



SEASONS GREETINGS AND A FIRE FREE CHRISTMAS

Christmas is approaching – hopefully we will all relax and unwind, forget our problems and responsibilities and get ready to party. Please make sure that the flow of party spirit doesn't lead to extra dangers at home or at work.

Just follow the Fire and Rescue Service's Christmas safety tips and we hope you will have a very merry Christmas.

- Streamers –** Christmas decorations are often made of combustible materials. Never attach decorations to lights or heaters or place garlands immediately above or around fireplaces.
- Ash -** Even in a non-smoking household, visiting family and guests may be smokers and it is important that ash is put into appropriate containers. Ensure that any smoking materials are extinguished properly. Beware of smokers falling asleep during the day and never smoke in bed. If you have an open fireplace but only use it at this time of the year, make sure the chimney has been cleaned and swept.
- Familiarisation –** If you are having overnight guests who may be unfamiliar with your home, ensure that they know their quickest escape route in the event of a fire. Take particular care to ensure that any children, elderly visitors or people with disabilities can escape safely. Make guests aware of any special features in your home, for example, how the front door opens from the inside.
- Electricity -** Christmas is often a time when extra appliances are used. As a general rule, one socket should accommodate one plug, but if you must use adapters and extension leads, do not overload them and ensure that leads and flexes are in good condition.
- Parties -** A house or office full of people always presents more hazards than usual, particularly in the kitchen and especially if the drink has been flowing. Take extra care. Never overcrowd office spaces. This may make escape difficult as there could be too many people using a limited number of exits.
- Rubbish -** Be aware that with lots of cards, decorations and wrapping paper around, there are more things to catch fire. Dispose of wrapping paper and packaging sooner rather than later.
- Alarms -** Never take the batteries from your smoke alarm to run toys and other gifts. Buy a stock of batteries before Christmas. Remember to test your smoke alarm as usual. If you have music at your office Christmas party, make sure you can still hear the fire alarm.
- Candles -** Never leave candles unattended and never put lit candles in or near a Christmas tree.
- Toys -** Try to avoid buying toys that look as if they are made from combustible materials. Buy toys from established retailers and manufacturers if you can.
- Illuminations -** Test Christmas lights before putting them on the tree. Make sure they are fused properly. Replace sets of old lights, especially those that are not in perfect working condition. Remember to turn them off at night and when you go out.
- Cooking -** If leaving a turkey to cook overnight, ensure that you are familiar with the timer controls on your cooker and that the temperature is set correctly. If setting light to the Christmas pudding, don't pour the alcohol straight from the bottle. Put a small amount of alcohol in a non-combustible container, such as an eggcup, and pour onto the pudding from there. Beware of adding more alcohol – if you add alcohol to a flame, you could get a 'flashback'.
- Enjoy -** By following the SAFE PRACTICE spelt out in this code you will have a Safe and Merry Christmas.