

Using Electricity Safely

Watch our online video and follow these instructions to use electricity safely.

What to do in a power cut

Make sure that it is actually a power cut and not just a problem with the electricity supply to your home. If it's dark outside, are the street lights on? If they are, then it's probably a problem with the electricity in your home.

Have your neighbours got power? If it's just you without power, then it probably isn't a power cut. Has everything gone off, or is it just the lights or appliances? If it's only one electrical appliance, then a trip switch might need resetting.

Have you got a prepayment meter? Make sure you haven't run out of credit.

Call 105 (a free phone service) to get information about power cuts in your local area. Contact Together Housing if you think it's a problem with the electricity in your home.

Consumer Unit

The consumer unit is the control centre of your electrical supply. It's found at the point where the supply enters the property, and it contains circuit breakers, residual current devices and a main switch to switch the electricity on/off.

It's important to know where your consumer unit is in case you need to cut off the mains electricity or re-set a 'tripped' switch.



The consumer unit contains:

Mains Switch - this controls the mains electricity supply to your home. You might want to switch this off in an emergency.

Circuit Breakers - these are safety switches that operate automatically to protect circuits from damage. When they detect a fault, they shut off the flow of electricity, which is called 'tripping'. Circuit breakers are sensitive and often trip, for example when you plug in a faulty electrical appliance. They can be easily reset by moving the switch once the fault has been corrected and the faulty appliance unplugged.

Residual Current Devices – these are switches that cut off circuits under dangerous conditions and are designed to prevent you from being electrocuted if you touch something like a bare live wire. They can help prevent electrical fires.

Replacing a fluorescent light

Make sure the electricity is switched off and the light fitting has cooled down. Switch off the light switch on the wall.

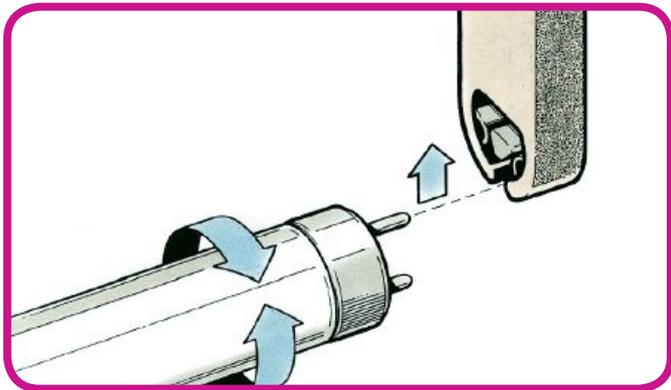
You can also use the consumer unit to shut off electricity to the tube light (this will turn off all the lights on that particular circuit).

Use a stepladder. Put a stepladder underneath the light to replace the tube comfortably and safely.

Turn the tube. Gently support the tube with both hands, keeping your hands as close to the ends of the tube as possible.

Turn the tube allowing you to slide it downward and out of the fixture.

Lift the new tube into place.



To install the new light, line prongs up with the slots in either socket. Push the tube straight up into the sockets and then turn it until you feel it lock into place. You can give the lamp a gentle tug to ensure it is firmly in place and then refit the light cover.

Electrical danger signs

Generally, electrical appliances are not provided or repaired by Together Housing.

Look out for these danger signs with your appliances:

- Frayed, cut or damaged leads.
- Cracked or damaged cases on plugs or appliances.
- Burn marks on plugs, leads or appliances.
- Loose cord grips in plugs or appliances.
- Burning or overheating electrical items can in some instances give off a fishy type smell. Be aware of strange smells you haven't noticed before.



Safety!

- Don't overload plug sockets and extension leads.
- Make sure rolled extension leads are fully unwound. They can overheat and set on fire if rolled up.
- Don't take mains powered portable appliances into the bathroom.
- Don't carry out DIY repairs on your electrical supply or appliances.
- Don't add extra sockets or switches unless this work is undertaken by a qualified electrician and Together Housing has agreed to the changes.

Contact Together Housing if you have any problem with the electricity supply in your home.