



CHRISTMAS

ELF & SAFETY TIPS



Introduction



East Dunbartonshire Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership Healthy Working Lives Groups have produced this handy booklet to offer practical information and advice to help you over the Christmas and New Year festivities.

Not all of it will be relevant to you, but we hope there's something for everyone and that you find something that you didn't know before.

Please share it with family and friends, and hopefully we will all have a safe and happy festive season.





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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

While it's not something any of us want to dwell on over the festive period, we do need to keep ourselves up to date with the current guidance around coronavirus.

For the latest coronavirus advice from NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government, including physical distancing measures, testing and advice for infected households, please visit NHS Inform:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

It has been a strange and tough 2020 for us all so remember to be kind to yourselves and those around you, and stay safe.



Christmas Food Safety Advice

Don't be a turkey

From defrosting turkey to using leftovers, these food safety tips will help stop your turkey from knocking the stuffing out of you this Christmas.

Handy hygiene

- Always wash and dry your hands thoroughly before and after handling food, especially when handling and preparing raw meat and poultry.
- Remember to wash and dry your hands after going to the toilet, touching the bin or touching any pets.
- Bugs are spread between food, surfaces and utensils most effectively on wet or damp hands.

Avoid cross-contamination

- Keep all raw food, whether it's turkey or vegetables, separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- You should also use separate chopping boards for raw foods (e.g. raw meat and raw veg).
- Raw foods can contain harmful bacteria that spread easily to anything they touch, including other foods, worktops, chopping boards and knives.

Just chillin'

- Store food that needs to be chilled in the fridge until you need it.
- Make sure the fridge temperature is below 5°C.
- Don't pack food too tightly as cold air needs to circulate to cool food down.
- If you're storing food such as fresh vegetables outside in a garage or shed, keep them in a sealed container.



Turkey defrosting details

- Defrost your turkey on a large dish and cover, preferably in the fridge.
- Remove the giblets and the neck to speed up thawing.
- Alternatively, defrost the turkey in a cool, clean place where the temperature is constant. Keep in mind that the temperature of where the turkey is kept will affect thawing times.
- It can take up to 48 hours for a large turkey to thaw.
- A turkey is fully defrosted when there are no ice crystals inside the cavity and the meat is soft when you insert a fork or skewer.
- Once thawed, store it in the fridge until you are ready to cook it, but if this isn't possible, you should cook it immediately.
- To work out the defrosting time for your turkey, check the packaging. If there aren't any defrosting instructions, use the following table as a guide:

Where is the turkey being defrosted?	Defrosting time
In a fridge at 4°C (39°F)	Allow about 10 to 12 hours per kg
In a cool room (below 17.5°C/64°F)	Allow about three to four hours per kg
At room temperature (about 20°C/68°F)	Allow about two hours per kg

Information for this section has been collated from the following webpage:

www.nhs.uk/livewell/healthychristmas/pages/healthychristmashome.aspx

More turkey talk

- 80% of people say they wash their turkeys before cooking them – don't do it!
- Washing the bird significantly increases the risk of food poisoning by splashing germs around the kitchen.
- Make sure your turkey is steaming hot all the way through before serving.
- When you cut into the thickest part of the turkey none of the meat should be pink.
- If juices flow out when you pierce the turkey or when you press the thigh, they should be clear.
- If you're using a temperature probe or food thermometer, ensure that the thickest part of the bird - between the breast and the thigh - reaches at least 70°C for two minutes.



Other birds are available

- The oven should be hotter for duck and goose to melt the fat under the skin.
- Goose should be cooked in a pre-heated oven at 200°C/425°F/Gas Mark 7 for 35 mins per kg.
- Duck should be cooked in a pre-heated oven at 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6 for 45 mins per kg.
- Chicken should be cooked in a pre-heated oven at 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4 for 45 mins per kg, plus 20 minutes.

Pamper your potatoes

- Bacteria can be on the soil on your vegetables so give them a bath.
- Don't just hold them under a running tap, but rub them under water then rinse.
- Washing loose vegetables is important as they tend to have more soil attached to them than if they are pre-packaged.

