

FIRE SAFETY **IN THE WINTER**



**FIRE
KILLS**

**YOU CAN
PREVENT IT**

Did you know?

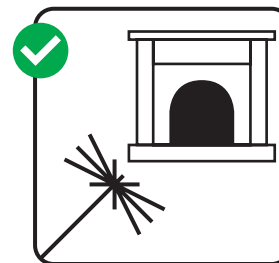
- 5,000 fires a year are caused by faulty electric blankets.
- In the UK on average, 12,000 chimney fires occur every year

This leaflet will help you keep safe throughout the winter period as this can be a particularly risky time for fires due to the need to keep warm.

Heating your home

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.

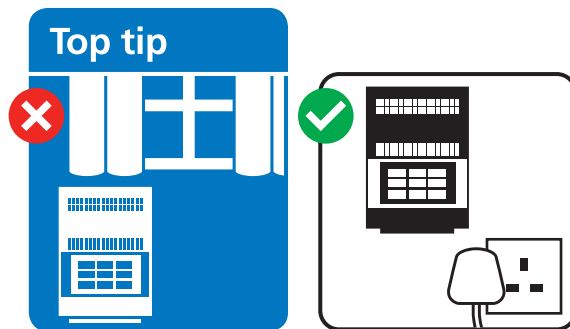


Heating your home

Using portable heaters

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

- Always unplug electric heaters when you go out or go to bed.
- Try to secure heaters against a wall to stop them falling over.
- Only use gas or paraffin heaters in well-ventilated areas. Heaters consume oxygen so you could suffocate if a room is not properly aired.



Keep away from fabric

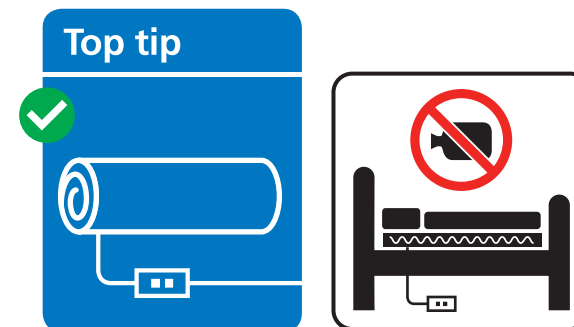
Keeping warm

Using electric blankets

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

- Unplug blankets before you get into bed, unless they have a thermostat control for safe all-night use.
- Don't leave electric blankets folded as this damages the internal wiring. Store them flat or rolled up instead.
- Test electric blankets every 3 years. Age Concern or your local fire service may be able to do this for you.

- 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.
- Look out for the following symbols which show a blanket is safe to use.



Store electric blankets flat or rolled up

If the electricity fails

Alternative lighting

Keep a battery operated light or torch handy in the event of a powercut or failure.

- If you have to use candles or matches always take special care. Put them out completely before leaving the room or going to bed.
- Use a snuffer or a spoon to put out candles. It's safer than blowing them out when sparks can fly.
- 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.



Keep a torch and batteries handy

Fire safety for thatched buildings

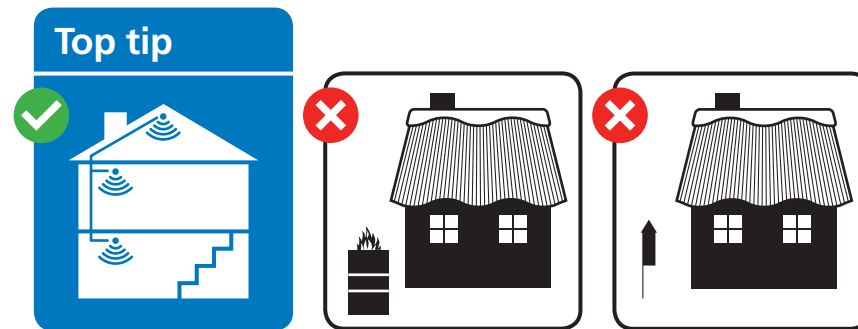
Fit a smoke alarm in the loft and make sure it is connected with other alarms in the house.

- Use lightning conductors that have been tested and check they carry one of these signs – they show they are approved and are safe.



- Don't burn rubbish or garden waste near a thatched property.
- Use a bulkhead light fitting in your loft space, instead of an exposed light bulb, as these are more of a fire hazard.
- Never light fireworks near the property.

Fit TV aerials to free-standing poles to avoid thatched roofs being struck by lightning.



Fit a smoke alarm in the loft

Remember these general tips from our *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet to stay safe from fire.

Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home. ✓

Test your smoke alarm batteries every week. Change them every year. Never remove them. ✓

Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking is on. Keep matches and sauce pan handles out of children's reach. ✓

Take care when cooking with hot oil – it sets alight easily. ✓

Extension leads and adaptors have a limit to how many amps they can take. Be careful not to overload them. ✓

Dispose of cigarettes carefully. Put them out. Right out. ✓

Make sure candles are always secure and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains. ✓

Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows it. ✓

If there's a fire, get out, stay out and call 999. ✓

Close inside doors at night to stop fire from spreading. ✓

www.direct.gov.uk/firekills

FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

These general tips are taken from our *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet. For a copy, visit www.direct.gov.uk/firekills or contact your local fire and rescue service.



**SMOKE ALARMS
SAVE
LIVES**

For more information on
general fire safety visit
www.direct.gov.uk/firekills

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