



# Welcome! Winter 2023

To our bumper Winter edition of the Schools Stay Safe Newsletter.  
Read on for advice on ways to stay safe for you and your family.

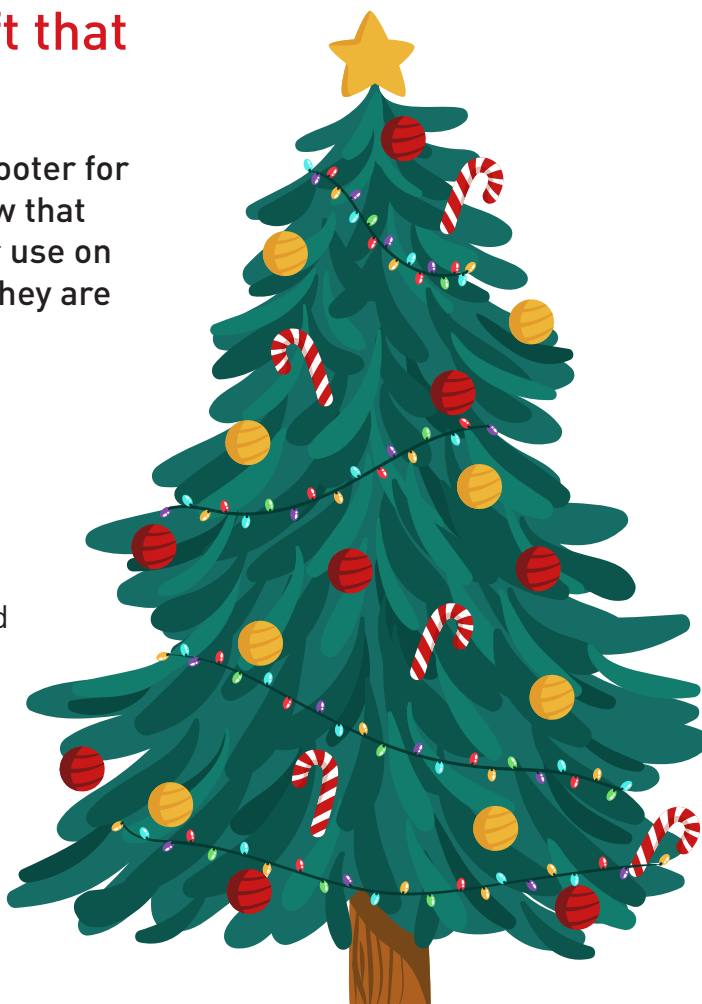
## The 12 potential hazards of Christmas!

### 1 Buying a Christmas gift that need a lithium battery.

You may be thinking about buying an E-Scooter for your child this Christmas, but did you know that private e-scooters are currently illegal for use on public roads and cycleways, even though they are widely available for sale?

Did you know lithium batteries can catch fire!  
They must be looked after.

1. Only buy batteries from a reputable manufacturer.
2. Unplug devices when they are fully charged to avoid overheating.
3. Store batteries in a cool dry place.
4. Avoid charging devices overnight, and try to charge outside where possible.





## 2 Road Safety and Drink Driving

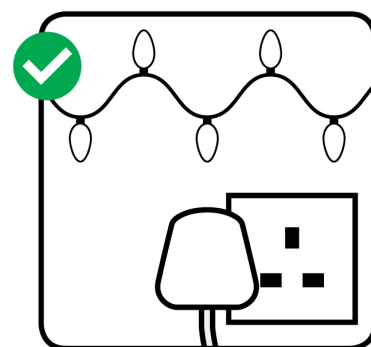
As the party season approaches and we plan our Christmas parties, we ask that you are mindful of the dangers that drink driving pose. Just one drink can impair coordination, slow your reactions, and distort your judgement.

Drink driving is illegal and puts lives at risk. It is not possible to say how much alcohol you can drink and stay below the limit.

## 3 Christmas Fairy Lights and decorations

We all love a pretty Christmas decoration and fairy lights at this time of year, but did you know unsafe use of such items as fairy lights can cause fire.

Check your Christmas tree lights carry the British Safety Standard sign and never place candles near your Christmas tree or materials that can catch light easily.



## 4 Family Escape Plan for your loved ones.

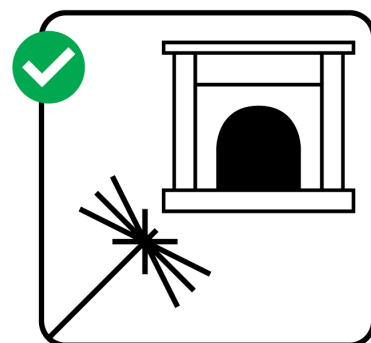
At Christmas it's great to have the family come over and stay!

Have you thought about how you would all escape in the unlikely case of a fire? It only takes 5 minutes to run through your escape plan and can save lives!



## 5 Have you had your chimney swept?

Santa needs a clear way in and out! Dirt and soot, or even an old bird's nest can build up and cause a potential fire. Chimneys should be swept at least once a year.





## 6 Candle Safety

Don't leave candles unattended, and make sure you put them out before you go to bed. Tea lights need to be in suitable containers, such as glass or porcelain. Never use candles near combustible materials.

## 7 Cooking and drinking don't mix!

Take extra care when cooking the turkey on Christmas day. Did you know leaving cooking unattended is one of the main causes of fire.

Use a timer, try not to drink alcohol whilst cooking and avoid loose clothing.



## 8 Test your smoke alarms at Christmas!

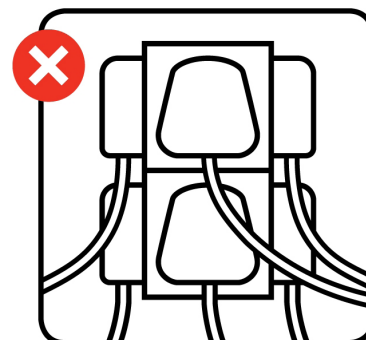
Use the festive season as a reminder to test your alarms. You should be at least testing them once a month!

Did you know you are 4 times more likely to die in a fire if you do not have a working smoke detector. If you test it and they are faulty, please call your local fire station and we will replace them for free, along with additional fire safety advice, (see bottom for contacts).



## 9 Electrical safety

Never overload electrical sockets. Use an extension lead instead, making sure it is fully unwound. Electrical current causes heat and leads that are not fully unwound could heat up and cause a fire. Always switch Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.





## 10 Check on your elderly neighbours and relatives.

Christmas can be a lonely time of year for some people, which puts them at greater risk of fire. Check in on your neighbours or relatives and make sure they are staying warm and fed.

## 11 Portable heater Safety

The cold weather means colder homes. Please be aware that portable heaters should always be bought from reputable stores with BS kite marks. They shouldn't be more than around 10 years old.

Do not be tempted to dry clothing near them, and always remember to switch them off before you go to bed.



## 12 Slips, trips and falls.

Alcohol can be part of the festivities at Christmas and along with extension leads or wiring from additional decorations could be the cause of a trip or a fall. If weather conditions are bad, it may be slippery underfoot.



**With a few safety measures in place, we can all enjoy a happy and healthy Christmas!!**



## Are you aware of Staywise?

Staywise is an interactive website packed full of fun activities from the UK's leading emergency services and safety-focused organisations, making it easy for you to find trusted activities that provide learning opportunities to help keep you safe.

There is lots to do on there for children and they are learning as they play!



If you need any further information or advice on any of these topics, please feel free to call our friendly staff at your local station:

- **Hemel Hempstead Fire Station**  
01442 867132  
[HemelHempstead.fire@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:HemelHempstead.fire@hertfordshire.gov.uk)
- **St Albans Fire Station**  
01992 507650  
[StAlbans.fire@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:StAlbans.fire@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

## Have you tested your smoke detector lately?

Do you have a night-time routine?

Would you know how to escape in the unlikely event of a fire?

We encourage you to book yourself a free Home Fire Safety Visit today. The local station numbers are to the right of this newsletter.

Don't forget, the visit is **FREE!**

-  Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
-  Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Community Safety
-  [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/fire](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/fire)

