



# PETRA's guide to out-of-hours emergency procedures & other useful information

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FIRE RISK  
ASSESSMENT.

# Introduction

This guide provides residents with advice and information on what to do in the event of an emergency. It covers a range of issues which could happen outside PETRA's normal office hours. However, these are not a set of hard and fast rules as every emergency is unique and has its own quirks. Where possible we have followed guidelines set by the London Borough of Havering's Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Unit.

In producing this guide it should be pointed out that serious emergencies are rare. In over 45 years since this estate was built we have only ever had to evacuate one block – when a serious gas leak led to Havering Council and British Gas ordering an evacuation while the problem was tackled.

## Section 1: Contacts

The PETRA TMO office (Tel: 01708 475358) operates between 07.30 and 15.30 Monday to Friday, and the phones are covered until 17.00 on those days.

For urgent help outside of these hours tenants should contact Havering's out-of-hours services: For housing repairs 01708 756699. For all other emergencies: 01708 433999.

Please ensure that the PETRA office has an up-to-date contact number so that we can reach you in the event of an emergency.

## Section 2: Preparing for an emergency

We never know when an emergency will occur, so it pays to be prepared.

- Make sure you know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water supplies.
- Find out if any elderly or vulnerable neighbours would need your help.
- Think about what arrangements you will need to make for your pets.
- Keep an emergency grab pack ready and stored where you can reach it easily (fumbling around in the dark during a power cut can be dangerous). Make sure all members of the household know where the pack is kept. (See below for suggested contents.)

Suggested contents for emergency grab pack:

- A torch – and remember to check regularly that batteries are working and keep spare new batteries in the pack. (Wind-up torches are good in emergencies as you don't have to worry about batteries.)
- Candles – but remember, if you have candles in your pack you will need safety matches to light them. Also, if you, or a family member, suffer with respiratory problems prolonged use of candles will aggravate the symptoms.
- First aid kit, including any necessary daily medication, or at least a list of medication and doses so that supplies can be found for you.
- List of important contact numbers.
- Copies of important documents – birth certificates, passports, insurance documents etc.

## **What to do in an emergency**

If you find yourself in an emergency situation, you will tend to act on your instincts and use your common sense. However, make sure the relevant organisations are contacted. Do not assume someone else has done this – it is far better that several people report a problem than none at all.

- For fires, the emergency services on 999.
- For the Council, their out-of-hours services on 756699 for housing, 433999 for all other emergencies.
- For gas emergencies, 0800 111999.
- For power emergencies 0800 0404090.

And remember: stay calm, do not put yourself or others in danger, and follow the advice of the emergency services or Council officers.

## **Section 3: Fire**

Fire is one of the biggest risks in your home. Contact the Fire Service for further information on fire safety in your home. The following useful tips will help keep you and your family safe:

- Have smoke alarms fitted – check batteries regularly.
- Reduce hazards that may cause a fire in your home – for example storage of newspapers or other flammable items.
- Check your escape routes and make sure they are kept free of obstruction.

### **In case of fire:**

1. Call the Fire Brigade on 999.
2. Evacuate the flat using the stairs, not the lift. Leave the door unlocked to allow the Fire Service access to deal with the fire.
3. If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor – the air is clearer at that level.

4. If the door feels hot, (feel with the back of hand) do not open it, as it probably means there is a fire on the other side.
5. Cover your nose and mouth and any exposed skin.
6. If you cannot get out stay together in one room near an open window to alert rescuers. Push a blanket or something similar along the bottom of the door to help keep smoke out.

**Remember:**

We are advised that if the fire is not in your flat the Fire Service will evacuate those they consider at risk. Otherwise, you should be safe to remain in your flat until the fire has been dealt with.

If you experience smoke penetration to your flat you should close the extractor vents in your toilet and bathroom.

If you are asked to evacuate your flat by the Fire Brigade, please ensure everything is turned off and shut, and lock the door behind you.

## Section 4: Power

When a power cut occurs, contact the power company (National Electricity 24-hour control on 0800 0404090) to find out how long your power is likely to be out.

If it likely to be a long period, run baths, bowls, buckets or jugs of water for future use as the power cut will take out the pumps that supply your drinking water.

**Remember:** If using water from the bathroom it is not drinking water and it should be boiled before drinking. This water is fed from tanks on the roof but without pumps to fill them they will run dry quickly if everyone is drawing off water.

Use torches if possible as candles can be a fire hazard and they also use up oxygen in enclosed areas, which is problematic for people with breathing problems.

Avoid opening fridges if possible as they will keep food fresh for up to 20 hours if left alone.

Never open deep freezers until electricity is restored, cover with newspapers or blankets for extra insulation. If food thaws out do not refreeze – use straight away, if insured contact your insurance company, or dispose of it.

Turn off all major appliances, particularly electric fires and cookers until power is restored.

