

Looking After Your House

As a tenant you need to look after your house to keep it safe, clean and healthy.

Reporting repairs and maintenance:

All repairs and maintenance need to be reported straight away. Report things like:

- Dripping taps or taps that are tight to turn
- Stove elements that are not working
- Fans that are not working properly
- Power points that are not working
- Things that are dangerous or unhealthy will be fixed as soon as possible. Report things like:
 - Blocked toilets, drains, sewerage leaks or sewerage coming up pipes
 - Leaking water mains and pipes
 - Exposed electrical wires
 - Septic tank lids are missing, dislodged, cracked or not fitting correctly
 - If there is a foul smell around the septic tank or lush green grass growing around the lid
 - Gas leaks

To keep your house clean:

- Sweep and mop the floors regularly
- Dust away spider webs
- Wash the windows and louvres regularly
- Put rubbish in the bin and make sure bins in the house are cleaned and emptied regularly
- Wipe the fans regularly with a damp cloth
- Wipe dirty marks off walls, doors and cupboards
- Dust light switches and power points with a dry cloth.

Pest control

To keep bugs and pests like cockroaches, flies, ants, ticks, and fleas away:

- Keep your home clean and your yard tidy
- You can keep food in cupboards in plastic containers with lids or plastic bags
- Don't keep, eat or cook food in the bedrooms
- Use cockroach baits or bombs before the problem gets too big. Tea tree or eucalyptus oil can also help keep bugs away

- Keep doors closed and make sure fly screens do not have holes
- You can use tick and flea collars and washes to help kill ticks and fleas on your pets
- Put rubbish in the bin and make sure bins are cleaned and emptied regularly. This will help keep flies and maggots out of your bins
- If you have problems with large numbers of bugs and pests, contact the Maintenance call centre or speak with your local Housing officer about the options to remove the pests.

Looking after your septic tank system

- Ensure septic tank lids are secure and not dislodged or loose
- Keep rubbish or other objects off the top of the septic tank
- Don't drive over or park cars on the septic tank
- Check the top of your septic tank regularly to make sure there are no cracks, chips or visible rust on the septic tank cover and lid
- Regularly maintain the area around your septic tank - cut and remove any overgrown grass
- Don't put rubbish, nappies, sanitary items, condoms, fats, oils or food waste down the toilet
- Never open the septic tank lid or put objects in it
- Check your household products are suitable for your septic tank:
 - use biodegradable liquid detergents with low phosphorous and sodium
 - minimise the use of household chemicals like bleach
- Regularly pour vinegar and add baking soda to clean the toilet – careful will froth up – leave for a bit, scrub and then flush.

Looking after your yard

- Keep the grass short and mow it regularly. Pull out weeds and put them in the bin
- Only plant bushes, flowers or shrubs that you can take care of and water your garden and plants in the evening
- Keep plants, timber or firewood two (2) metres from the house to help stop white ant damage
- Make sure people don't climb or cut holes in the fences
- Make sure garden taps are turned off when not in use and water is not left running for animals. Water for animals should be left in shallow dishes
- Keep your yard free of rubbish and put the bin out on 'bin day' so it can be emptied
- Make sure people don't swing on the clothes line or hang anything heavy on it
- Talk to your Housing Officer or local council if you need help removing car bodies or large items like old fridges.

Looking after your laundry

- Keep the tub clean and wipe it out regularly
- Make sure no rubbish goes down the tub drain. The drain is for water only
- Remove hair and any other rubbish from the drain
- Make sure the floor drain is not covered up
- Remove any dirt, hair or rubbish from inside the washing machine after each use
- Make sure the hose for the washing machine is in the hole in the tub or in the tub so the dirty water can drain away
- Open the windows and door in the laundry when using the washing machine to help stop mould growing
- Mop or wipe up any water on the floor straight away
- Looking after your bathroom and toilet
- Wipe the bath and shower wall regularly. You can use white vinegar or bathroom cleaner to remove mould
- Use one cleaning cloth in the bathroom, a different one for the toilet and a different one on the floors and walls. This will help stop germs spreading
- Sweep and mop the floors regularly
- Remove hair and other rubbish from the drains
- Open the windows and doors when the bathroom and toilet are not being used to help stop mould growing
- Scrub the toilet with a toilet brush and disinfectant, white vinegar or toilet cleaner to keep it clean
- Don't flush nappies, cloths, toys or other objects down the toilet.

Looking after your kitchen

- Wipe the benches every day and after you have prepared food
- Wipe out the sink regularly
- Wipe the cupboards and shelving inside and out with a damp cloth regularly
- Sweep and mop the floor regularly
- Clean the oven and stove including the hot plates, drip trays and behind the stove. Use an oven cleaner to remove grease from inside the oven
- Only use saucepans or cooking trays for the oven and stove to help stop food or oil spilling
- Keep food in cupboards in plastic boxes with lids or plastic bags to help keep bugs and pests like cockroaches, flies, ants and rats away
- Never let anyone sit or put anything heavy on the oven door

Cleaning your house

- You can buy products made to clean things such as ovens, windows, showers, bathrooms and floors. These products can be poisonous and must be kept out of reach of children.
- To help with cleaning:
- White vinegar and bicarb soda make good cleaning products. They are cheap to buy and safe to use
- Use toilet cleaner and disinfectant regularly. You can also use vinegar on a cloth to wipe around the toilet seat and cistern
- Use one cleaning cloth in the kitchen, a different one in the bathroom and a different one on the floors and walls. This will help stop germs spreading
- Use a small amount of white vinegar in a bucket of warm water to mop the floors
- A few drops of eucalyptus oil on cotton wool or an absorbent cloth placed on a bench will help keep flies away
- 10 mls or 40 drops of eucalyptus or tea tree oil mixed with one (1) litre of water can be sprayed around the house to help keep fleas and ticks out

Where can I get more information?

Contact your local Housing office or visit tfhc.nt.gov.au.

Arnhem	(08) 8987 0533	Barkly	(08) 8962 4497
Big Rivers	(08) 8973 8513	Central	(08) 8951 5344
Greater Darwin	(08) 8999 4789	Top End	(08) 8995 5122