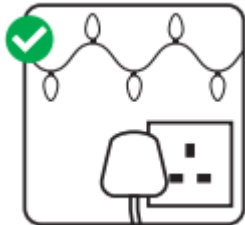




**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

# Fire Kills Campaign Quarterly Briefing Pack October – December 2021

October – Smoke alarm testing  
November – Electrical  
December – Christmas



## FIRE SAFETY IN THE WINTER



WISHING YOU A  
SAFE AND HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS



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Annex A – Electrical Fire Safety Week Stakeholder Pack (separate document)

# 1. Introduction

Welcome to the pack covering October to December 2021. This information pack provides details of national activity that may support local fire and rescue services in their local delivery and has been developed and collated by the Home Office Fire Kills team together with the National Fire Chiefs Council.

## Fire and Rescue Campaign Calendar

The calendar, with many cultural and awareness dates is available on the Fire Kills Portal. Details on accessing the portal, where you will find all of the Fire Kills campaign resources, are available in this pack.



www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk  
www.firekills.campaign.gov.uk

# FIRE AND RESCUE CAMPAIGN CALENDAR 2021

Key	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Fire Kills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NFCC Campaigns	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

## Fire Kills Practitioners' Group

The success of the Fire Kills Campaign relies on the close working relationship – on both the development and the delivery – between the Home Office, the NFCC and local fire and rescue services. The FKPG provides a sounding board, fresh ideas and ensures national activity reflects local requirements.

We currently have no representatives from the North East region. If you would like to represent the North East region on the group, or find out more, please contact [James Webb](#).

## 2. Summary and themes

October Smoke alarm testing	November Electrical	December Christmas
<u>Older People's Day</u> 1 October	<u>Bonfire Night</u> 5 November	<u>Christmas</u> 25 December
<u>Candle Fire Safety Week</u> 11-17 October	<u>Electrical Fire Safety Week</u> 22-28 November <i>(Please note this has changed from the date on the Fire and Rescue Campaign Calendar)</i>	<u>New Year's Eve</u> 31 December
<u>National Burn Awareness Day</u> 13 October		
<u>Product Safety Week</u> 18-22 October		

### ***Feedback***

We hope that these support local initiatives and would welcome any feedback on how they might be improved, what areas we could do more and any other ideas that you think will be beneficial to fire and rescue services up and down the country.

If you have any feedback or questions on the packs or the campaign more generally, please contact [James Webb](#).

### ***Resources, draft press release templates and social media posts***

At the end of this document, you will find draft press releases and social media posts associated with the themes and key awareness dates included in this pack.

### **3. October – Smoke alarm testing**

The national smoke alarm campaign began in 1988 to encourage people to install smoke alarms in their home. Since 2003, the primary message of the Fire Kills campaign has been to encourage regular testing of smoke alarms.

#### ***Messaging***

- You are around eight times more likely to die in a fire if you do not have any working smoke alarms.
- The easiest way to protect your home and family from fire is with working smoke alarms - get them, install them, test them. They could save your life.
- Fit at least one on every level of your home and test them monthly.
- Ten-year sealed battery smoke alarms are the best option. They are slightly more expensive, but you save on the cost of replacing batteries.
- If it is a ten-year alarm, you will need to replace the whole alarm every ten years.
- Never disconnect your alarms or take the batteries out if it goes off by mistake.
- The ideal position to install an alarm is on the ceiling in the middle of a room and on the hallway and landing so you can hear an alarm throughout your home.
- Don't put alarms in or near kitchens or bathrooms where smoke or steam can set them off by accident.
- Testing smoke alarms, tests the smoke sensor as well as the power supply and/or battery.



#### ***Template press notice***

This is available on page 20 to raise local media awareness of the necessity of smoke alarm testing. The press notice can be used as a template and adapted as necessary to include local fire and rescue service logos, identities and any local engagement activity.

### **3.1 Candle Fire Safety Week**

Candle Fire Safety Week runs from 11-17 October 2021. The aim of the Week is to raise awareness of the candle fire safety messages and behaviours.