Check on vulnerable/elderly neighbours.

## Section 5: Gas leak

If you smell gas:

- Check all of your gas appliances (eg cooker) are turned off.
- Open windows to vent the flat.
- Phone the gas company (National Grid 0800 111999).
- Do not use a lighter or matches.
- Do not use light switches.
- The gas company should respond quickly to the call and will tell you what the problem is and how and when it can be remedied.

## Section 6: Flood

In the case of our tower blocks, this is more likely to be internal water penetration from flats above you. In such cases contact the out of hours Havering service on 01708 756699, advising them of the

problems you are experiencing. The out-of-hours operative will then investigate and hopefully resolve your problem.

## Section 7: Evacuation

An evacuation may occur for a number of reasons, for example a gas leak, flooding or chemical incident.

Depending on the type of incident involved, you may be able to return to your property after a few hours, but you may have to wait longer.

If the emergency is serious enough to warrant evacuation you will not have a great deal of time to gather things you may need together. It is a good idea to have a list of essential items, and to know where you can put your hands on them quickly.

In the event of being evacuated, remember to:

- Collect the items you will need, including medication and any special foods you may require.
- Make sure you turn off gas, water and electricity at the mains.
- Secure your property.
- Make your way to the assembly point and report in (see below).
- Stay out – Do not re-enter the building until advised you can do so by the Safety Representative / Officer.

### Assembly points:

- Parkview House – The car park outside Sunrise Lodge
- Overstrand House – The car park outside Sunrise Lodge
- Uphavering House – The main car park by the estate sign

Havering Council will co-ordinate any evacuation required and if you do not have a place you can go to, such as a friend or family member,

they will arrange for you to be taken to an emergency rest centre. This would normally be either a local school or sports centre.

If you are going to be staying with family or friends you should advise the police or local authority officer when you report to the evacuation point. You will be asked to provide a contact number so that they can reach you to advise and update you on the situation as it develops. Importantly, this will also prevent you being listed as missing.

## Section 8: Severe weather

### Snow and ice

- Don't travel unless your journey is absolutely necessary.
- Allow extra time for your journey.
- Ensure your vehicle is in good working order and carry an emergency pack in your car.
- If you have elderly or vulnerable neighbours make sure they are safe and warm.
- If they need shopping or medication and you are unable to help, call the PETRA office and they will do their best to assist.

### Heatwave

In the event of a heat wave, the Department of Health will issue advice through the media to those areas affected.

Many heat disorders occur because of over-exposure to heat or excess physical activity. The elderly, young, sick or overweight are most likely to succumb to the extremes of heat; the following tips will help you to counter the effect of this:

- Stay indoors as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of water at regular intervals.
- Limit the intake of alcohol, as alcohol causes dehydration.
- Dress in loose fitting clothes covering as much skin as possible.

- Protect your face and head by wearing a suitable hat.
- Never leave children or pets in vehicles.
- Avoid too much sun exposure, but if you are exposed use a high sun protection factor cream.
- Remember that electric fans do not cool the air, they just circulate it.
- Check on family, friends and any vulnerable neighbours.
- Avoid over-exertion or strenuous work during extreme heat.

### **High winds**

- Make sure all items on your balcony are secure, or else take them inside.
- Secure all windows.

## **Section 9: Useful phone numbers**

In an emergency, you may find the following numbers useful:

Emergency Services	<b>999</b>
Police Switchboard	<b>01708 751212</b>
British Telecom	<b>150</b>
National Electric 24hr Control	<b>0800 0404090</b>
E-on	<b>0800 1831515 / 0800 7838838</b>
UK Power Networks	<b>08000280247</b>
National Grid – For gas leaks	<b>0800 111999</b>
<b>London Borough of Havering</b>	
Main switchboard office hours	<b>01708 434343</b>
Housing contact centre	<b>01708 434000</b>
Out-of-hours service	<b>01708 433999</b>
Housing repairs out-of-hours service	<b>01708 756699</b>
<b>NHS advice</b>	
A freephone health assessment service	<b>NHS 111</b>
Queens Hospital	<b>01708 435000</b>

**Take a few minutes to complete your personal contact details, ready in case of an emergency:**

My GP: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Friends: \_\_\_\_\_

Vets: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Parkhill Estate Tenant Management Organisation**

PETRA Office

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Sunrise Avenue,

Hornchurch,

Essex

RM12 4YW

Tel: 01708 475358

Fax: 01708 469350

Email: [petratmo@aol.com](mailto:petratmo@aol.com)

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**PETRA is a not-for-profit community organisation registered with the Financial Services Authority, registration number 29444R.**

Welcome to  
**The Parkhill**  
& Sunrise Estate



Residents  
Visitors  
Gardening Group  
Community Room  
Car Park

STREAND HOUSES