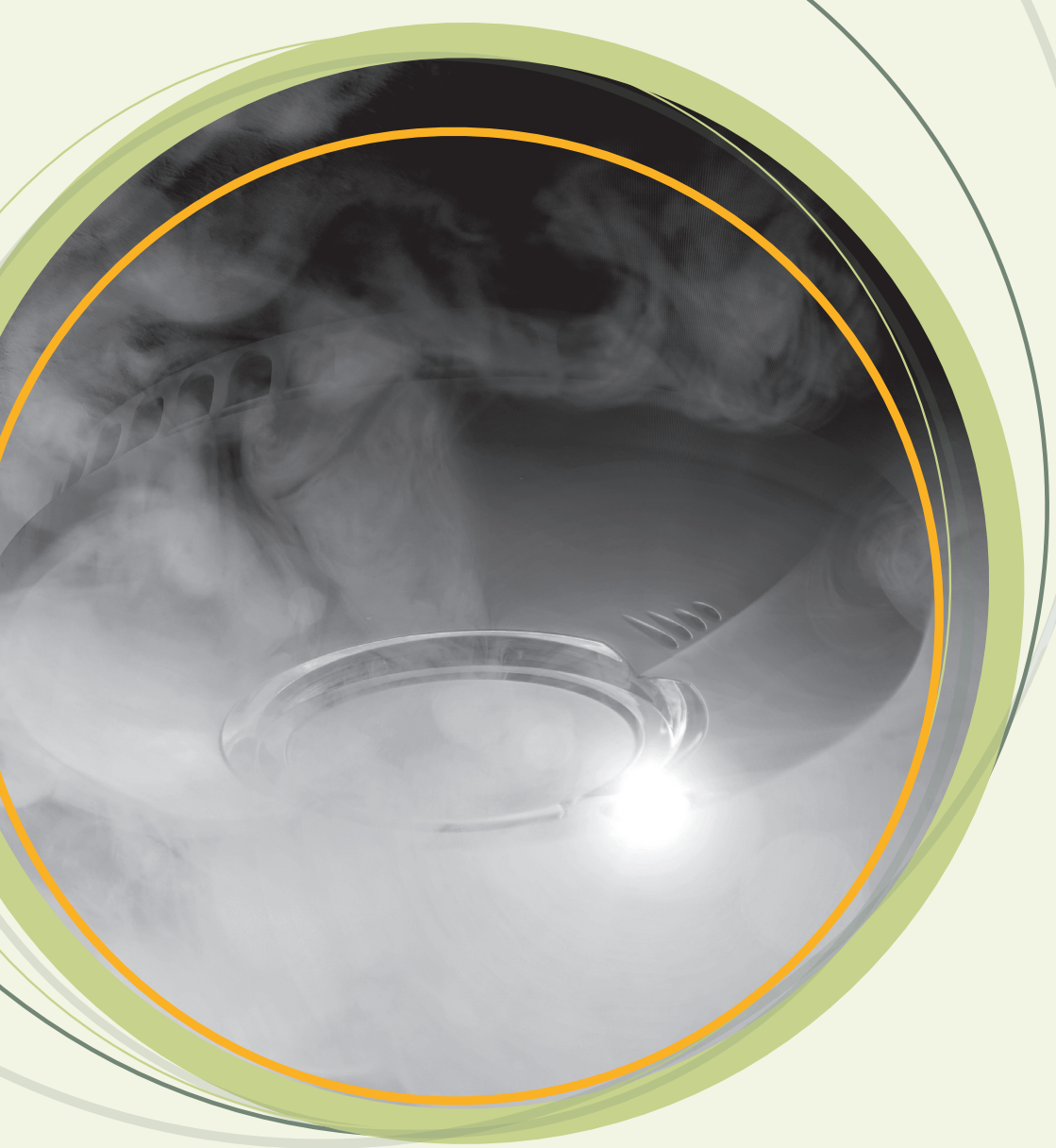


BERNICA



# Staying safe in your home

Information about smoke, heat  
and carbon monoxide alarms



**Smoke and heat alarms are early warning devices. Used correctly they can give you and your family valuable extra time to escape a fire.**

