



Home Heating

Policy Intent

Housing Tasmania considers adequate home heating in Tasmania is fundamental to achieving good housing and health and well-being outcomes for tenants.

Adequate home heating means a heater located in each dwelling sufficient to heat the main living space.

The home heating policy defines the protocols and procedures relating to the types and sizes of heaters to be installed.

Types of heaters to be installed

Where a dwelling is located in a natural gas zone, the primary space heating source is to be a flued natural gas space heater, unless installation is assessed on a case by case basis as unviable. Tenancies in suburbs where natural gas is available are required to have a signed lease agreement which includes a gas schedule. Tenancies are also required to apply for a gas connection with one of the retail providers as stipulated in this policy under "Tenancies in Gas Zones".

Where a dwelling is not located in a natural gas zone or the installation of natural gas space heating is assessed as not viable, the primary heating source is to be a heat pump, unless installation is assessed on a case by case basis as unviable.

Where a heat pump cannot be viably installed, direct electric heating will be the primary heating source.

Wood burning heaters are not to be installed under any circumstances.

Where existing wood burning heaters have failed and tenants wish to install their own replacement wood heaters, the installations are not to be approved.

Sizing of heaters to be installed

The sizing of the heaters will be influenced by a number of factors, primarily whether the house is insulated, construction method (slab on ground or other) volume of living area, orientation and area location.

The size and type of the heaters to be installed is determined by Statewide Maintenance Services. Where feasible, heat pumps and electric heating are to be sized to enable connection to Aurora Heating Discount (HydroHeat).

Supplementary heating

Additional or "supplementary" heating appliances are not to be installed, except where a member of the household is quadriplegic or installation has been approved on a case by case basis by the Manager Housing Services.

With installations involving quadriplegia, Service Centres must certify the need to Statewide Maintenance Services at the time the supplementary heating is ordered.

With installations requiring approval from the Manager Housing Services, copies of the approvals must be sent to Statewide Maintenance Services at



the time the supplementary heating is ordered.

Tenants may use their own supplementary heaters, including “plug-in” electrical types. However when tenants wish to install their own supplementary heating appliances, they must seek approvals from the appropriate Service Centres.

Generally approvals will only be given where the heating appliances could be installed without significant structural modifications. Approval is not to be given for the installation of un-flued supplementary gas heating.

Each case will need to be considered on its merits and be subject to Housing Tasmania’s existing policies relating to tenant modifications of their houses. Any approvals that result in modifications would require the tenants to return the houses to the original states, at their own cost, prior to ending the tenancies.

When houses become vacant, existing supplementary heaters are to be recorded in the next lease agreements as items which will not be maintained and may be removed on failure.

Similarly with purchased properties that have supplementary heating, the lease agreement is to list the supplementary heaters as items which will not be maintained and may be removed on failure. In tenanted houses, where supplementary heaters that are already installed fail, as at the date of this policy they are to be repaired or replaced.

Where Housing Tasmania is supporting a transfer of tenants who have previously been allowed supplementary heating, the installation of supplementary heating in the new dwelling will be subject to this policy.

Thermal Efficiency

All new public housing developments are to be designed for optimal passive solar performance and, at a minimum, are to comply with the Building Code of Australia energy efficiency rating requirements applicable at the time.

When purchasing properties, consideration is to be given to the energy efficiency rating in line with the mandatory disclosure of residential building energy efficiency.

Application

This policy applies to all public rental housing.

The policy does not apply to group homes or similar supported accommodation.

Implementation

Existing dwellings are to have their heating appliances replaced/renewed through a “replace on fail” strategy in accordance with this policy.

Existing properties which have failed wood heaters are to have the ceiling insulation reviewed by Statewide Maintenance Services to ensure the level of insulation is appropriate for the type of heating to be installed.

Constructed dwellings are required to comply with this policy.



Purchased dwellings are required to comply with this policy. The type of heater in a purchased property will remain until requiring replacement, at which time it shall be replaced/renewed in accordance with this policy.

Tenancies in Gas Zones

Tenancies in gas zones must have a signed lease or lease extension agreement with Housing Tasmania which includes the gas schedule – special conditions. The schedule contains special conditions outlining the tenant's obligations to allow Housing Tasmania to install a natural gas connection to the home and replace the existing electric hot water cylinder, electric heater, wood heater or electric range with a natural gas appliance.

Tenants are also required to apply for a gas connection with one of the gas retailer providers, either Aurora or Option One, as part of their lease contract. This includes:

- An eligible applicant for public rental housing accepting the offer of a home
- A transfer to another home, including mutual exchanges
- Succession of tenancy or changes in lead tenants

A vacating tenant should be advised to contact their gas retailer for a final gas reading and to have the gas disconnected.

Tenant Responsibilities

Tenants are responsible for reporting any damage or malfunction of heating provided by Housing Tasmania to Statewide Maintenance Services as soon as the damage or malfunction is noted.

Tenants are also responsible for cleaning heaters for the duration of the tenancy and on vacation of the property. This includes ensuring heaters are free from dust, cleaning of wood fire flues annually. Heat pump filters and gas filters must be cleaned every quarter.

Tenants found to have deliberately damaged their existing heating to in an attempt to warrant a new type of heating will be charged for costs. In these cases the Area Manager should be notified of the deliberate damage and will make a decision around the provision of a replacement heater.

Exceptions

Manager Housing Services has discretion to approve installation of supplementary heating outside of policy guidelines where circumstances warrant this. Where discretion is applied all decisions should be documented and copies placed on the relevant files.

No discretion exists to install replacement wood heaters.