

# STAYING SAFE AND WARM AT HOME.



**Know the risks and follow the advice  
overleaf to keep safe and warm this winter**  
[www.newham.gov.uk](http://www.newham.gov.uk)

**WE ARE NEWHAM.**

# DID YOU KNOW...?

- More fires occur when it's colder.
- Three fires a day are started by candles.
- You're around eight times more likely to die in a fire if you do not have a working smoke alarm in your home.
- Carbon monoxide is a silent killer. The fumes are highly poisonous and cause around 50 deaths and hundreds of injuries every year.
- About three fires a day are started by electric heaters, with those placed too close to flammable materials causing fires, burns and deaths.

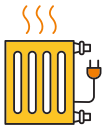
## KNOW THE RISKS

### OPEN FIRES AND CANDLES



- Make sure you put out any candles, incense and oil burners when you leave the room and especially before bed.
- Keep candles away from materials that may catch fire such as curtains, furniture, clothes.
- If you have a fire use a fire guard to protect against flying sparks and hot embers.
- Before you go to bed make sure fires or hot embers are under control and guarded. Store logs away from solid fuel burners as heat can cause them to burn.

### ELECTRIC HEATERS AND BLANKETS



- Electrical heaters can be a great way to keep warm – especially if you only want to warm up one room. However, they should be used with care.
- Keep heaters away from clothes, curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.
- Before moving your heater, turn it off and allow it to cool first.
- Secure heaters against a wall to stop them falling over, or fit wall-mounted heaters.
- Use electric blankets as instructed, get them tested every three years and never use a hot water bottle with an electric blanket.



# CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)



To keep your home safe fit a CO alarm. These can be bought from DIY stores and some supermarkets, or directly from energy suppliers. Never use a gas cooker, barbeque or oven to heat your home; it is inefficient and there is a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and this can kill.

## Symptoms of CO poisoning

Poisoning from CO can happen in a matter of minutes or over an extended period of time depending on the amount of CO in the air. You cannot taste, see or smell CO fumes but they are extremely dangerous.

Symptoms can include:

- headaches
- dizziness
- nausea
- breathlessness
- collapse
- loss of consciousness.

## What do to if you suspect CO poisoning

If you suspect CO poisoning or if your CO alarm sounds:

- Open doors and windows to ventilate (if possible).
- If you are able to do so safely, switch off the appliance.
- Get outside into the fresh air quickly.
- Seek immediate medical advice. See your doctor or go to hospital – let them know that you suspect CO poisoning. They can do a blood or breathe check.

Before you return to your home, it is very important to call the gas emergency number on **0800 111 999** and tell them what has happened. You may need an engineer to inspect your appliance and flues to check if there is a dangerous problem.

For further information please visit the Health and Safety Executive website at

[www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic](http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic)

# 5 KEY HEATING SAFETY TIPS

1. Check any heating appliances are in good working order and not subject to a product recall by checking the Office for Product Safety and Standards website for any alerts or recalls.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/consumer-product-safety-advice-for-staying-safe](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/consumer-product-safety-advice-for-staying-safe)



2. Ensure flammable items such as furniture and drying clothes are placed well away from heaters and fires.



3. Ensure you use the correct fuel for woodburning stoves and open fires – to reduce the risk of toxic fumes, chimney fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.



4. Check your escape routes, make sure they are clear from clutter and items such as portable heaters are not blocking them.



5. If possible don't skip servicing of boilers and gas appliances by a Gas Safe engineer to prevent gas leaks and CO poisoning. Landlords must arrange for an annual gas safety check in rented accommodation. If you're a homeowner check your energy provider's website for information about their Priority Services Register – if you're eligible they often offer a free annual gas safety check along with other support.



## KEEP YOUR HOME WARM AND SAFE BY:

- Heating your home to at least 18°C in winter poses minimal risk to your health when you are wearing suitable clothing.
- Get your heating system and cooking appliances checked and keep your home well ventilated.
- Use your electric blanket as instructed.

## KEEP IN THE WARMTH BY:

- Fitting draught proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors.
- Making sure you have loft insulation and, if you have cavity walls, making sure they are insulated too.
- If you live in privately rented accommodation please talk to your landlord about insulation. If there is no response get in contact with **ENVPrivate. SectorHousing@newham.gov.uk** to request a FREE home visit.

- Insulating your hot water cylinder and pipes.
- Drawing your curtains at dusk to help keep heat generated inside your rooms.
- Making sure your radiators are not obstructed by furniture or curtains.

## LOOK AFTER YOURSELF BY:

- Having plenty of hot food and drinks – food is a vital source of energy and helps to keep your body warm.
- Aiming to include five daily portions of fruit and vegetables in your daily diet.
- Stocking up on tinned and frozen foods so you don't have to go out too much when it's cold or icy.
- Exercising – it's good for you and it can keep you warm in winter, but if you have any health concerns, speak to your GP practice before starting any exercise plans.

## REMEMBER



- If you're struggling to afford your gas and electricity bills, contact your supplier for help and advice.
- Don't use candles and naked flames as a substitute for lighting and heating.
- Fit a carbon monoxide alarm in all rooms containing solid fuel, gas or paraffin heaters.
- In the event of a power cut call 105 – it's free of charge and will put you through to your local electricity network operator who can give help and advice.

## BOOK A FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT

You are far less likely to have a fire in your home if you have a home fire safety visit.



The London Fire Brigade (LFB) offers free home fire safety visits to all residents, where officers will provide fire safety advice and can fit smoke alarms, if required, and specialist alarms for people with visual or hearing impairments.

**FREEPHONE: 0800 028 4428**

**EMAIL: [smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk)**

**Text: 07860 021319**