

## > JOIN SCOTLAND'S FIGHT AGAINST FIRE

Get ready for winter. Make sure you have working smoke alarms. Consider fitting a heat alarm in your kitchen to give you early warning of a fire in the home.

Take extra care when cooking if you suffer from any illness, disability or are taking prescribed medications that makes you careless or forgetful.

We all know older people who are at risk from fire – it could be a grandmother, aunt, friend or neighbour. Join Scotland's Fight Against Fire. If you, or someone you know, is at risk from fire, contact us now.

call **0800 0731 999**  
visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)  
Or talk to your local firefighters.

## > ALCOHOL

If you're tired, have been drinking, or taking drugs, you will be less alert to the signs of fire.

You are more likely to fall asleep.

You are less likely to wake up if a fire does start, particularly if you don't have working smoke or heat alarms in your home.

If fire does break out alcohol or drugs can heighten feelings of disorientation, making it difficult for you to escape.

**Cooking and alcohol can be a recipe for disaster.**

If you've been drinking alcohol or taking drugs, don't cook.

**Smoking is the main cause of death from fire in the home.**

You are more likely to lose your life in a fire if you drink and smoke.

In many fires started by cigarettes, people have also been drinking and are sleepy.

Never smoke in bed.

Don't smoke in your chair if you've been drinking or you're feeling tired. If you do feel tired smoke outside or stand up and smoke at a window or outside door.

## > FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk) for practical fire safety advice, or talk to your local fire fighters at your nearest community fire station. You will find contact details on the website, in your local library and in the phone book.

For specific information and advice for older persons contact the Age Scotland helpline. Age Scotland Fire Safety Factsheet 101s provides essential fire and safety information for older people and persons who care for older people.  
call **0845 125 9732** visit [www.agescotland.org.uk](http://www.agescotland.org.uk)

The Scottish Government 'Ready for Winter' campaign sets out simple steps we can all take in the home, before a journey (whether driving, cycling or on foot), at work and in our communities to prepare for Winter. It also encourages people to look out for others, especially the more vulnerable, when bad weather strikes.  
visit [www.readyscotland.org](http://www.readyscotland.org)

## > GET YOUR FREE SMOKE ALARMS

A short visit from the Fire and Rescue Service will help make sure your home is as safe as it can be. They can even install smoke alarms, free, if you need them. It only takes about 20 minutes, and their advice and help could save your life.

To request a free Home Fire Safety Visit,  
call **0800 0731 999**  
visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

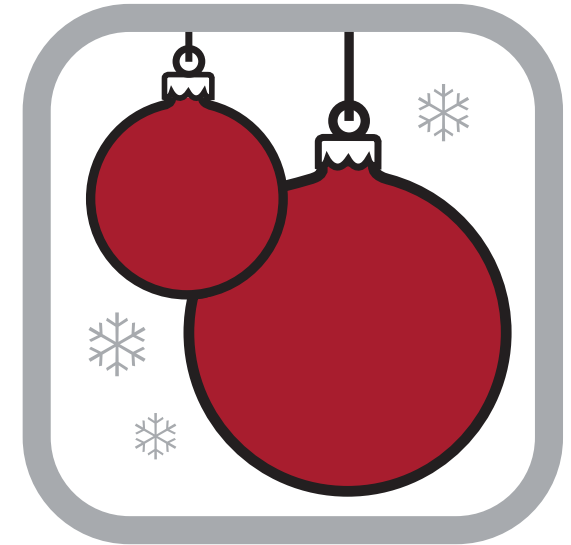
If you would like this document in another format or language, please call **0800 0731 999**.



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Get ready for winter- book a  
**FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT**  
Call **0800 0731 999**  
or visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)



## Fact.

House fires and casualties increase during winter, with a **high risk** over the festive period.



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
Working together for a safer Scotland

## > USING PORTABLE HEATERS

- Keep heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.
- Unplug or switch off portable heaters when you go out or go to bed.
- Secure portable heaters in position to avoid the risk of them being knocked over.
- Only use gas or paraffin heaters in well-ventilated areas. Heaters consume oxygen and in enclosed spaces can produce harmful gases and/or cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Fit a Carbon Monoxide detector in all rooms containing gas or paraffin heaters.
- Never use portable gas cylinder heaters in high rise flats
- Always change gas cylinders in the open air. Never change gas cylinders in an enclosed space.

## > USING ELECTRIC BLANKETS

- Never leave an electric blanket switched on when you're in bed unless it's marked 'suitable for all night use'.
- Ensure your electric blanket is tested and serviced in accordance with manufacturer's guidance, in particular after the guarantee runs out. Manufacturers often recommend testing blankets every 3 years.
- Check the blanket, plug and flex regularly for damage (e.g. fraying fabric, scorch marks, exposed wires). If you're in any doubt, don't use the blanket.
- Store electric blankets safely – roll them, don't fold them.

## > FAIRY LIGHTS AND DECORATIONS

- Unplug fairy lights or other electrical Christmas decorations when you leave the house or go to bed.
- Check fairy lights are in good working order and replace any bulbs that have blown.
- Bulbs can get very hot, don't let them touch materials that can scorch or burn easily, such as paper or fabrics.
- Make sure the fuse in the plug is the correct rating.
- If you need to plug more than one appliance into an electrical socket use a multi-socket adaptor which is fitted with a fuse and has surge protection.

## > CANDLES

- Extinguish all candles before you go to bed. In particular, never leave a burning candle in a bedroom.
- Keep candles, matches and cigarette lighters out of reach of children and never place lit candles where they can be knocked over by children or household pets.
- Always put candles on a heat resistant surface/ holders. Be especially careful with night lights and tea lights, which can get hot enough to melt plastic or ignite combustible Christmas decorations.
- Position candles away from objects that may catch fire, like Christmas trees, greeting cards, ribbons and other decorations.
- Never move lit candles.
- Always use a candle snuffer or a spoon to extinguish candles or tea lights.

## > WHEN CELEBRATING

**Consuming even a moderate amount of alcohol can greatly increase the risk of fire and fire injury.**

- Ensure that exit door keys are kept readily available and/or exit doors can be opened from the inside in the event of fire or emergency.
- Take care of older people, children and those who may find it difficult to react quickly and safely if there is a fire.
- Make sure your family and/or visitors know what action to take in the event of fire or actuation of smoke/heat alarms.
- Smoking is the main cause of death from fire in the home. If people are smoking in your home provide a sufficient number of ashtrays.
- Stub out cigarettes properly – make sure there's no smoke.
- Pour water on cigar and cigarette ends before putting in a bin.
- Leaving cooking unattended or being distracted while cooking is the most frequent cause of fire in the home. Never cook hot food while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- If celebrating with fireworks remember that they are explosives. Store them safely out of the reach of children and always follow the fireworks code.

## > FESTIVE SAFETY TIPS

- Check your smoke and heat alarms are working. Replace batteries if necessary.
- If you have an open fire make sure your chimney is swept before winter. Always use a fire guard, secured in position, to protect against flying sparks from hot embers.
- Never place Christmas cards or decorations around the mantelpiece.
- Check your Christmas light plugs are fitted with the correct fuse, don't overload extension leads and ensure all electrical devices are Intertek BEAB approved.
- 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.
- Never leave cooking unattended, especially when using hot oil. For early warning of fire consider fitting a heat alarm in your kitchen.
- 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.

