



STAYING SAFE AND WARM IN WINTER

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DID YOU KNOW?

Around 65 fires a year are caused by faulty electric blankets.

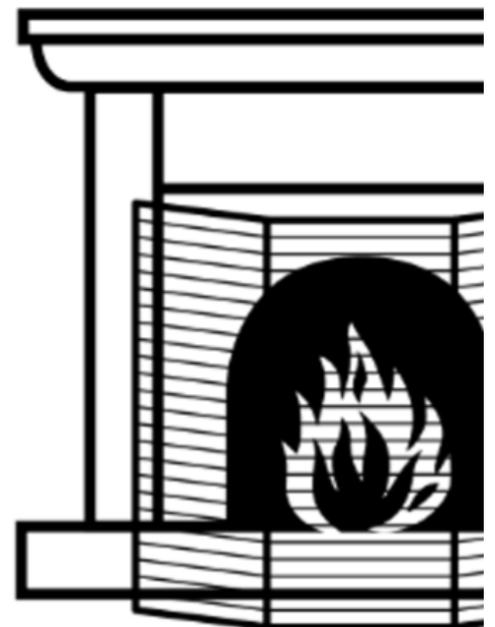
Two fires a day are caused by heaters.

In England on average, 7,700 chimney fires happen every year.

Because we all need to keep safe and warm in the winter, the colder months can be a particularly risky time for fires. This leaflet will help keep you warm and safe.

Open Fires

- Be careful when using open fires to keep warm. Make sure you always use a fire guard to protect against flying sparks from hot embers.
- Make sure embers are under control and properly put out before you go to bed.
- Keep chimneys and flues clean and well maintained.
- Make sure decorations are well clear of open fires.



USING HEATERS

Keep heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.

We always ask customers never to use electric or portable heaters in the home because of the dangers, and because they almost always cost more to use, but we know people sometimes turn to them when they feel they have no other choice.

If you are going to use them, please follow these important tips to help keep you and your family safe.



- Always unplug electric heaters when you go out or go to bed. Never leave them unattended, even if you are at home.
- Try to secure heaters against a wall to stop them falling over. If this isn't possible, make sure they are on a level surface, well away from anyone or anything that could knock them over.
- Only use electric or portable heaters in well-ventilated areas. Heaters use oxygen so you could suffocate if a room is not properly aired.
- Never power heaters from extension leads – they can become overloaded and cause a fire.
- Always check your heater for wear and tear and don't use it if it isn't in good condition.
- Only buy appliances from reputable companies.
- Register your appliances in case the manufacturer ever recalls them.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working so any fire is caught early and you can get out safely.

USING ELECTRIC BLANKETS

Never use hot water bottles in the same bed as an electric blanket, even if it is switched off.



Store electric blankets flat or rolled up

- Try not to buy second-hand blankets and check regularly for wear and tear. Replace your blanket when it is more than 10 years old.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Look out for the following symbols which show a blanket is safe to use.
- Unplug blankets before you get into bed, unless they have a thermostat control for safe all-night use.
- Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded to prevent damaging the internal wiring.
- Test electric blankets every 3 years. Age UK or your local fire and rescue service may be able to do this for you.



IF THE ELECTRICITY FAILS

Keep a battery-operated light or torch handy in case of a power cut or failure.



Keep a torch and batteries handy



- If you have to use candles or matches always take special care. Put them out completely before leaving the room or going to bed.
- Never use candles to try and heat your home.
- Make sure candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains.
- Keep a mobile phone handy so you can still make an emergency call if there is a power cut.

Home Insurance

In case the unthinkable happens, please make sure you have contents insurance for your personal possessions. We cover the buildings insurance for your home, but not your personal things inside.

If you are a homeowner, please check the terms of your lease or agreement to understand your insurance requirements. We do not provide contents insurance for any homeowners, and only buildings insurance in some cases. Your lease or agreement will explain.