#### **Candle fire safety messages**

- Make sure that when in use, candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains.
- Children should not be left alone with lit candles.
- Put candles out when you leave the room, and make sure they're put out completely at night.
- Keep pets away from lit candles



- **Keep the wax pool clear** of wick trimmings, matches and debris always.
- **Burn candles in a well-ventilated room, but avoid drafts, vents or air currents.** This will help prevent rapid or uneven burning, sooting, and excessive dripping.

- **Trim the wick** to ¼ inch each time before burning. Long or crooked wicks can cause uneven burning, dripping or flaring.
- Don't move candles once they are lit
- **Follow the manufacturer's recommendations** on burn time and proper use.



- Do not burn several candles close together as this might cause flaring (mainly with tea-lights).

- Use a snuffer or a spoon to put out candles. It's safer than blowing them out when sparks can fly.

#### **Template press notice**

This is available on page 21 to raise local media awareness around Candle Fire Safety Week. The press notice can be used as a template and adapted as necessary to include local fire and rescue service logos, identities and any local engagement activity.

### **3.2 National Burn Awareness Day**

The Children's Burns Trust is preparing for this year's National Burn Awareness Day on 13th October 2021. In addition to the usual Toolkit, other resources will include a First Aid Webinar to be broadcast on the day. You can subscribe to the Children's Burns Trust Newsletter [here](#) to ensure you receive all the information as soon as it is available.

**3.3 Product Safety Week**



## **4. November – Electrical**

### ***Messaging***

Electrical fire safety messages can cut across electrical distribution, faulty appliances and wiring and even misuse of electrical equipment. This highlights the need for tailoring messages and activity to relevant audiences. Having sufficient fire detection equipment and escape plans remains of high importance.

- **Check that your electrical products have not been recalled**  
[Product Recall – Acting on product safety \(campaign.gov.uk\)](https://www.campaign.gov.uk)
- **Make sure you register your electrical appliances** so that you are the first to know of any safety repairs or recalls. You can do this through the manufacturers' websites, or through the register my appliance website:  
[www.registermyappliance.org.uk](http://www.registermyappliance.org.uk)
- **Don't overload plug sockets**  
An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take so, to help reduce the risk of fire, be careful not to overload them. Try to keep to one plug per socket.
- **Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order**  
Look out for fuses that blow, circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reason and flickering lights to prevent appliances triggering a fire.
- **Regularly check for frayed or worn cables and wires**  
Check to see if the cable is fastened securely to the plug and check the socket for scorch marks. You should always carry out these checks before you use an appliance.
- **Switch off appliances at the socket when not in use**  
This helps to reduce the risk of fire. Switch off appliances when you go to bed or when you go out unless they are designed to be left on, like freezers.
- **Buy your electrical chargers from a reputable source**  
Many imported chargers do not satisfy UK safety regulations and can cause serious electric shock, injury or fire
- **Get Out, Stay Out, Call 999**  
Never use water on an electrical fire and don't take any risks with your safety. Pull the plug out or switch the power off if it is safe to do so. Get out, stay out and call 999.
- **Residual Current Device**  
Encourage homeowners to fit and use RCD protection, if they do not already have it. An RCD (residual current device) is a life-saving device which is designed to prevent you from getting a fatal electric shock if you touch something live, such as a bare wire. It provides a level of protection that ordinary fuses or circuit-breakers cannot provide. RCD protection is particularly important when using electrical equipment outdoors.



## **4.1 Bonfire Night**

### OPSS Fireworks Campaign

- Through work carried out with stakeholders, the Government believes that information and education are vital to addressing the key issues associated with fireworks, to ensure those using fireworks do so safely and appropriately.
- For that reason, Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is developing a public awareness campaign for the forthcoming fireworks season, working with a variety of stakeholders, including animal welfare groups, safety charities and the industry, to promote the messaging of safe and considerate use across differing audiences.
- The campaign will focus on three key themes:
  - to raise awareness of safety issues when buying, storing, using and disposing of fireworks;
  - to encourage considerate use of fireworks in private displays;
  - to raise awareness among retailers of their responsibilities regarding the sale of fireworks.
- OPSS will be producing a range of social media and other assets for its own social media channels and for partners to share and the aim is for the campaign to go live in week commencing 11th October.

