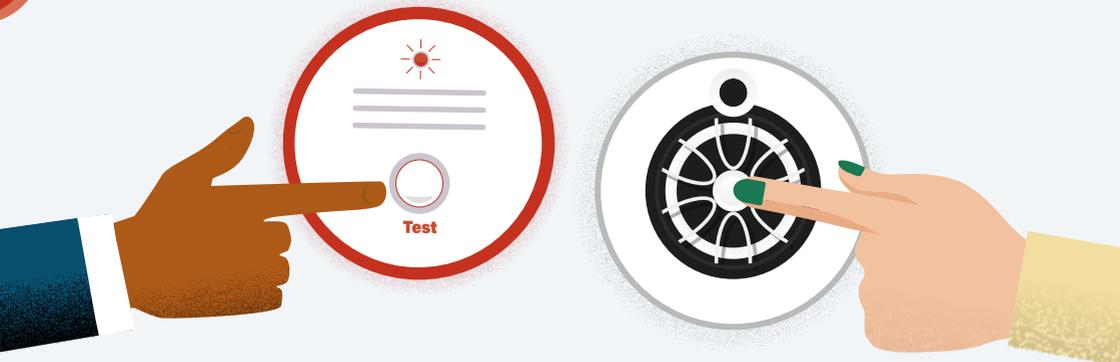




**GREATER
MANCHESTER**
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Smoke and Heat Alarms

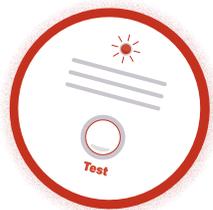


Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service provides home fire safety advice to keep you safe at home.

If you are concerned about your fire safety, or the fire safety of others, please visit our website below to complete our online assessment for personalised advice or to find out if you are eligible for a Home Fire Safety Assessment. If you are eligible for a Home Fire Safety Assessment, we may fit free smoke and heat alarms during the visit, depending on the fire risk.

manchesterfire.gov.uk

Fit smoke and heat alarms and test them regularly



- Smoke and heat alarms save lives.
- Fit a minimum of one working smoke alarm on every level of your home, preferably in a circulation space such as a hallway or landing.
- Fit additional alarms in other rooms that are regularly inhabited and where there could be a risk of a fire starting.
- Fit a heat alarm in your kitchen area.
- Test your alarms once a week, by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds. To help you remember, do it every time you put the bins out.
- If you experience a false alarm (and there is no fire), you can silence the alarm by pressing the same test button. It will automatically re-set.

Smoke and heat alarm maintenance

- Vacuum your alarms with a soft brush vacuum nozzle every 3 months and wipe over with a damp cloth to remove any dust.
- The alarms that we fit have a ten-year sealed battery which does not need to be changed. Replace the whole unit after 10 years.
- For non-sealed battery-operated alarms, change the batteries once a year.
- Never take the batteries out of your alarm to use in another electrical item. An alarm without batteries cannot warn you if a fire starts.



More information about smoke and heat alarms

- A smoke alarm is a warning device that detects smoke at the earliest stages of a fire.
- A heat alarm is a warning device that detects an increase in temperature from a fire but is insensitive to smoke.
- Heat alarms are more suitable for detecting fires in kitchens or other rooms where steam, fumes or moisture could cause nuisance alarms in smoke alarms.
- When an alarm detects a fire, it will make a piercing noise to alert or wake you, giving you time to get out, stay out and call 999.
- Many people killed in house fires are asleep at the time. A smoke or heat alarm can wake you up and give you vital extra time to escape.

Choosing smoke alarms

- Smoke alarms can cost as little as £5-£10 and are available from DIY stores, electrical shops and many supermarkets and high-street retailers.
- There are different types of smoke alarms available. Some use optical sensor technology (typically more effective at detecting slow burning fires). Others use ionisation sensor technology (typically more effective at detecting fast, flaming fires). Multi sensor alarms are also available.
- If possible, fit an optical multi sensor smoke alarm with a ten-year life span. Buying an alarm with a sealed battery compartment will help to prevent tampering or removal of the battery. Whichever model you choose, look out for one which has a British Standard Kitemark symbol.

Problem with your smoke or heat alarm?

If there is a problem with your smoke or heat alarm, such as it fails to operate or chirps repeatedly, there are several things you can try to resolve the issue.

- Check whether the battery needs replacing, or whether the guarantee on the alarm has expired and you need to replace the whole unit.
- Consider whether the alarm is in the right place.
- Clean the unit carefully with a slightly damp cloth or the soft brush attachment of a vacuum cleaner.
- If the alarm has a base plate, ensure that the unit is attached firmly to the baseplate.
- If you have the manual for your alarm, troubleshooting advice should be available.

False alarms can be annoying, but they are easy to prevent. Whatever you do, don't remove the battery or disconnect the alarm.

If we fitted your alarms

If there is a problem with an alarm that we have fitted, and the alarm is still covered by guarantee, telephone our supplier (Fire Angel) on freephone 0800 141 2561 for advice. Fire Angel will post out a replacement alarm if they cannot resolve the issue with you over the telephone.