**Carbon monoxide alarms detect the poisonous gas and provide an early warning.**

# Smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms in your home could save your life!

- Smoke and heat alarms are early warning devices. Used correctly they can give you and your family valuable extra time to escape a fire
- A smoke alarm does not prevent fires. It sounds to warn you when enough smoke enters the alarm. We install smoke alarms on all levels of your home
- A heat alarm also doesn't prevent fires. It sounds to warn you of a change of temperature in a room. We install heat alarms mainly in kitchens. Not all properties have a heat alarm fitted
- A carbon monoxide alarm sounds when it detects carbon monoxide above normal levels. We install these in all rooms where there is a fixed combustion appliance (such as your heating boiler, or a gas or solid fuel fire). It is vitally important that you allow us access to your home to service and keep safe your heating appliances
- You should test all the alarms in your home every week
- The alarms must be replaced if they repeatedly sound/beep on a regular basis as this indicates the battery is low on charge. If this occurs, contact us and we will replace the alarm for you
- If you have any doubt or query about your smoke, heat or carbon monoxide alarms, please contact us and we will be able to help
- If any of your smoke or heat alarms go off, never assume it is a false alarm. Shout '**FIRE**' to alert others in the home.





# Our responsibilities

- We will carry out a heating safety check of your fixed combustion appliances (heating boilers, solid fuel fires, gas fires) at least once a year. It is vital that you allow us access to your home to do this and allow us to make sure that they are working safely
- As part of the safety check visit, we will check that the smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms are working correctly, replacing them as required
- We will install at least one smoke alarm on each level of your home. If you do not have this, please contact us and we will make the necessary arrangements to install any additional alarms required
- We will install a Carbon Monoxide alarm in every room of your home with a fixed combustion appliance (such as your heating boiler, or a gas or solid fuel fire). If you do not have an alarm in each room with a fixed combustion appliance, please contact us and we will arrange to install one. Note: This is not required in a room with a gas cooker or an electric fire
- Where there is a fire detection system installed in a communal building, we will undertake regular testing of this to ensure that it is operating properly. We also undertake regular inspections of emergency lighting systems in communal areas to ensure that they will illuminate, even in the event of a power failure.



# Your responsibilities

- Allow us access to service your combustion appliances and test the operation of the smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms in your home. If you have any questions about your alarms, please ask the engineer at this visit to your home
- Never tamper with or attempt to disconnect your alarms
- Report any faults with your alarms or where they repeatedly beep on a regular basis.

## Replacing your alarm

### **We will replace your alarm when:**

- You inform us that the unit starts to beep or sound repeatedly on a regular basis
- The unit fails to sound the alarm loudly when the test button is pressed.







# Looking after your smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms

- It is recommended that you test your alarms once a week to be sure the units are working. It will also help you and your family to become familiar with the sound of the alarm. Report any defects to Bernicia
- Only test your alarms if you can safely access and reach them to do so
- Press and hold the test button until the alarm sounds (it may take up to 20 seconds) (See image). The alarm will stop sounding shortly after the button is released
- Familiarise yourself with the sound. If the alarm fails to sound, check that the cover is correctly fitted in place and re-test. If the alarm still does not sound, contact us
- Never test the alarm with a flame
- Clean your alarm regularly. Use a soft bristle brush to remove dust and cobwebs from the sides and cover slots where the smoke enters. Keep the cover closed while cleaning. Do not vacuum or brush inside the alarm.





# Carbon monoxide poisoning symptoms

Carbon monoxide alarms are early warning devices. The alarm will sound when it detects carbon monoxide above normal levels.

You cannot taste, see or smell carbon monoxide fumes, but they are extremely dangerous.

Poisoning from carbon monoxide can happen in a matter of minutes or over an extended period depending on the amount of carbon monoxide in the air. Symptoms can include but are not limited to;

