

Centacare Evolve Housing Fact Sheet

Pests and Vermin

Pests and vermin can cause serious damage to the property and can result in an unhealthy home. This can be an unpleasant and serious problem and can also increase the risk of many types of temporary and permanent illnesses. Ensuring your home is free of pests and vermin is your responsibility as a Centacare Evolve Housing tenant.

What are pests and vermin?

Pests and vermin are insects and animals such as ants, spiders, cockroaches, millipedes, silverfish, rats and mice for example. Generally, pests and vermin will only be attracted to an area where there is an easy food source and a place to nest.

What does my lease say?

The Housing Tasmania and Centacare Evolve Housing lease states:

Section 3.9 of the Housing Tasmania lease stated:

Section 3.10 of the Centacare Evolve Lease Stated:

“You must ensure that the premises is free from pests and vermin”.

What are the local Government/ Council regulations?

Tasmania’s Local Government (Council) has responsibility to all Tasmania’s to ensure they are not at risk from any public health matters. This includes homes and public areas. Your Local Council can declare a residential home unfit for persons to live in and may determine that it is also unhealthy for surrounding neighbours. There are serious implications should this occur and your tenancy could be at risk.

Why is it a problem?

Left as an unattended problem, pests and vermin can cause damage to the property, for which you will be responsible. Also, pests and vermin can be unhealthy, particularly in large numbers. If a continued problem, pest and vermin can cause illness. In extreme cases, you could be required to temporarily or permanently vacate your home.

If your property is damaged by pests and vermin, it will be your responsibility as the tenant, to repair any damages to an acceptable standard or damage will be completed by us and the repair costs passed onto you either during your tenancy or when you vacate.

Why is it a problem only at certain times of the year?

Pests and vermin can be a particular problem at different times of the year. For example, in winter, mice and rats seek shelter and warm places to nest. In spring and summer, animals breed which results in higher numbers. Insects become a particular problem in warmer weather. In some cases it may not be something you can completely prevent, but it remains your responsibility as the tenant to keep the matter under control. If you have a particular and ongoing problem, it is worth discussing the issue with your Tenancy Office when they next visit your home or give them a call to talk about it.

How do I prevent pests and vermin in my home?

A home that is regularly cleaned, kept tidy and well-aired as much as possible is healthier for you and your family. You can minimise pests and vermin becoming a problem in your home by doing the following things:

- Get into the habit of disposing of any unwanted food leftovers (including wrappers and containers) and rubbish as soon as you have finished with it. Encourage any children in your house to do the same and lead by example.
- Do not leave unwanted or uneaten food on tables, benches, floors or in bedrooms for an extended period of time or overnight.
- Always dispose of any unwanted food, food containers and wrappings in a lined rubbish bin with a well-sealed lid and always use rubbish bin liners. This is also a good way of recycling plastic bags and can save you money.
- Empty your inside rubbish bin regularly. Do not wait for it to become full or overflowing before emptying it, particularly if it begins to smell unpleasant.
- Ensure you have your wheelie bin placed outside in a well-ventilated area. Do not place rubbish straight into the wheelie bin as this will result in the wheelie bin smelling unnecessarily and may attract pests and vermin more easily.
- Always place your wheelie bin out on the curb on the day, or night before, of Council rubbish collection.
- Open windows regularly and use extractor fans when cooking.

- Keep any food in your pantry well sealed or in sealed containers.
- Ensure your yard and underneath your home is free of rubbish and debris. Rubbish left in a tied garbage bag for any length of time will still attract pests and vermin.
- If a liquid leaks or spills occur indoors it is important to clean and dry the area immediately. This is especially the case for sugary liquids such as cordials and honey as these attract insects quickly.
- Ensure your home does not have excessive piles of items such as clothes, towels, sheets or other belongings as pest and vermin (particularly mice and rats) can build nests in piles of undisturbed clothes, towels and other household items.
- Ensure any pets you have remain clean, including their bedding and ensure they have appropriate toileting space that is regularly disposed of, even if outside. Ensure you regularly clean your animals' feeding dishes and bowls. Uneaten pet food can attract pests and vermin. Remember, you need permission from Centacare Evolve Housing to have any pets.

What happens if I have an infestation of pests and vermin?

Under your lease agreement, it is the tenant's responsibility to ensure this does not occur. If there is a significant problem, it is important you contact an exterminator to attempt to address the issue. Any costs relating to a professional exterminator will be covered by you and Centacare Evolve Housing will not reimburse you for any of these costs.

There are items available from most supermarkets that you can use to help to control less problematic pest and vermin issues. Plugging small holes with steel wool (e.g. holes where plumbing pipes are situated) can prevent access for mice and rats inside your home as they cannot chew through metal. Also, using mouse traps and ant-rodenticide type products can all help. You are strongly advised to not use home remedies in the prevention of pests and vermin. If you have larger gaps in your home caused by foundation movement or warping that provides access for pests and vermin, it is important you contact Centacare Evolve Housing to report the issue.

More information

If you would like further information about your responsibilities as a Centacare Evolve Housing tenant please refer to your Lease or contact us.