

NORTHERN TERRITORY

CONSUMER

AFFAIRS

Repairs and Maintenance of Rental Properties

You'll want good advice

"...Don't stop paying your rent or you risk getting evicted..."
"...You can't just kick them out but there is something you can do..."



Consumer Affairs: 1800 019 319

Tenant's responsibility

When entering into a tenancy agreement the tenant should ensure they are present at the ingoing inspection and make sure the property is clean and habitable. The ingoing property report helps any claims that may be made on the bond by the landlord at the end of the tenancy.

It is the tenant's responsibility to keep the rented premises clean and not cause damage to the property, fixtures and fittings.

General repairs

If something of a non-urgent nature breaks down, leaks or needs repairing, the tenant is required to contact the landlord or landlord's agent in writing as soon as the fault occurs. The written notification should outline in detail the repairs that require attention.

Keep a copy of the letter with date and time the letter was delivered.

Landlord's responsibility

When letting out a property it is the landlord's responsibility to ensure that the property is clean and habitable and meets all health and safety requirements.

It is also the landlord's responsibility to maintain the property during the period of a tenancy so that it is in a reasonable state of repair allowing for wear and tear.

If the landlord refuses to carry out repairs the tenant may make an Application to the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT) seeking compensation.

General Repairs

If the tenant reports that repairs of a non-urgent nature are needed to the property, it is the landlord's responsibility to carry out those repairs as soon as possible after notification by the tenant. If not carried out within a reasonable period of time the tenant can make an Application to NTCAT for a determination.

Emergency repairs

Emergency repairs should be reported to the landlord or landlord's agent immediately that the fault is known.

This includes:

- a burst water service
- a blocked or broken lavatory system
- a serious roof leak
- a gas leak
- a dangerous electrical fault
- serious storm, flooding or fire damage
- a failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply
- a failure or breakdown of any essential service for hot water, cooking, heating or laundering
- any fault or damage that causes the premises to be unsafe or not secure

Do this in writing and keep a copy.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Landlords must either make repairs within 5 business days of receiving written advice from the tenant, or advise of arrangements for repairs to be done within 14 days of that advice.

If emergency repairs are not carried out the tenant can apply to NTCAT for an order to remedy the breach of the lease agreement or conduct an inquiry into the possibility of terminating the lease.

Having Problems with your landlord?

Tenants should first try and settle any dispute with their landlord or agent.

Do this in writing, and keep a copy of all correspondence, and if telephone calls are made or received, keep a record of the date, time and the name of the person you spoke to.

If the matter cannot be resolved, contact Consumer Affairs on 1800 019 319 and discuss the matter with a tenancy officer.

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