

Make Your Home A Safer Place



Be prepared

Get the name and telephone number of your doctor and any other emergency phone numbers and addresses and keep them in a place where they can be found in an emergency.

Calling for help

Make sure you know how to dial 999 and ask for the emergency services.

Escape route

Find out how to get out of your home quickly and safely in the event of a fire. Draw plans of your escape route, keep and remember them and ensure everyone who lives in the house is aware of them.

Do a home safety check

Check upstairs and downstairs looking for worn or loose-fitting carpets, poor lighting, unguarded fires, cracked plugs and worn flexes, furniture too close to fires etc. Do not put yourself at risk by tampering with electrical wiring and appliances.

Be vigilant

Many accidents occur in the home from everyday activities such as children playing, preparing food, simply moving about the house, carrying out D.I.Y. and other household repairs.

Chemicals

Ensure all chemicals in the house and garden are clearly labelled and stored safely and securely.

Garden tools

Make sure all garden tools, equipment and chemicals are stored away properly. Do not leave items lying around which could cause a trip or fall.

Hazards

Children should be supervised at all times. Potential hazards can be found indoors and outside all homes.

Bonfires

Never start bonfires with petrol or methylated spirits.

Never try to tackle a fire yourself.

Fit smoke detectors and make sure they work. Check battery levels on any existing detectors.

In the kitchen - the place where most accidental fires start - ensure that chip pans of fat are not left unattended while cooking.

Rubbish should be cleared from cupboards, attics and under the stairs. As well as providing a natural fuel, many fires start in rubbish.

Electrical wiring and appliances should be checked to ensure they are safe. Only a qualified electrician should carry out any repairs or alterations.

Smoking materials are a major source of fires, so make sure that any cigarettes are firmly stubbed out in ashtrays.

Accidental fires often involve the vulnerable, so impress on any elderly neighbours and relatives the need to be extra careful.

Flammable liquids such as methylated spirit should be securely and safely stored away from sources of heat.

Ensure that young children are protected and do not leave them unattended in the home.

Neighbourhood Watch

Over 155,000 Neighbourhood Watch schemes operate throughout the United Kingdom and all you have to do to find out if your area is covered is contact your local Police station.

The schemes are usually run by a volunteer co-ordinator who will help get the committee working together and meeting regularly to make sure any problems in the area are resolved. The committee also keeps in touch with the local police to share information and advice.

If a scheme does not already operate in your area, your local crime prevention officer can tell you how to go about setting one up. It's a relatively easy process and could help to make your community a much safer, happier place.

For more information about Neighbourhood Watch and how it can help your area, please click on the following link www.neighbourhoodwatch.net.

Make Your Home A Safer Place



How to prepare for a flood

If you live in a flood risk area do what you can now to prepare for a flood.

- Make sure you have adequate insurance. Flood damage is included in most buildings insurance policies but do check your home and contents are covered
- Make up a flood kit - including key personal documents, torch, battery or wind-up radio, mobile phone, rubber gloves, wellington boots, waterproof clothing, first aid kit and blankets
- Keep details of your insurance policy and the emergency contact number somewhere safe - preferably as part of your flood kit
- Make a list of other useful numbers you may need - your local council, the emergency services and your Floodline quick dial number.
- Get into the habit of storing valuable or sentimental items and important documents upstairs or in a high place
- Buy some sandbags or flood boards to block doorways and airbricks. In an emergency, make sandbags using old pillow cases, carrier bags or even tights filled with sand or earth
- Make sure you know where to turn off your gas, electricity and water. If you're not sure, ask the person who checks your meter when they next visit.
- Mark the tap or switch with a sticker to help you remember
- Make a Family Flood Plan

Preparing for Winter

- Make sure you know where your main stopcock is - if you do suffer flooding it is important to shut off the water supply quickly
- Fit lagging to pipes, tanks and cisterns to prevent freezing and leave cabinet doors open to allow warm air to circulate around them
- Repair any dripping taps
- Remember that loft insulation should be laid on top of pipes - not underneath them
- Make sure your loft insulation is in good condition and is thick enough
- If you are going on holiday, leave the heating on and open the loft hatch. This allows warm air to reach pipes and tanks in the loft
- If you are going to be away for more than a few days, arrange for a friend or neighbour to look in for you
- Make sure all drains and gutters are clear of any debris and that any nearby trees are cut back to minimise the risk of falling branches damaging your home
- Repair gates and fences to protect them against storm damage