	A reasonable landlord would consider that the tenant's mobility issues and the absence of an electric shower would make it more difficult to maintain good levels of personal and domestic hygiene. A reasonable landlord would therefore categorise this as a significant hazard.
Significant (Scenario 5)	A tenant reported that the kitchen worktops in their flat had become badly water damaged; they were	A reasonable landlord judge that, while not immediately life-threatening, the deteriorated surfaces poses a significant

	delaminating and swollen, making them impossible to keep clean and there is nowhere else available for food preparation. The sink seal had failed, causing dirty water to seep behind and into several of the units.	hygiene hazard, particularly due to the risk of bacterial contamination and lack of alternatives for safe food preparation. This would therefore be considered a significant hazard.
Out of scope (Scenario 6)	A tenant reported a missing cupboard handle and minor chipping to the corner of a worktop with no other damage. The kitchen remained fully functional, cleanable, and appropriately equipped for safe food storage and preparation.	A reasonable landlord would look to address this issue as part of their general improvement/maintenance work.