



Winter Fire Safety



The festive period is meant to be a time of celebration – family and friends coming to visit and extra decorations around your house. There's Christmas dinner, wrapping presents, last minute decorating or squeezing in one last guest... there's always lots to think about.

We want to make sure that staying safe is on that list. Keeping you and your home safe is important so we've put together some reminders of quick and simple things to do and watch out for over the festive season and beyond.

Festive Safety Tips

- Check your smoke and heat alarms are working. Replace batteries if necessary.
- Never place Christmas cards or decorations around the mantelpiece.
- Never leave cooking unattended, especially when using hot oil.

Fairy Lights and Decorations

- Check your Christmas light plugs are fitted with the correct fuse, don't overload extension leads and ensure all electrical devices are approved and safe to use.
- Always switch Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.
- Decorations can burn easily – don't place them near lights or heaters.

Christmas dinner

Cooking is the biggest cause of house fires in Scotland.

- Never leave cooking unattended, especially when using stovetops, ovens, or grills.
- Don't cook whilst under the influence.
- Always turn off kitchen appliances when finished cooking and ensure tea towels and oven gloves are not left on the hob.
- Stay attentive to your cooking and avoid holiday distractions.
- Keep decorations and other fire risks away from open flames or heat sources.



Returning home after a night out at a Christmas party or festive visits with friends? Keep to cold food if you are peckish. If you do want something hot, try to pick this up on the way home.

Real Christmas Trees

Caring for your tree:

- Keep your tree away from heat sources. These include fireplaces, heat vents, candles and cigarettes.
- Try to avoid putting your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks.
- Always keep the tree stand filled with water.

Disposing of your tree:

- Take your tree to a recycling centre or request for it to be collected by a community pickup service.
- When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly.

Glasgow City Council have shared information on how to recycle your Christmas tree on their website. You can also find out more on page 35.

Winter Safety Tips

Take time to check on elderly relatives and neighbours this Christmas as they are at greater risk from fire, particularly if they suffer from ill-health or disability.

Reaching out to our more vulnerable neighbours can make a big difference at this time of year. If you know of neighbours or anyone with mobility or health issues, checking in on them on a regular basis to ensure they have food and other essentials at home could be lifesaving – and would be very much appreciated.

If you have concerns about any elderly neighbour or friend, help is to hand. Contact Age UK's helpline on 0800 12 44 222. We are also here to help – please get in touch by phone on 0141 560 6000 or speak to your Housing Officer for help and advice.

Don't use heaters to dry clothes

Not only can this cause problems with damp, heaters can also cause fires when things are placed too close to them or left on top. You can find more advice on keeping your home free from damp on page 19.



Disposable barbecues

We are still feeling the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. It may be tempting to try and save money by using disposable barbecues to cook or heat your home.

Disposable barbecues can give off fumes for hours after you've used them.

They should never be used indoors or inside an enclosed space.



Candles

Candles and tea-lights can create a relaxing or special atmosphere in the home, used by people of all ages. They are also part of many religious and cultural celebrations - but are also a major cause of fires.

Keep safe by following these tips:

- Candles and incense sticks should always be held firmly in tight fitting holders and placed on a flat, stable, heat-resistant surface where they won't be knocked over.
- Never leave a lit tea-light unattended – even for a few seconds – and always use proper holders.
- Keep candles and flames away from clothes, curtains, cushions, paper and other things that might catch fire such as homemade decorations.
- Keep candles and flames out of wind or draughts.
- Do not put them under shelves, they can heat up the shelf above and cause a fire.
- Ensure candles and other naked flames are out of reach of children and pets and never leave them alone with burning candles.
- Do not use them if you've been drinking alcohol or feel sleepy.

Never leave candles unattended. Always put them out when you leave the room, go to bed, or leave the house.

Carbon monoxide has no smell or taste – it's unlikely you would notice straight away if you were breathing it in.

If you're suffering from any of the symptoms and feel better when you leave the house, it could be CO poisoning.

If you're concerned you or someone in your household may be suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning, make sure you do the following:

- Get fresh air immediately.
- Open all doors and windows, switch off gas appliances and leave the house.
- Contact your GP, who can check and advise if you need treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If you're concerned there is immediate danger, call the gas emergency helpline on 0800 111 999.

What are the physical symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?



If you've been drinking, don't cook. NEVER leave cooking unattended.



It's safer to smoke outside, or standing at an exterior door or window, **especially if you are tired or have been drinking.**



Keep portable heaters away from furniture, bedding or curtains. Don't sit too close and **turn off portable heaters before going to bed.**



Unplug fairy lights or other electrical Christmas decorations **when you leave the house or go to bed.**



If you've got a live Christmas tree it's important to **keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.**



Always put candles out when you leave the room, go to bed or leave the house.



Keep candles away from anything which could catch fire.



Do not smoke, use naked flames or get near to anything which may cause a fire whilst wearing clothing or a bandage that has **been in contact with emollient skin cream.**



Make sure your **smoke and heat alarms are working. Test them every week.**



Keep in touch with friends, relatives and neighbours who live alone or **who may be at risk.** A **phone call**, or a chat in person **can make a massive difference at this time of year.**



The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service offer free home safety visits. Please get in touch and arrange a FREE home fire safety visit with local firefighters by calling 0800 0731 999 or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk

If you are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, food prices, energy costs and general living costs increasing, we are here to help. Contact us for advice and support through our Money Advice Team (GEMAP) on 0141 560 6000 for a telephone appointment.



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Working together for a safer Scotland

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Call us to arrange a free Home Fire Safety Visit for you or someone you know who may be isolated or at greater risk from fire. Together, we can all stay fire safe.
CALL **0800 0731 999** TEXT **'FIRE'** TO **80800**
or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk