



**National Fire Safety Campaign
Monthly Briefing Pack
December - Christmas**



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1. Summary

Christmas

December brings the build up to Christmas and the festive season. The traditions around Christmas – be it faith-based or otherwise – can result in Christmas being a more hazardous time with regards to fire safety. These extra fire risks include:

- increased cooking and potentially cooking whilst under the influence of alcohol.
- increased use of candles in the home
- decorations which may burn very easily
- Christmas tree lights which haven't been used for a year and/or may be faulty

Colder weather

Another potential risk associated with December is the colder weather. In the winter months, many households may begin to use additional or alternative heating sources in a bid to stay warm as the temperature drops.



Local activity

We are keen to support local activities that you feel would benefit from promotion at a national level. If you have any exciting or new ideas that you'd like to share with your communications colleagues at other services, do post or share them on the NFCC Workplace: <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Workplace>.

2019 Fire and Rescue Campaign Calendar

The 2019 Fire and Rescue Campaign Calendar has been circulated along with this briefing pack and made available in the [National Fire Safety Campaign Portal](#).

2019 Briefing packs

Following feedback, we will be signposting future themes and awareness days/weeks in packs ahead of their circulation.

In this case, the **January briefing pack** will focus on **Smoke Alarm Testing** and feature one awareness day – **'Register My Appliance Day'**.

2. Christmas fire safety messages

In recent years, excessive alcohol consumption has been a major contributor to not only fires, but fire-related casualties. With the likelihood of increased alcohol consumption and cooking across the festive period, the national fire safety campaign messaging will 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

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

3. Draft social media posts

Smoke alarms

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

Generic Christmas message

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>

Faulty Christmas lights

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>

Visiting guests

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/1sHOnTn> - '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 national fire safety campaign Portal has Christmas images that you may wish to use. These can be found here:

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



4. Suggested local PR activities

Here are some suggestions that you may wish to consider for your activity around Christmas. If you want to highlight your own local initiatives in this campaign briefing pack to other fire and rescue authorities, please do so at the NFFC Workplace, which you can find at this link: <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Workplace>.

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 national fire safety campaign – 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 9 – which can be edited and tailored with local details and information – which can be distributed to consumer media and press supplements.

5. National Fire Safety Campaign Portal

The [National Fire Safety Campaign Portal](#) hosts all of the national fire safety campaign artwork and material and is available to all fire and rescue practitioners.

There is a single login for you to access the Portal:

Please contact [Laura Udeh](#) if you have any queries.

National Fire Safety Campaign

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



2018 National advertising campaign



Archive



Brand



Fillers



Kids



Leaflets



Monthly Campaigns



Partner Pack 2016



Photos & Icons



Posters



Social

6. Template press notice – Christmas fire safety

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 safety 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 during the festive season. 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 national fire safety 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 national fire safety campaign short Christmas Tree video at:
<http://youtu.be/hMtjGfr0tYs>