

Health and safety ignored

Many landlords are still unaware of even basic health and safety rules when leaving their properties for rental, according to The Association of Independent Inventory Clerks (AIIC).

For example, one in ten rented properties have items such as soft furnishings, bedding and furniture that do not have the required fire and furnishing compliance labels and have to be removed. What's more, AIIC members are still finding the dubious - and illegal - practice of landlords 'selling' odd items of furniture, without fire & furnishing compliance labels, to incoming tenants.

Pat Barber, Chair of The AIIC, comments: "A recent



Landlords are ignoring furniture fire requirements

tenant told us - 'I bought the sofa for £1, it's really old and tatty, but a great bargain.' When we pointed out that he would have to take it with him or dispose of it at his own cost when he moved out he was not quite so excited.

"We see time and time again, properties with fire hazards such as gas cylinders and chemicals stored incorrectly by the landlord. We have also seen tins of paint without the lids properly closed in kitchen cupboards - an accident waiting to happen. In fact, on compiling a new inventory recently, an inventory clerk opened a cupboard door and a large pot of paint fell from above, turning her nice smart black suit a whiter shade of pale!

"On more serious note, we are urging all landlords to ensure that all the soft furnishing, bedding and furniture is fire retardant with the correct labels and that hazardous materials are not stored in the property or garage."

AIIC has identified the top 10 most common health and safety issues found in rented properties and they include:

- 1 Non-compliant furniture bedding and soft furnishings
- 2 Loose sockets and light switches
- 3 No smoke alarms or monoxide detectors fitted
- 4 Obscured gas meters and electricity mains fuse boxes
- 5 Curtain tracks and blinds where screws have been put directly into the wall without using raw plugs
- 6 Loose/damaged steps or paving outside the property
- 7 Loose stair carpet
- 8 Poorly maintained decking
- 9 Air vents and air bricks covered in rooms especially where there are gas appliances
- 10 Locked windows with no keys supplied