

FIRE SAFETY **IN THE WINTER**



**FIRE
KILLS**

**YOU CAN
PREVENT IT**

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Did you know?

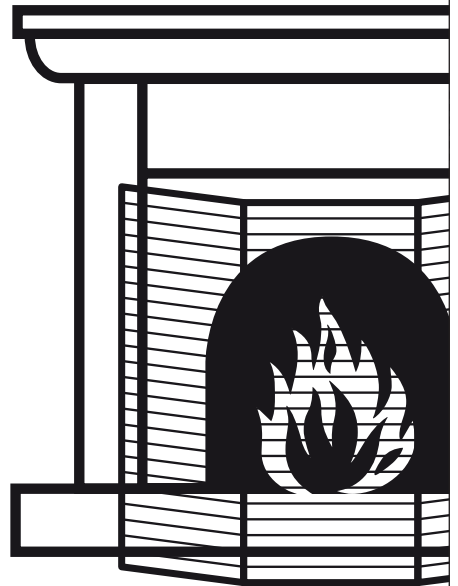
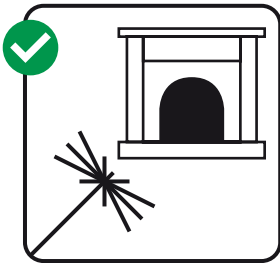
- **Around 65 fires a year are caused by faulty electric blankets.**
- **Two fires a day are caused by heaters.**
- **In England on average, 7,700 chimney fires occur every year.**

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.

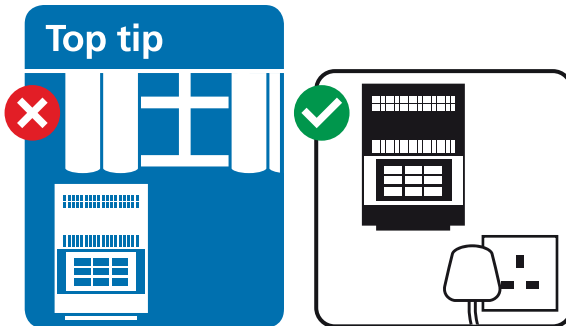


Heating your home

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.
- 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.
- 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.



British Standard Kitemark



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 power cut 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.
- 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.



British Standard Kitemark



- 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.

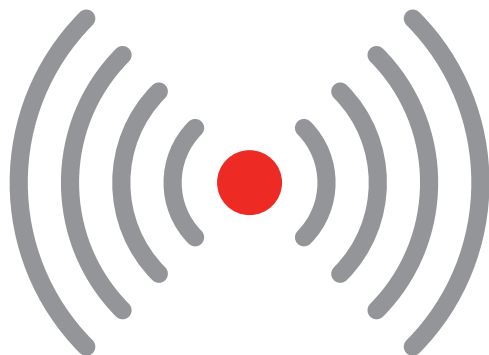
Fit TV aerials to free-standing poles to avoid thatched roofs being struck by lightning.

Top tip



Fit a smoke alarm in the loft





SMOKE ALARMS
SAVE
LIVES

For more information on
general fire safety visit
www.facebook.com/firekills

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