Know your dates

- Sniffing food is not a reliable way of telling whether it is safe to eat as some harmful bacteria don't always change the way food smells, tastes or looks.
- Food with a 'use-by' date goes off quite quickly and it can be dangerous to eat after this date.
- Food with a 'best before' date is longer-lasting and although it may not be at its best quality after this date it should be safe to eat.

- Eggs can be eaten a day or two after their best before date as long as they are cooked thoroughly until both yolk and white are solid or if they are used in dishes where they will be fully cooked, such as a cake.

Don't be a buffet buffoon

- Cold items for a buffet should remain covered in the fridge until the last minute.
- Don't keep cold items out for more than four hours as they could be open to harmful bacteria if left to grow warm at room temperature.
- Foods which are cooked and intended to be served cold should be cooled as quickly as possible, ideally within one to two hours.
- Food can be cooled down faster by separating it into small batches, putting it in a container and placing the container in a shallow dish of cold water.

So... many... leftovers

- Cool your leftovers as quickly as possible, ideally within 90 minutes, then cover and refrigerate.
- Use leftovers within two days and reheat until they are steaming hot all the way through.
- Don't reheat leftovers more than once.
- If you want to keep leftovers longer than two days, you can freeze them instead.
- Cool leftovers as described above before putting them in the freezer.
- Once defrosted, don't refreeze leftovers unless you cook them again first.



Alcohol – Know the Risks

The health implications

Drinking heavily has been linked to life-threatening conditions such as cancer, heart disease, stroke and liver disease. It is also linked to weight gain, mental health problems, sleep problems and fertility issues. By drinking more at Christmas time we are making ourselves more vulnerable to short and long-term health issues.

Low-risk guidelines are the same for men and women. Both are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week. If you regularly drink 14 units per week, it's best to spread your drinking over three or more days.

Staying within these recommended limits greatly decreases your chances of developing alcohol-related health issues.

NHS Scotland offers the following tips to help stay safe:

- Stick to sensible limits.
- Eat before and while you drink as food makes the body absorb alcohol more slowly - limiting how quickly it gets into the bloodstream.
- Use soft drink 'spacers'. Alternate between alcoholic and soft drinks. It'll stop you getting dehydrated and lessen the effects of a hangover.

- Check the strength and cut the quantity. Drink strengths vary widely between brands. Why not choose a lower alcohol option and consider cutting back?
- Don't drink every day as drinking too much alcohol damages the liver. It may repair itself, but you have to give it a chance. Have at least two alcohol-free days a week.
- The Chief Medical Officers for the UK recommend that if you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant, the safest approach is not to drink alcohol at all to keep risks to your baby to a minimum. Drinking in pregnancy can cause long-term harm to the baby. The more you drink, the greater the risk.

Driving

You can be over the legal limit to drive after drinking less alcohol than you may think. If you're out celebrating over the festive period, don't drink if you're driving. Even a small amount of alcohol can affect your driving in a number of ways:

- It slows your reactions.
- You have poorer judgment of speed and distance.
- It reduces your field of vision.
- It can make you feel over-confident so you'll take more risks.

Be safe - avoid alcohol before you drive.



The facts:

- The legal limit for driving changed on 5 December 2014 to 50mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood, however, it's very difficult to judge when you've reached that limit.
- Alcohol affects us all differently as factors such as age, weight, how quickly your body breaks down chemicals, type of drink, the speed of drinking and the amount that you've eaten will all influence the level of alcohol in your blood.
- Around half a million breath tests are carried out every year so there's a good chance you'll get caught.
- If you're found guilty of drink-driving you could lose your licence, get a £5,000 fine, be sentenced to up to six months in prison and pay increased rates for your car insurance.

Some tips:

- Get a taxi.
- If you've been drinking and plan to drive the next day, give it at least 12 hours for the alcohol to leave your system, but if you've drunk a lot, you may need even more time.
- If you're stopped and given a breath test the 'morning after', you will be treated in the same way as if you were caught the night before.

