

Simplified Landlord Checklist

Vital Services

As a landlord, you are responsible for providing vital services to your tenants. These include fuel, hydro, gas and hot and cold water. If you pay for a vital service and breach your contract with the supplier of the service, you face possible tickets and fines from Municipal Licensing and Standards. However, if your tenant has expressly agreed to pay for a vital service, this will not apply to you; you just need to ensure access to the vital service in question.

- Ensure that your furnaces and boilers have both the proper fuel and the right amount of fuel
- Have furnaces and boilers inspected and maintained regularly

Heat is considered a vital service from June 1 to September 15. During this time you must ensure that the heat is kept on at 21 degrees Celsius.

- You can offer tenants space heaters or fans if they complain about temperature, as temps fluctuate in May and September.
- Use common sense – eg heatwave in September, you don't have to turn the heat on until temp drops
- If you provide hydro, ensure that hydro accounts are paid
- Ensure gas lines are safely working, if the unit has gas heating or a gas stove
- You must provide hot and cold water to all tenants, so inspect your hot water heater regularly
- Vital services can only be turned off when it is necessary to do repairs. Give tenants as much notice as possible.
- According to new bylaws under "RentSafeTO," tenant requests are urgent if they affect vital services and must be addressed within 24 hours. For full information on RentSafeTO, please [click here](#).
- Interfering with or discontinuing a vital service for a tenant is considered an offense under the Residential Tenancies Act, and could be met with up to a \$25 000 fine.
- If you have an issue with a tenant, contact their housing worker or your nearest Housing Help centre for assistance in solving the problem.

For the full bylaw on vital services in Toronto, please [click here](#). More information on enforcement of the vital services bylaw, please [click here](#).