We will share further information and resources when they are available.

## **4.2 Electrical Fire Safety Week**

The Fire Kills campaign is working with Electrical Safety First to run Electrical Fire Safety Week (EFSW) from 22 to 28 November. Last year's campaign focused on online marketplaces. With Covid-19 lockdown restrictions meaning people couldn't visit high street stores and shopping centres, the campaign advised festive shoppers to be vigilant when shopping online for electrical products.

This year, Electrical Safety First will campaign on two key issues relating to the prevention of electrical fires: primarily on counterfeit electrical products and with secondary messaging and promotional content provided around electrical product recalls and registration.

Consumer research carried out by Electrical Safety First has identified some regions in England as being particularly at risk when it comes to these two issues and the Charity's social media activity will target these regions with promoted posts. These are:

Counterfeits – London, South West, Yorkshire and Humber  
Product Recalls and Registration – London, North West

**A stakeholder pack is available as a separate document, shared alongside this one.**

### Counterfeits and Marketplaces

Electrical Safety First have provided the following background information:

Online marketplaces, already seen as convenient and cheap options for buying household goods, increased in popularity last year, with 58% of UK adults saying they would be using them for Christmas shopping, seeing them as an accessible and cost-effective option in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic meaning trips to High Street stores for buying gifts were not an option.

This year, with supply chain issues threatening Christmas deliveries and cautious attitudes towards returning to pre-Covid normality, it is likely that once again shoppers will be driven online in the search for those "must have" Christmas gifts and gadgets.

However, sellers of counterfeit or sub-standard electrical products exploit online marketplaces for the ease with which they can sell their goods to a mass market – it can be impossible to know what you are actually buying, with no real guarantee that the product you receive will be genuine.

Electrical Safety First has carried out numerous tests on electrical products purchased from well known online marketplaces, with the majority of them failing to meet UK safety standards, and some posing a severe risk of electric shock or fire. More needs to be done to stop these products being made available to UK consumers.

### Consumer Audience

- Online shoppers and bargain hunters of all ages, particularly older and vulnerable people who may still have concerns about shopping in bricks and mortar stores.
- Digital support will target 18-24 year olds, still the most “at risk” when it comes to buying counterfeits in general. Research carried out in February 2021 showed that although this age group had the least confidence that products sold via online marketplaces were safe (62% against an average across all age groups of 69%), they are still the most likely age group to purchase an electrical fake, with just 48% saying they would never consider buying one, against an average of 75%.

### Key messages for the week

#### *Electrical Fakes*

- If you are shopping online, buy from a retailer that you know and trust, either direct from the manufacturer’s website or a trusted High Street name – that way if something goes wrong, you can return the product for repair or a refund.
- Fake and substandard items can be almost impossible to spot. Online shoppers are being misled by imagery taken from official product sites, fake official safety marks and believable pricing – items can even be priced just a few pounds below recommended retail value to avoid arousing suspicion.
- Buying fake electrical products is particularly risky as they often contain faulty parts that can overheat and catch fire or deliver a fatal electric shock. While many items appear sophisticated on the outside, they lack essential safety components inside.
- If a bargain seems too good to be true, it probably is.

#### *Regulation of Marketplaces*

- Online marketplaces are not subject to the same regulations as other retailers. This means that it is too easy for counterfeit and sub-standard products to be sold.

### Research

Electrical Safety First will be carrying out some awareness research to gauge consumer attitudes towards shopping online, to include:

- Concerns about supply chain issues affecting availability of products
- Concerns about returning to bricks and mortar shops while Covid-19 is still prevalent
- Confidence in online marketplaces and the products sold on them.

We will be able to provide data broken down by government region to help with localising campaigns.

### Case Studies

Real experiences of fires caused by counterfeit or sub-standard products purchased via marketplaces can really help to bring the story to life.