Safety issues

Did you know that people are 50% more likely to die in a house fire over Christmas than at any other time of year? Also, more than 80,000 people a year need hospital treatment for injuries such as falls, cuts and burns during the festive period. Alcohol is a key factor in these statistics. Drinking more, and more often, increases our vulnerability to injury so keep safe by staying within the recommended safe drinking levels and avoid doing relatively complex tasks such as cooking while under the influence.

Worried about alcohol?

Here are some useful numbers and websites:

- Alcohol Focus Scotland:
www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk
- East Dunbartonshire Council Alcohol and Drug Service: [0141 232 8211](tel:01412328211)
- Glasgow Council on Alcohol:
[0808 802 9000](tel:08088029000)
- <https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/alcohol>

Staying Safe at Home this Festive Season



All of us have had to spend more time at home this year and with the festive season approaching it's a good time of year to double check that you are following the latest home safety guidance.

Toys

When buying toys make sure they are age appropriate. Toys for children under three years of age should have



no small parts detachable without the use of tools as this would be a choking hazard. Make sure you buy from a reputable trader and that you

dispose of packaging safely. Remember Christmas novelties are not toys and don't have to comply with toy safety regulations so make sure you keep them out of reach of little fingers.

Batteries

Lots of toys and household appliances contain small batteries. Small coin cell batteries the size of a 5p piece can be deadly if your child swallows one.

You will be surprised to find them in everyday items such as headsets, car keys and digital thermometers. Look round your home for them and put them out of reach of little fingers. Make sure you dispose of used batteries too as they can still pose a risk.

For more information on this and other ways to keep little ones safe, check out the Child Accident Prevention Trust at <https://www.capt.org.uk/>

Or check out this video on things around the home that contain batteries - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1G0FWSNZB0>

Plan ahead where possible, and install batteries and build toys in advance to reduce the chances of batteries and tools being mixed in with the gifts on Xmas morning.

Extension leads

Most people have extension leads in their homes and use them to increase the number of appliances that they can plug into a wall socket, especially at Xmas. However, although there is space to plug in four appliances, this does not mean it's always safe to do so. You should never overload an extension lead by plugging in appliances that together will exceed the maximum current rating stated for the extension lead. This could cause the plug in the wall socket to overheat and possibly cause a fire.

Use the Electrical Safety First overload calculator to check this out - <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/safety-around-the-home/overloading-sockets>



Xmas lights

After 12 months packed away in a loft, Xmas lights can easily become unsafe so look out for loose wires and check they are not damaged or broken before use. Make sure you only use replacement bulbs of the same type and rating as the ones originally supplied with the lights and replace any failed lamps immediately to prevent overheating. Always switch the lights off and unplug them before you go to bed at night. Lastly, keep them away from flammable decorations and things that burn easily.

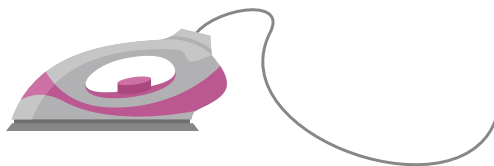


Safely buying and using electrical goods

Never leave children alone near cookers and remember that children need parental supervision around any electrical appliance.

Keep cords out of reach, especially those connected to hot items such as toasters and irons, and unplug appliances that get hot - such as irons and hair straighteners - immediately after use and store out of reach.

You can register new appliances and check for recalls on existing appliances at <https://www.registermyappliance.org.uk/>



Candles

Don't leave burning candles unattended - put them out before going to bed and never put candles on Christmas trees. Keep lighters and matches out of reach. Keep candle out of drafts, and away from little ones and inquisitive pets. Don't move candles whilst they are burning and keep candles at least three inches apart from each other when lit.





Buying goods and shopping online

Make sure you purchase from a reputable trader because if there is a problem with the product or service you have purchased then it is more likely to be resolved easily. Don't buy counterfeit goods. If the price is too cheap then the likelihood is that the goods may be fake and are unlikely to pass safety standards. Think about installing Vistalworks to help you filter out sellers of fake goods

<https://vistalworks.com/checker>

Consider shopping locally to support local businesses. If you are shopping online do your homework and check that the site is secure. Keep a copy of your order so that you can check that it's correct. This is also useful in any dispute. In all cases consider using a credit card to pay for purchases where the value of the item purchased is over £100 as you have additional rights under S75 of the Consumer Credit Act. Buying gift vouchers is a popular alternative to giving cash, but be aware that businesses are not always obliged to accept vouchers at a later date.

