



R B F & R S

news release

18/12/2009

No: 57/F&R

WINTER WEATHER - HOME FIRE SAFETY

With snow, severe weather and freezing temperatures set to continue into next week, Berkshire firefighters are reminding residents to pay attention to their safety at home as well as on the roads.

With everyone spending more time indoors, wider use of heaters and open fires can increase the risk of fires – ensure your chimney is swept and clear and always use a fireguard with an open fire. Heaters should have a working thermostat and should always be switched off when not in use.

Lit candles look pretty but must not be left burning unattended or left on flammable surfaces. Christmas tree lights and electrical decorations are part of the festive scenery but remember to turn them off and unplug them when you go to bed! Likewise, if you, or anyone in your family, smokes, make sure cigarettes are properly extinguished – a smouldering cigarette end can lead to a house fire all too easily.

Christmas cooking disasters can mean more than a burnt turkey and disappointed diners – keep an eye on ovens and hobs when they're in use and turn them off as soon as you have finished cooking.

If you're drying washing inside, don't drape it over heaters and switch off your tumble dryer when you have finished drying.

Check boilers are working correctly and keep an eye on external pipework as freezing can cause pipes to burst and lead to flooding.

Finally, test your smoke alarms and if you haven't got any – go out and buy some today. The best Christmas present of all is peace of mind and safety for your family. Berkshire's firefighters will be at the ready if needed but would prefer Berkshire residents to be visited by Santa's sleigh rather than a fire engine.

ENDS.