Electrical Safety First will be sourcing new case studies to sit alongside existing ones but any help from FRS partners would be very much appreciated. If you have a case study of somebody who has experienced an electrical fire caused by a fake electrical product, preferably in the smart technology category, please contact Joshua Drew ([Joshua.drew@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](mailto:Joshua.drew@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)).

### Digital Support

The Charity's free 'Check It Out' browser extension (available on Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox and MS Edge) identifies third party sellers on popular online retailers, helping shoppers to make an informed decision about who they are buying from. Find out more at <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/check-it-out/>

The Charity is also currently developing a digital campaign that will remind consumers of the risks associated with buying electrical products from the increasingly popular Facebook and Instagram Marketplaces.

Social media messaging and graphics to support the campaign will be supplied nearer to the launch.

### Secondary Campaign Messages – Product Recalls and Registration

Electrical Safety First has developed a stakeholder pack that promotes the digital tools developed to help consumers check for electrical product recalls and register appliances (attached separately).

Research statistics on barriers to product registration and recall response rates will also be provided, broken down by government region.

## 5. December – Christmas

### Messages

With the likelihood of increased alcohol consumption and cooking across the festive period, messaging may reference this, along with other Christmas specific messages. A secondary focus will be on keeping warm and safe in the colder weather.

- Don't cook if you have been drinking and never leave cooking unattended.
- Never place candles near your Christmas tree or materials that can catch alight easily.
- Keep candles, lighters and matches out of children's reach. Never leave lit candles unattended.
- Never overload electrical sockets. Always switch Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.



- Decorations can burn easily – so don't attach them to lights or heaters.

- Take time to check on older relatives and neighbours this Christmas as they are potentially at greater risk from fire.



- Make sure your family and visitors know how to escape in an emergency.



- Check your Christmas tree lights carry this British Safety Standard sign.

Wishing you a safe and happy Christmas

Check your Christmas tree lights carry the British Safety Standard sign.	Never place candles near your Christmas tree or materials that can catch light easily.	Test the batteries in your smoke alarm every week. Never remove them.	Decorations can burn easily – so don't attach them to lights or heaters.	Keep candles, lighters and matches out of children's reach. Never leave burning candles unattended.	Never overload electrical sockets. Always switch Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.
Most fires start in the kitchen. Avoid leaving a cooker unattended.	Make sure your family and visitors know how to escape in an emergency.	Make sure cigarettes are put out properly.	Store fireworks safely. Never go back to a lit firework and keep a bucket of water nearby.	Take care around open fireplaces as clothes may catch fire.	Take time to check on elderly relatives and neighbours this Christmas as they are at greater risk from fire.

## **Suggestions for local activity**

Here are some suggestions that you may wish to consider for your activity around Christmas.

### **Online advent calendars**

In the past, many local fire and rescue authorities have created online advent calendars with fire safety tips, messages or videos behind each door.

### **Christmas bazaars**

Many charities, churches and other organisations will be running Christmas Bazaars in the lead up to Christmas. This provides an opportunity to engage with your local community through attending events with fire safety material or through firefighters helping out on stalls, swapping their fire helmets for Santa hats!

### **Christmas hampers**

Some schools may prepare Christmas hampers for deprived families and/or older people. You may be able to work with the school to include fire safety information, or information about home fire safety visits, in the hampers, helping the messages get out to those people who may be more vulnerable to the risks of fire.

### **Events**

Local events such as road shows or setups in shopping centres/car parks can provide a fantastic opportunity to engage with the community to communicate potentially life-saving messages. Another idea is to send Christmas cards to your residents which include the top tips on fire safety at Christmas. The 'Wishing You a Safe and Happy Christmas' leaflet – available on the Fire Kills Campaign portal – fits this purpose well.

### **Website**

Christmas fire safety information could be included on your website. You could also encourage your local authority to include a link to – or promote – the information on their website.

### **Targeting local agencies**

Working with local organisations and local branches of national organisations can provide further opportunities and communication channels to deliver fire safety messages.

