

Electrical safety in rental properties

Tenants guide

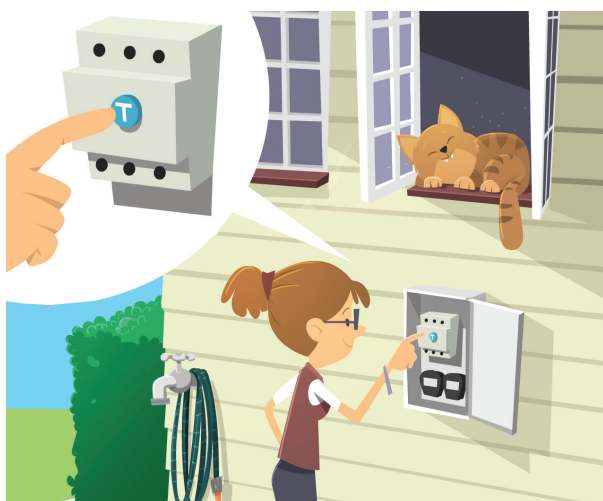
Safety switches

Safety switches protect you from electric shock.

Check your rental property has safety switches by looking in the electrical switchboard. By law, your property owner must install at least one safety switch.

Safety switches have a **'Test'** button so if you can't see this, contact your property owner or real estate agent to let them know.

Test your safety switches using the test button every three months.



Smoke alarms

Working smoke alarms save lives. Tenants should:

- test and clean smoke alarms once a year
- replace flat or nearly flat batteries
- tell your property owner or real estate agent if there is a problem with the smoke alarm (apart from flat batteries)
- let the property owner or real estate agent into your home to install smoke alarms.

Remember: never remove or touch a smoke alarm or the battery unless you are testing it, cleaning it or replacing the battery.

Landlords must install smoke alarms that comply with smoke alarm legislation introduced on 1 January 2017.

Your property owner or real estate agent must test and clean each smoke alarm in the property before the start of your lease.

For more information visit qfes.qld.gov.au





Don't DIY

Don't attempt to do your own electrical work—it could kill you and the people you live with. It's dangerous, illegal and can affect your insurance. Always contact your property owner or real estate agent so they can arrange a licensed electrical contractor.

Your property owner is not allowed to do any electrical work in your home unless they are a licenced electrical contractor.

If your plug-in appliance like a toaster or hair dryer is broken, replace it or have it repaired by an electrician or appliance repair company.

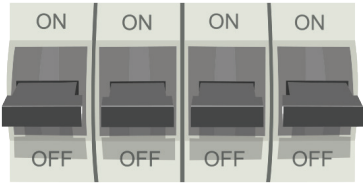
If you are a licensed electrician, you can repair your own plug-in appliances, but not any part of the rental property or its hard-wired equipment.

If you're choosing a licensed electrical contractor, always check they have a current licence before agreeing to any work. You can check their licence number at electricalsafety.qld.gov.au.



Roof spaces

There are serious electrical dangers in your roof because there are lots of electrical cables up there. If you need to get into the roof space, make sure you turn off all the main power switches at the switchboard first.



If a worker needs to go into your roof space, like an electrician or pest controller, allow them to turn the power off.

Prepare for the power to be turned off by:

- charging your phones and electronic devices
- finding alternative storage for frozen food
- using battery power for medical equipment – or arranging for people who depend on that equipment to be with friends or family.



Tingles or shocks

Getting a tingle or shock from electrical equipment, taps or other metal fittings? Don't ignore it—it's a sign something's not right, and could kill you.

- If you get a shock from using or touching metal electrical appliances like a dryer, toaster or stove, stop using it immediately. Get it checked if it's a plug-in appliance or call your property owner if it's hard-wired (for example a stove or air conditioning unit).
- If you get a shock from a tap, pipe or other metal fitting, stop using it and call Energex, Essential Energy or Ergon Energy immediately and ask them to check your property.

Energex	South East Queensland – Sunshine Coast to Esk and Gatton areas	13 19 62
Essential Energy	Goondiwindi and surrounding areas	13 20 80
Ergon Energy	Rest of Queensland	13 16 70



Electrical appliances

Do you have a washing machine, hair straightener, TV, power tools or other plug-in appliances or power leads?

- Only use them for what they're meant for.
- Follow their safety instructions.
- Water and electricity don't mix—don't use them in or around water, like in the rain or the bath and don't touch them with wet hands.
- Maintain them by following the manufacturer's maintenance and servicing guidelines.
- Unplug them or turn off the power before cleaning or maintenance.
- If it's broken stop using it and throw it away or get it repaired.

Property owners are responsible for maintaining hard-wired equipment and keeping it safe (for example air conditioners, solar systems and electric hot water systems).



Check it out before you plug it in

Check your electrical appliances before you plug them in—don't use them if they are damaged.

The following could cause a fire or electric shock:

- broken casings and cracked plastic covers
- changes in colour from overheating or moisture
- water in the appliance
- frayed cords or damaged plugs
- damaged extension leads
- full or dirty filters.



Buying electrical appliances online

It can be dangerous to buy electrical appliances on the internet from overseas sellers as they might not comply with Australian safety standards or have information about how to use them safely.

If you are buying electrical appliances, check they have the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM). The RCM means the product has been tested, is compliant and meets Australian standards.

Non-compliant appliances can cause electrical shock, fire, injury or death. You may not be able to get a refund or exchange if your product turns out to be non-compliant or faulty.





Overhead powerlines, service lines and underground lines

Look up and Live.

Before you begin work outside your home, like cleaning your pool or tidying the garden, check for overhead powerlines and service lines (connected to your house), especially if you're using long objects or ladders.

Keep away from all powerlines. If it's damaged or falls to the ground, don't touch it and contact Energex, Essential Energy or Ergon Energy.

If you're digging in your yard, make sure there aren't any underground electric lines before you start. Find out where they are located by calling the free Dial Before You Dig service.

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Ergon Energy	Rest of Queensland	13 16 70
Dial Before You Dig	Queensland	1100 1100.com.au



Electricity outage, brown outs and surges

There are many reasons for a power outage, brown out (drop in voltage in power supply) or electrical surge in your area including lightning strikes, car accidents, high winds, hot weather, wildlife or technical issues.

If you have lost electricity, you can check with Energex, Essential Energy or Ergon Energy online or by phone if there is a problem in your area and how long it will take to fix.

If you continue to experience brown outs, electrical surges or other issues report it to Energex, Essential Energy or Ergon Energy.

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Electricity accounts

Visit energymadeeasy.gov.au to find an electricity provider and the best deal.

Contact your electricity provider if:

- you have problems with your electricity supply
- have questions about your contract or bill
- need to disconnect or reconnect your service.

If you have problems with your electricity provider and are unhappy with their response, you can contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland which is a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service for unresolved complaints with your electricity, gas or water supplier.

Visit ewoq.com.au

Call **1800 662 837**

More information

Contact the Electrical Safety Office • Electricalsafety.qld.gov.au • Phone **1300 362 128** • [Facebook.com/electricalsafetyoffice](https://www.facebook.com/electricalsafetyoffice)