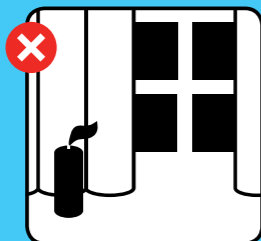


Electricity failure

Alternative lighting

- Keep a battery operated torch handy in the event of a power cut.
- If you have to use candles or matches take care, put them out completely before leaving a room or going to bed, never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Ensure candles are secured in a proper holder, are not used on top of your television and are kept away from material that can catch fire, like curtains.
- Keep a mobile phone handy so that you can still make an emergency call in the event of a power cut.



Useful information

Directgov

Includes advice on taking care of yourself in winter.

www.direct.gov.uk

Gas Safe register

You can check if an engineer is on the register by visiting the website

www.gassaferegister.co.uk

If you suspect a gas leak call **0800 111 999**

Energy Saving Trust

Provides free advice on saving energy. Call **0800 512012**

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Home Heat helpline

Provides advice for people having difficulty paying their fuel bills and how to make your home more energy efficient.

Call **0800 33 66 99**

www.homeheathelpline.org.uk

Age UK

Provides advice and information for people in later life. Call **0800 169 65 65**

www.ageuk.org.uk



Contact us

☎ 01392 872200

@ firekills@dsfire.gov.uk

🌐 www.dsfire.gov.uk

To request any information in this document in an alternative format or language please call **0800 731 1822** or email firesafety@dsfire.gov.uk



DEVON & SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Winter safety



**KEEP
SAFE**
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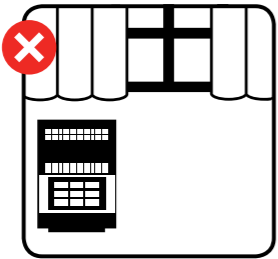
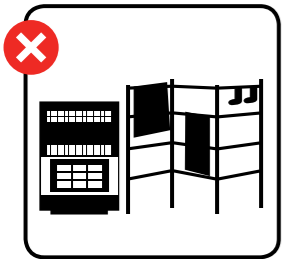
Acting to Protect & Save

Winter safety

With the onset of colder weather comes the need to keep warm and this brings increased fire risks. This leaflet is designed to help you stay safe and warm this winter.

Using portable heaters

- Keep heaters at least one metre away from curtains and furniture. 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 from falling over.
- Only use gas or paraffin heaters in well ventilated areas.



Open fires

- Keep chimneys and flues clean and well maintained, ensure they are swept once a year.
- Make sure you always use a fire guard to protect against sparks and hot embers.
- Ensure embers are properly put out before you go to bed.

Sweeping frequencies

Sweeping frequencies below are for guidance only. Frequency will depend on a number of factors including: type of fuel, appliance used, duration of use, moisture content of wood fuel, type of chimney.

Smokeless coals: at least once a year.

Wood: up to four times a year.

Bituminous coal: twice a year.

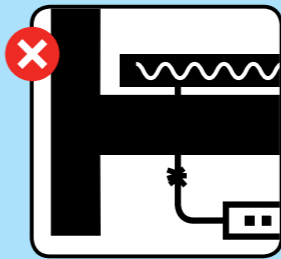
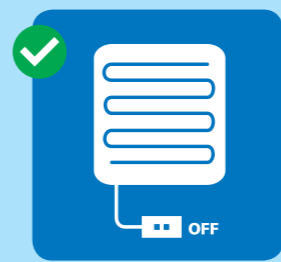
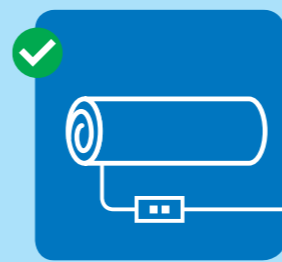
Oil: once a year.

Gas: once a year.



Using electric blankets

- Never use a hot water bottle 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 may damage the internal wiring. Store them flat or rolled up instead.
- Get your blanket tested by a qualified electrician every three years.
- Replace your blanket if it is more than ten years old.
- Never buy a second-hand electric blanket.



Wheat bags

Wheat bags are heating pads that usually contain buckwheat or wheatgrass, which can be warmed in a microwave.

Do

- only use as a heat pack for direct application to the body
- ensure your microwave turntable is working properly
- watch for signs of overuse such as burning or charring
- leave bags to cool in a safe area and on a non-combustible surface.

Don't

- use a wheat bag as a bed warmer
- overheat the bag
- reheat the bag until it has completely cooled – this can take up to two hours
- leave the microwave unattended when heating
- store the bag until it has completely cooled
- use the bag if you see evidence of damage.