### **Targeting older people**

One key target group with a lot of community fire safety activity, particularly severe weather fire safety, is older people. Periods of extreme weather create opportunities for potential activity including:

- Joining forces with your local Age UK outlet to give a talk about fire safety. You could also make relevant posters and leaflets available.
- Working with local schools to encourage them to think about their grandparents and how safe they are from fire.
- Joining forces with your local GP surgery and/or Post Office to raise awareness of the services available to older people, possibly promoting home fire risk checks.
- Go carol singing with fire safety information!

**Press release**

A general press notice based on the template on page 23 – which can be edited and tailored with local details and information – which can be distributed to consumer media and press supplements.



## 6. Fire Kills Portal

The Fire Kills Campaign [Portal](#) hosts all the artwork and Fire Kills material and is available to all fire and rescue practitioners.

There is a single login for you to access the Portal (not for public sharing):

Please contact [James Webb](#) if you have any queries.

### Fire Kills Campaign

Here you will find all the material for Fire Kills campaign. Check out the "Fire Kills Showcase" to see our pick of the best. Don't forget to check the "Monthly Communications Briefing" area regularly for all the new stuff.



Archive



Brand



Covid-19 Fire Prevention Resources



Electrical Fire Safety Week 2020



Fillers



Fireworks assets



Kids



Leaflets



Monthly assets



NOT FOR USE - online tool



Photos & Icons



Posters



Quarterly Campaign briefing packs 2020



Social

## **7. Draft social media posts**

### **Smoke alarms**

- *Smoke alarms save lives, but only if they work. Test yours now and monthly. #FireKills #SmokeAlarms*

### **Older People's Day**

- *Test smoke alarms for someone who may need help and help to keep them safe #OlderPeoplesDay*

### **Candle Fire Safety Week**

- *Nothing better than the warm glow of candles on wintry nights. As long as they are away from curtains or things that might burn! #CandleFireSafetyWeek #FireKills*
- *Candles look nice and add ambiance to your living room, never leave them unattended; blow out candles when you head to bed. #CandleFireSafetyWeek #FireKills*
- *Berry, vanilla or winter spice? What's your fave? Whatever the scent, never leave a lit candle unattended. #CandleFireSafetyWeek #FireKills*

### **National Burn Awareness Day**

- *Children living in socially deprived areas are 6.7 times more likely to sustain a burn injury #NBAD21*
- *1/4 of severe burn injuries to children seen by Specialist Burn Units are from tea and coffee spills #NBAD21*

### **Bonfire Night**

- *Be safe while celebrating with fireworks. Don't remember the 5th of November for all the wrong reasons.*
- *Planning a fireworks party? Have a quick look at some advice for running a safe and fun night - <http://bit.ly/2e6Ntqm>.*

### **Christmas**

- *Opening a door of your advent calendar takes the same amount of time as testing your smoke alarms. Test yours now by pressing their buttons. #PressToTest*
- *#SmokeAlarms Save Lives #PressToTest your smoke alarms. Share to remind friends and family to do the same. Like to tell others you've tested yours. #FireSafety*
- *Helpful Tip: Press the test button on your smoke alarms, it could just save you and your loved ones' lives. #PressToTest*
- *Christmas is a time for friends and family, enjoying nibbles and a tippie, pulling crackers, twinkling decorations and opening presents! Remember to be fire safe in the midst of all the festivities. <http://bit.ly/1oQouvb>*

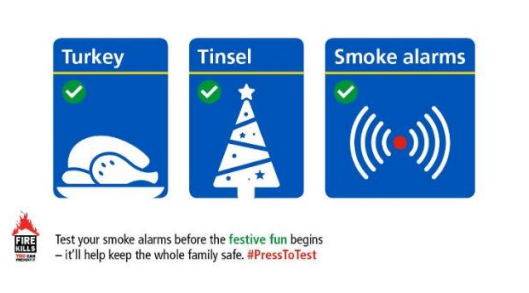
- *Tinsel, baubles, and the magic of fairy lights brings the tree to life. Please remember to check the fairy lights are safe <http://bit.ly/1bgBP5F>*
- *Got friends and family coming to stay over Christmas? Make sure everyone knows how to get out in case of a fire and test your smoke alarms #PressToTest*

