

Festive fire safety Tips

to keep you safe this Christmas.



Christmas is a time for family and fun – it's all about spending time with the people you love being with and having a wonderful time eating, drinking, and being merry. Unfortunately, the risk of house fires and casualties increase during the festive season, so while we don't want the merriment to end, it also means taking some extra precautions to make sure that Christmas time is as safe as it is enjoyable.

Kitchen

Christmastime and cooking often go hand in hand, with turkey dinners and a few festive tipples being the order of the day for many of us. These are some of the best parts of celebrating during the festive season, but they also require some care and attention.

People who live with conditions that can make them forgetful, or take medication which can cause this, should be extra careful when they're cooking this winter. It's a good idea to make sure your smoke alarms are in working condition, and fitting a heat alarm can also help provide extra peace of mind in the kitchen. It's incredibly important not to leave hot oil unattended as this can pose an especially high risk of fire.

Living Room

Unplugging lights when you're not using them in your home, especially when you go out or go to bed, is imperative. It's also good to remember that lights get very hot, and you or your family are at risk of burns if you touch lights that are on or have recently been on. With that in mind, try to keep lights away from material that can scorch or burn easily, like paper or fabric.

If you're using portable heaters in your living room to keep warm, never cover them – don't drape things over them or use them to dry clothes, and keep them away from furniture or curtains. Fitting a carbon monoxide detector in rooms where you use gas or paraffin heaters can help avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, as can using these heaters in a larger, ventilated space.

Bedroom

Candles are lovely for creating a Christmasy feeling in a room, but always remember to extinguish them before you go to bed. Put them on heat-resistant surfaces, and out of the way of children or any fabrics which could easily catch fire, like ribbons or Christmas cards.

Cosying up under an electric blanket is wonderful on a cold night, but always remember to switch it off when you're in bed unless it's marked as suitable for all-night use. Keep an eye out for things that don't look right with your blanket, like scorch marks, fraying fabrics or exposed wires, which are a sign that your blanket isn't safe to use.

Remember to make sure your home is safe before you go to bed. If you've been drinking or taking drugs, you'll be more likely to fall asleep, but less likely to acknowledge the signs that a fire may have started in your home. They can also make it more difficult for you to escape a fire as you might be disorientated. Smoking is the main cause of deaths from fire in the home – it is always best to step outside for a cigarette to prevent any risk.

To help get your home winter safe, you can book a free home fire safety visit from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, who can give you advice and even install smoke alarms for free. To request a visit, call 0800 0731 999, or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk.

In the event of a fire, always dial 999.