

WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY AND WHAT DO I DO?

While the following is by no means a comprehensive solution to all possible questions, it does cover the most frequently asked.

The following are considered emergencies.

1. **Water leaking into your apartment from the apartment above.** First and most importantly: Go upstairs and knock on the door. Find out from the tenant above you what they were using that caused the leak. Was it the tub, a shower, the dishwasher, a washing machine or something else? Ask them to turn it off or stop running the water. If it was an appliance, was there water on the floor? (**If your roof is leaking see roof leaks, below**). The purpose of these questions is twofold. First, this may initially temporarily stop the problem, and secondly the information you supply to us may help us to more quickly permanently solve the problem, by helping us to determine if we need to contact a plumber, an appliance repair service, or even a tile repairman. In any case contact our office, follow the directions on the voice mail and leave us as much information as possible.
2. **Locked out.** You may be charged a fee if you have lost your key for any reason, forgotten your key, or locked your key in the apartment. The amount you are charged may vary depending on several factors. Time of day would be one example. The charge during business hours, for example is lower than at 1:00 AM, a weekend, a holiday, or during bad weather. Do not have the locks changed on your own. If we cannot gain access to your apartment, you may be liable for additional charges.
3. **Fire.** Assuming there were no injuries, and the fire is out, there are several considerations. Are the premises secured? Is the alarm, if applicable, still sounding? Was there any damage to the structural integrity of the premises? If any of these is in question, call our office.
4. **Smell Gas.** Call NorthWestern Energy at once. The number is [\(888\) 467-2669](tel:8884672669). Gas leaks are considered a high priority and they come very quickly. You must be home to let them in. Please notify us after they have responded.
5. **Your house or apartment was broken into.** First, do not enter the premises without the police. Call 911. Second, if the premises are not secured, broken locks, door, etc., call us.

These may or may not be emergencies depending on circumstances.

1. **No heat.** While this may very well turn out to be an emergency, some common sense is called for. In most cases either a registered plumber, electrician or a certified HVAC technician should make most heating repairs. If the temperature is above 40 degrees, you may be uncomfortable, but it may not be an emergency. If the temperature is below 32 degrees and there is no other source of heat, we want you to call us. **Never use your oven or range top for heat. This is considered a fire hazard.** In a true emergency, when we cannot get your system fixed after hours, we may be able to supply you with a temporary space heater. Call us.

2. **The electricity is off.** Again, common sense needs to be used. Is the electric off everywhere in the apartment, or just part of the apartment? If it is off in the whole apartment, is it off in the whole building? If it is off in the building, is it off in the neighborhood? Check the streetlights and see if any lights are on in the hallway or windows next door. **If the problem is more than your building, call Flathead Electric at [\(406\) 751-4483](tel:4067514483).** If it is just part of the apartment, you need to first check your circuit breakers. If this does not resolve it, call us. **If your refrigerator is affected, try to avoid opening it.** The insulation will keep the food chilled for a longer time this way. If you have electric in the apartment, try plugging the refrigerator into another outlet. Be careful to use only a heavy-duty extension cord to avoid fire hazards. Call if you have a question.
3. **No water.** Just as with the electricity some basic information is needed. Is the water completely off, or just on one or two faucets? If there is no water at all, or very low water pressure everywhere, especially cold-water pressure, do your neighbors have the same problem? Have you checked the basement to see if it is dry? If the answer to these is a yes, there is most likely a systemic problem related to water service. This may be a break in a water main in the street, or other work being done by the water company. Call them at [\(406\) 863-2456](tel:4068632456). If you see running water in the basement, or any water leaking anywhere in the building where it should not be, call us immediately. If you merely have low water pressure from a showerhead or faucet, call our office and leave a message for standard next day repairs.

These are not considered emergencies.

1. **The roof is leaking.** Yes, we know that it is really an emergency, but we cannot get a roofer to come out to repair a roof at night in the rain. **However, we do consider this a very high priority and want to know about it immediately.** So please put a bucket or a trash can under the leak to avoid floor problems and the spread of additional water damage. Call our office to leave specific information. We will call a roofer first thing in the morning. The more information you leave us, (what room was the leak in, more than one leak, etc.) the easier it will be to find, and repair quickly.
2. **No air conditioning.** While no A/C may be a real inconvenience, since this needs to be serviced by a certified HVAC technician, not an emergency repairman, this is not handled as an emergency. Please leave the information on our standard phone line. Overnight calls are handled by our office by 9:00 AM so it is important that you notify us right away so that we can schedule you for service quickly. Please be sure to leave a message.
3. **Noisy neighbors.** We suggest that you first talk to the neighbor. If this does not work, call the police. You have a right to quiet. In addition, please send us an email through this web site with the particulars.