Links to videos:

- <http://bit.ly/1bgBP5F> - Christmas Tree video
- <http://bit.ly/1sH0ntn> - 'Tis the season to be careful - TV Filler (60 secs)
- <http://bit.ly/1oQouvb> - 'Tis the season to be careful - TV Filler (30 secs)

Social media assets

The Fire Kills campaign Portal has Christmas images that you may wish to use. These can be found here:



<https://homeoffice.brandworkz.com/bms/damui/?category=1116>.

## **8. Template Press Notices**

### ***Smoke alarm testing***

#### **FIRE KILLS CAMPAIGN URGES US ALL TO TEST THE SMOKE ALARMS IN OUR HOMES NOW AND REGULARLY**



**[Local]** Fire and Rescue Service, as part of the Fire Kills Campaign, is urging people to test their smoke alarms after research showed that only 26 per cent of all households who own an alarm test them on a regular basis.

**[Insert name of spokesperson]** of **[insert name of Fire and Rescue Service]** said: “You’re around eight times more likely to die in a fire if you don’t have any working smoke alarms. However, in 2018/19, only 26 per cent of the people who own an alarm say they take the time to test it at least monthly.”

There were 186 fire-related deaths in the home in the year ending March 2021. The Fire Kills campaign hopes that by encouraging everyone to test their smoke alarms more deaths could be prevented.

**[Local spokesperson]** added, “I’d encourage people in **[area]** to make sure you test your smoke alarms today and get into the habit of testing them regularly as they can save you and your family’s life. In the event of a fire, working smoke alarms will give you the valuable time to get out, stay out and call 999.”

To help keep you and your loved ones safe, **[local FRS spokesperson]** offers these simple steps:

- Test your smoke alarms now or when you get home
- Make sure you fit smoke alarms on every level of your home and test them regularly, even if they’re wired into the mains.
- Whatever happens, never remove the batteries in your smoke alarms unless you are replacing them. Some require new batteries every year.
- Plan and practise an escape route and make sure that everyone in your home knows it.
- In the event of a fire, get out, stay out and call 999.
- Test others smoke alarms who are unable to test their own

**[Local]** fire and rescue service are supporting the testing of smoke alarms by **[insert details of local activity]**.

**- ENDS -**

## ***Candle Fire Safety Week***

### **Candle Fire Safety Week: Snuff out the fire risk**

As part of the Fire Kills campaign, fire and rescue services across the country are asking people to take care this Candle Fire Safety Week (11-17 October) and snuff out the risk of fire in their homes.



With winter fast approaching, a few candles scattered round the room can lend a warm glow to an evening in or add some festive cheer to the season's celebrations such as Guy Fawkes' night and Christmas. But with candle fires resulting in around 300 casualties each year, **[insert name of FRS]** are asking people to take extra care with candles this winter – around a third (32 per cent) of all fires started by candles attended by fire and rescue services result in a death or injury.

The most important step you can take to keep yourself and your loved ones safe is to ensure your home has working smoke alarms. To prevent candle fires from starting in your home, you should make sure your candles are kept away from flammable materials like curtains and ensure candles are put out when you leave the room, even for a moment.

**[Insert name of FRS spokesperson]** said:

“Candles are a typical sight in many homes, scenting our rooms and giving an atmospheric glow to cold winter nights. But it's important to remember that a candle is not just a decorative feature. Left unattended, an open flame scenting your home could leave a trail of devastation.

“Place your lit candles with extra care, away from curtains, pets and children and always remember to put them out when you leave the room, even for a moment.”

“Even with these precautions it's vital to be prepared should the worst happen. Working smoke alarms can give you the vital time you need to get out, stay out and call 999. Keep yourself and your loved ones safe by testing your alarm regularly and by practicing your escape routes.”