If you would be unable to fit a replacement alarm yourself, or are unable to contact Fire Angel, telephone our Contact Centre on 0800 555 815 and they will assist you.



If your alarm system is hard wired to mains electric

If there is a problem with an alarm that is hard wired to mains electric, contact an electrician. Or if in rented accommodation contact your landlord for further advice.

Additional advice for people with a hearing impairment

- Fit a system of interlinked smoke and heat alarms and an interlinked strobe light and vibrating pad (the latter to be placed under your pillow when you go to bed) so that you receive a vibrating and visual alert if any alarm in your home activates.
- If you have a pacemaker fitted, consult your GP or medical professional first before installing a vibrating pad as these can sometimes interfere with some types of pacemakers.
- We can fit alarms, strobes and pads during Home Fire Safety Assessments, or make a referral for them to be provided by the local council.
- Register your mobile phone with the National Emergency SMS Service. This national scheme allows anyone, who is unable to use voice telephony, to send a text to 999 using a mobile phone. The text gets converted into a call to the emergency services. Visit [emergencysms.net](https://www.emergencysms.net) to find out how to register.



Additional advice for people with reduced mobility

- If you are unable to test your alarms, consider whether a family member, friend or carer can test them for you.
- If you would be unable to respond in the event of a fire, or if your alarm is activated, ensure you have a suitable plan in place to aid escape. This could include installing assistive technology, such as a monitoring or telecare system, connected to your smoke/heat alarms, that will send an automatic alert to a call centre if it is activated. Alternatively, a telecare system such as a pendant device, worn around the neck, or a bracelet device which you can press to alert a contact centre that assistance is required. Contact social services to find out if they can provide you with assistive technology solutions that meet your needs.

Additional advice for tenants

If you are a tenant, your landlord (unless they are excluded) must ensure that at least one smoke alarm is provided on each level of your home, where there is a room used as living accommodation. This is part of their responsibilities under the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022.

Your landlord must also ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers). They must also ensure smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are repaired or replaced if you report a fault.

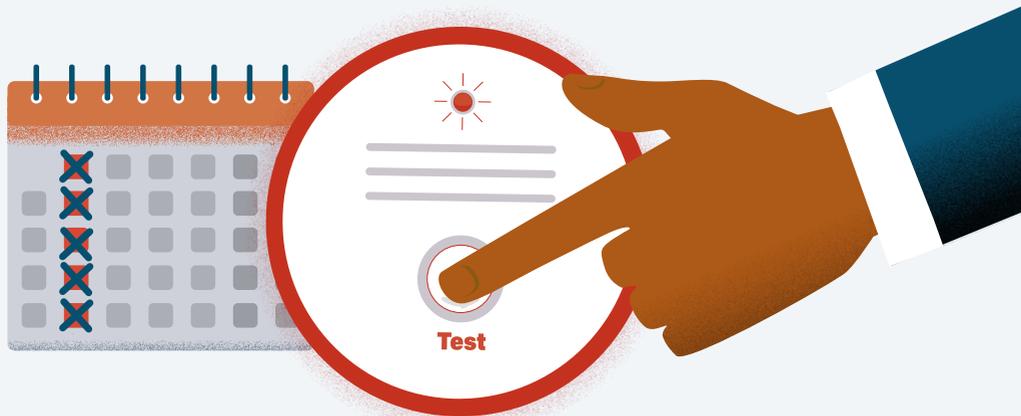
If you are a tenant whose home is not compliant with the regulations, contact your landlord in the first instance and ask them to fit the equipment. If the landlord will not assist, report the problem promptly to your local authority.

Additional advice for carers

- If you are providing care or support to a vulnerable person, it is important to include and record fire safety in your assessments and care planning.
- If the person you are providing care or support to is unable to test and maintain their smoke and heat alarms, test the alarms for them every week, or help to identify somebody who can do this.
- Make sure that the person you are providing care or support to has smoke and heat alarms that meet their needs and understands what to do if the alarms activate.
- If you are providing care or support to someone with a hearing impairment, check whether they can hear a sounding alarm from the place where they usually sleep. If they can't, arrange for them to have interlinked smoke and heat alarms and an interlinked strobe light and vibrating pad fitted.
- If you are providing care or support to someone who would be unable to mobilise/evacuate in response to a sounding alarm, make sure they have a suitable plan in place to aid escape, including the introduction of assistive technology if required.
- Wherever possible, involve the person you are supporting in decisions about their fire safety. Talk to them about what to do if a fire starts or if their alarm activates.
- Refer the person you are supporting to us for a Home Fire Safety Assessment (see the front page of this leaflet for details).



Fit a smoke alarm on every level of your home and a heat alarm in your kitchen. Test your alarms weekly.



A working smoke alarm can buy you valuable time to:



Get out



Stay out



Call 999

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

Saving lives, protecting communities, working together

manchesterfire.gov.uk | [@manchesterfire](https://www.instagram.com/manchesterfire)    

If you do not have access to the internet, call **0800 555 815**