

## Media release

6 February 2009

### Home fire safety ... what you need to know

Around fifty Londoners die in house fires each year, and the majority of these deaths happen in the home. The risks grow in winter, as people spend more time indoors and make greater use of heaters, candles and cooking appliances.

If there is a fire in your street property or tower block, would you know what to do to ensure you and your family escape safely?

### **Hackney Homes and the London Fire Brigade have some advice for Hackney residents about what to do in the event of a fire...**

#### **Raise the alarm and get out**

- Do not stop to investigate the fire or to collect valuables or pets.
- Use your escape route to get everyone out and meet at an agreed point.
- Close any doors which are open, and only open the doors you need to go through. This will help to stop the fire spreading so rapidly.
- Check doors with the back of your hand. If a door is warm, don't open it, the fire is on the other side.
- If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor as the air is cleaner.
- Once you've got everyone out of the building, call 999.

#### **Escaping from a window**

- You should only try and escape through a window if on the ground or first floor, and your escape route is blocked.
- If you have to break the window, cover jagged glass with towels or thick bedding.
- Throw bedding or other soft materials onto the floor below the window to break your fall
- If you have any children, elderly or disabled people in the home, plan the order you will escape in so that you can help them down.

#### **High rise flats/tower blocks**

- High rise flats are built to be fireproof and walls, ceilings and doors will hold back flames and smoke. **If there's a fire elsewhere in the**

**building you're usually safer staying in your flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you.**

- If there is a fire in your flat, set off the fire alarm and leave the building.
- If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer.
- If you live in a building with a lift, do not use it if there is a fire, go down the stairs instead.
- Call 999.

The London Fire Brigade is offering Hackney residents FREE Home Fire Safety Visits where a local fire-fighter will visit you at home and fit a free smoke alarm where required. **Call 08000 28 44 28 to book a free Home Fire Safety Visit or pick up a Referral Card from your local Hackney Homes Neighbourhood Office.**

**Ends**

**Press queries to Susan Walsh on 0208 356 3528 or email [susan.walsh@hackneyhomes.org.uk](mailto:susan.walsh@hackneyhomes.org.uk)**

**Notes to Editors**

- Hackney Homes is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) launched in April 2006 to manage the Council's social housing stock. Hackney Homes is led by a board which includes residents, councillors and independent representatives and is responsible for managing 22,000 tenanted properties and 8,000 leasehold properties in the borough. For further information visit [www.hackneyhomes.org.uk](http://www.hackneyhomes.org.uk)