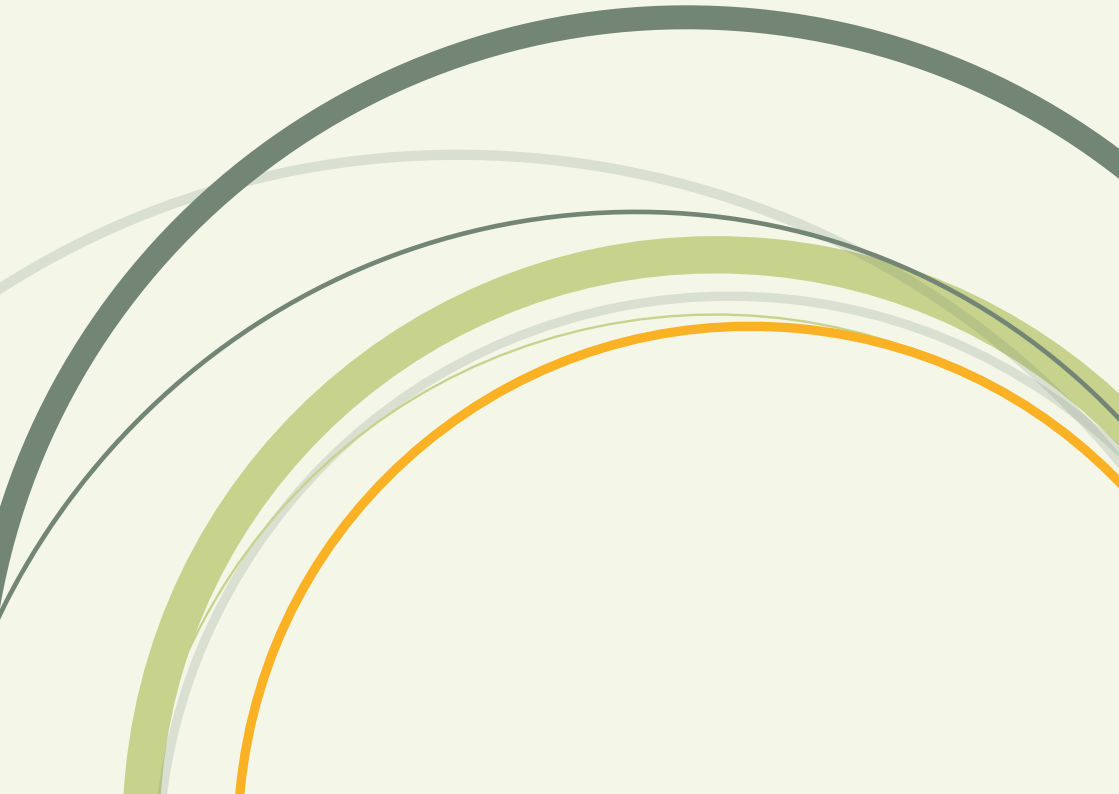
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Feeling or being sick
- Feeling weak
- Confusion
- Chest and muscle pain
- Shortness of breath.

## Other signs can include

- Symptoms that only occur when you are in your home and disappear or get better when you leave
- Others in your home are experiencing similar symptoms (including your pets)
- Black, sooty marks on the front covers of gas fires
- Sooty or yellow/brown stains on or around boilers, stoves or fires
- If you get any symptoms when appliances are in use, e.g.; when the boiler is on
- Increased condensation on the windows
- Pilot lights frequently blowing out
- Yellow instead of blue flames coming from gas appliances or flames are not fully formed (e.g. if flame isn't all the way round on a gas hob burner).

**If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning or if your carbon monoxide alarm sounds:**

- Open doors and windows to ventilate (if possible)
- If you can do so safely, switch off the appliance
- Get outside into the fresh air quickly
- Seek immediate medical advice
- See your doctor or go to hospital – let them know that you suspect CO poisoning, they can do a blood or breath test to check
- Before you return to your home it is very important that you contact our repairs team. You may need an engineer to inspect your appliances and flues to check if there is a dangerous problem.



The logo for Bernicia, featuring the word "BERN" in a standard sans-serif font, followed by a stylized "N" that incorporates a white arch, and then "ICIA" in the same sans-serif font. The background of the entire page is a solid olive green, decorated with several large, sweeping, curved lines in shades of orange and white that create a sense of movement and depth.

BERN<sup>n</sup>ICIA

# How to contact us

Online: [www.bernicia.com](http://www.bernicia.com)

Email: [contact@bernicia.com](mailto:contact@bernicia.com)

Phone: 0344 800 3800

Letter: Bernicia Group, Oakwood Way, Ashwood Business Park, Ashington NE63 0XF



Follow us on social media

Bernicia Group is a Registered Society in England and Wales under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 No. 7711. Affiliated to the Federation of Housing Associations. Registered under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, Registration No. 4868. VAT Registration No.733 8036 38