



Winter lock up: Top safety tips

With the cold winter nights upon us, here are a list of top tips to help keep you and your family safe during the coming months.

Love Your Boiler

By servicing your boiler on a yearly basis, you will not only reduce the likelihood of a breakdown, but may actually increase the working life of your boiler by up to five years.

If the worst happens and your boiler breaks down during the festive period, there are a couple of quick checks you can do. Central heating systems often switch off for reasons other than there being a problem with the system itself. For example, there may not be enough water in the system or the fuse may have blown.

These are the first two things that an engineer will check and are often found to be the problem. Both are simple things to fix, so try checking your water gauge and topping up the system or replacing the fuse.

If your boiler is still not working, you should not attempt to repair the boiler in any way yourself and should call out an engineer registered as a competent person by Gas Safe Register.

Lighting Fires

You can't see it or smell it but some 50* people die every year due to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and many more are made ill by exposure to it.

Statistics show that one in five households with a chimney in use have not had it swept in the last year and eight percent have never had it swept at all.* A check of all your gas

appliances and flues, including a simple CO check, will put your mind at rest that everything is in safe working order.

Lights and Electricity

Electric heaters and kitchen appliances are in constant use during the winter and should also be checked to ensure they meet safety standards by a registered electrician.

If a piece of electrical equipment cuts out continually, gives off a strange smell or if the plug feels warm, switch off immediately and get it checked!

Remember:

- Never overload power points.
- For appliances that use a lot of power such as heaters, hair dryers and kettles, use only one plug per socket

Candles and Flames

Candle safety is all about common sense, but during the festive season being sensible can be far from our minds. For safe candle use:

- Don't surround candles by foliage or decorations
- Always use a stable holder and don't stick a candle to a saucer with hot wax
- Don't place candles on carpets or other flammable surfaces
- Keep lit candles away from pets, children, hair and clothes
- Never leave candles unattended or burning while you are out of the room and never forget to extinguish them before going to bed

Bed Time Checks

By carrying out the following checks before you go to bed, you can greatly reduce the chance of a fire starting while you are asleep and enjoying sweet dreams.

- Make sure all the burners or rings on your cooker are off
- Check all heaters are off and place guards in front of open fires
- Switch off all unused electrical appliances at the socket

- Close all internal doors, particularly in unoccupied rooms such as the kitchen, front room and dining room

*Statistics provided by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)

ENDS/...