To help you enjoy your candles safely, the Fire Kills campaign has offered some tips for this Candle Fire Safety Week:

- **Never leave lit candles unattended.** Put burning candles out when you leave the room, and make sure they're out completely at night.
- **Place your candles carefully.** Make sure they are on a stable surface, out of the reach of pets and children, and keep them away from flammable objects like curtains, furniture, bedding and books.
- **Don't move candles once they are lit**
- **Do not burn several candles close together** as this might cause the flame to flare
- **Burn candles in a well-ventilated room, out of drafts, vents or air currents.** This will help prevent rapid or uneven burning, soot, and dripping.
- **Always put scented candles in a heat resistant holder.** These candles are designed to liquefy when heated to maximise fragrance.

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- **Fit smoke alarms and test them now and monthly.** A working smoke alarm can buy you valuable time to get out, stay out and call 999.
- Make sure that everyone in your home knows what to do if a fire should occur– **practise your escape route.**

**- ENDS -**

OFFICIAL

## **Christmas**

### **Don't Let Fire Ruin Festive Cheer this Christmas**

Christmas dinner, wrapping presents, decorating your home – there's lots to think about this Christmas. But one thing **[local FRS]** and the national Fire Kills campaign are urging **[area name]** residents to put top of their Christmas lists this year is fire safety.



While fire safety is vital throughout the year, the extra distractions of Christmas make it especially important to be vigilant. This is why **[local FRS]** is asking people to take extra care over the festive season to ensure that their families and loved ones are protected from fire.

**[Local FRS spokesperson]**, says: “Christmas is a time for festive cheer with family and friends. But fairy lights, candles and decorations mean it is also a time to take extra care to keep our loved ones safe from fire”

To ensure you have the merriest of Christmases, keep fire safety at the top of your list. Ensure you place candles in suitable holders and away from curtains, never leave cooking unattended and, of course, test your smoke alarms.

“The colder weather brings its own menaces too. Take care when using portable heaters or open fires to keep warm.”

From everyone at **[Local]** Fire and Rescue Service we wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas.

**[INSERT DETAILS HERE OF ANY LOCAL ACTIVITY PLANNED]**

For further information contact **[insert press office contact details]**

Here are some simple tips from the Fire Kills campaign to help you and your family enjoy the joys of Christmas safely:

- **Ensure you have working smoke alarms installed on all levels of your home.** Working alarms can give you the vital time needed to escape in a fire. Test your smoke alarms regularly and never remove batteries!
- **Never leave cooking unattended.** The majority of fires start in the kitchen so this is a high-risk area. Many of us enjoy a merry tippie over the festive season but be sure to avoid cooking whilst under the influence of alcohol. Always turn off kitchen appliances when you have finished cooking.
- **Never leave burning candles unattended.** Keep candles out of the reach of children, and away from decorations, cards and wrapping paper, fires, lights and heaters.
- **Put your cigarette out, right out.** Make sure your cigarette is fully extinguished and take care when under the influence of alcohol or tired. It's very easy to fall asleep while your cigarette is still burning and set furniture alight.

- **Never use heaters to dry clothes.** Heaters can start fires when things are placed too close to them. Keep them well away from curtains, clothing and furniture.
- **Don't overload sockets.** Ensure only one plug per socket. Always turn off plugs when they are not in use, except those that are designed to be left on, like freezers.
- **Ensure you switch off fairy lights** and unplug them before you go to bed or leave the house. Check your Christmas tree lights conform to the British Standard (BS EN 60598) and are in good working order before use.
- **Always use an RCD (residual current device)** on outdoor electrical equipment. This safety device can save lives by instantly switching off the power if there is a fault and can be found in any DIY store.
- Do something good this Christmas. **Test the smoke alarms of someone you know who may need help such as an older relative or neighbour** to ensure their safety as they are at greater risk from fire.
- Make sure that everyone in your home knows what to do in a fire – **in the event of fire you should get out, stay out and call 999**

**Watch the Fire Kills campaign short Christmas Tree video at:**

<http://youtu.be/hMtjGfr0tYs>

**– ENDS –**