

# **FIRE SAFETY IN THE WINTER**



**FIRE  
KILLS**

LET'S PREVENT IT

## Did you know?

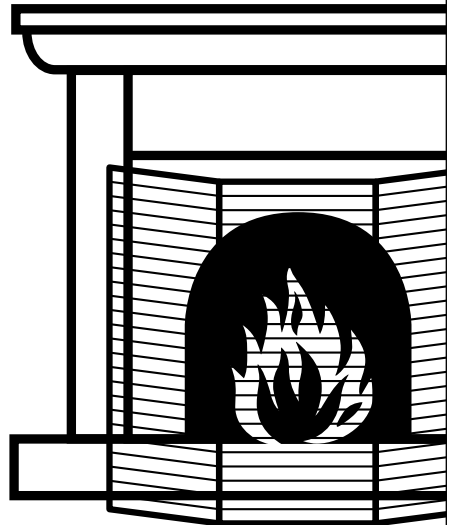
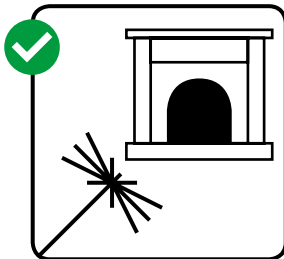
- **Around 43 fires a year are caused by faulty electric blankets in the home.**
- **Three fires a day are caused by heaters.**
- **In England on average, 3,800 chimney fires occur every year.**

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.
- Fit a carbon monoxide alarm in all rooms with fuel burning appliances.



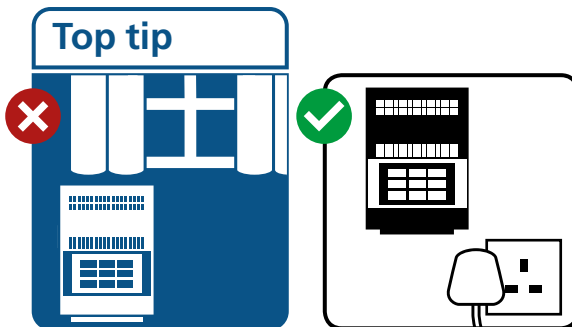
# Heating your home

## Using portable heaters

**Keep heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.**

- Only use gas or paraffin heaters in well-ventilated areas. Heaters consume oxygen so you could suffocate if a room is not properly aired.

- Always unplug electric heaters when you go out or go to bed.
- Try to secure heaters against a wall to stop them falling over.



**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**

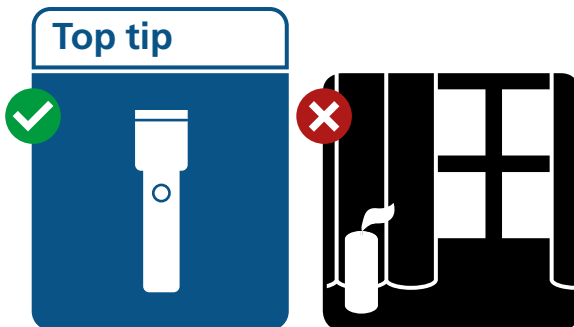


# If the electricity fails

## 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

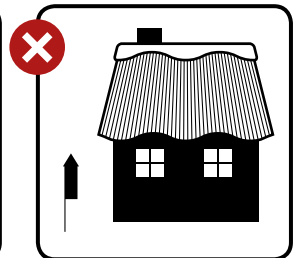
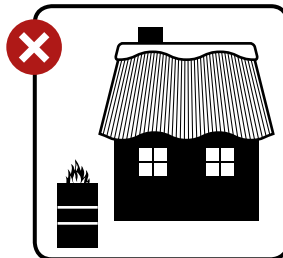


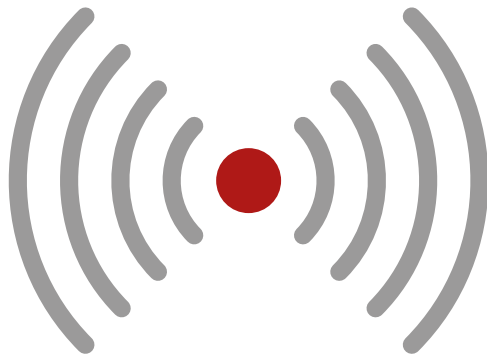
- Don't burn rubbish or garden waste near a thatched property.
- Use a bulkhead light fitting in your loft space, instead of an exposed light bulb, as these are more of a fire hazard.
- Never light fireworks near the property.

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



**Fit a smoke alarm in the loft**





**SMOKE ALARMS**

**SAVE**

**LIVES**

For advice specific to you and your home,  
visit **[www.ohfsc.co.uk](http://www.ohfsc.co.uk)** and complete  
your own home fire safety check.

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