What to do if things go wrong or the goods are faulty

Any good you purchase should be of satisfactory quality, fit for purpose and as described, and services should be

carried out with reasonable skill and care, and within a reasonable time. If the goods are faulty you have the right to reject the goods and get a refund within 30 days. Alternatively you can ask the retailer to repair or replace the item within six months of purchase. Your rights against the retailer last for up to five years, but after the first six months it's up to you to prove that the fault was present at the time of purchase. Any manufacturer's warranties or guarantees are in addition to these rights.

If you need further advice contact your local Trading Standards Team on 0300 1234510 or email Trading.standards@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Don't fake it

- If you are buying a branded product make sure you buy the genuine product.
- Look at the quality of the goods and think about whether the trader is likely to be an authorised supplier.
- Counterfeits are usually poor quality and will not last like the real thing.
- If you are in doubt that the product you are going to buy is genuine, don't buy it!
- Counterfeit alcohol and perfumes may seem like bargains but can have serious safety problems. Many people are allergic to substances used in the manufacture of counterfeit products and could experience ill-health.



Keeping Mind and Body Healthy

Darker mornings and evenings, and winter weather can make most people feel a bit gloomy. For some, the thought of Christmas, Diwali, Hanukkah or Hogmanay can brighten up these feelings. However, we know this year will be different. If you are finding these uncertain times hard, you are not alone!

Wrap up warm and get outdoors if you can! Half an hour of light-to-moderate walking daily is an ideal way to stay active. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of kindness and compassion, and the need to support each other through these difficult times.

Here are some hints and tips that may help you to keep a healthier mind and body over the festive season:

- Reach out for help as early as possible – especially with things like debt or finances. Make sure you are receiving all the benefits that you may be entitled to. There is a list at the end of this section with some useful phone numbers and websites that can help to support your mental health.
- Setting goals - having something to work on is important for everyone. These may be small, but are really helpful for your mental health. Setting a to-do list can be motivational and rewarding.
- Find the positives and use them – have you overcome challenges in the past? Think about how you did that and can you use these 'strategies' again?
- Enjoy nature – we know the importance of being surrounded by nature and

the positive effects that this has on our mental health. Step outside, look at the sky, listen to the birds or go for a walk. Getting out in the day, no matter the weather, can really help brighten mood.

- How are you sleeping? Sleep is essential for our mental health. We need to be relaxed before we can sleep so try reducing screen time before bed. Listening to relaxing music and reading can help.
- Help others - if you can volunteer in your community, you can boost your mental health while helping others.
- Stay connected – whether that is work colleagues, friends or family - it's important to stay connected. Make a special effort to keep in touch with people through phone or virtually. Do you know anyone on their own, perhaps they are shielding? Give them a call and brighten their day - caring is sharing.
- Do something for you - life is busy and it is easy to get caught up with work and family needs. However, this can lead to burnout. It is not selfish to take time out for you, it actually makes good sense. Do something that you enjoy and make a point of doing this regularly to recharge your batteries. Go on, give yourself a reward because you cannot care for others if you do not care for yourself.

- Some people find this time of year difficult when quitting smoking so keep reminding yourself why you have stopped and if you need someone to talk to, call Quit Your Way Scotland on 0800 84 84 84 or chat online with a Quit Your Way Scotland Advisor at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/helplines/quit-your-way-scotland>
- Remember to stock up on medication as pharmacies and GP surgeries close over the festive period. Check with your local GP when they are closed.
- Condoms can help prevent HIV, sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies. Free condoms are available to people living in Greater Glasgow & Clyde. You can now order condoms securely and quickly online, and have them delivered free to your home in a discreet package. To order condoms go to www.freecondomsglasgowandclyde.org For advice about your sexual and reproductive health, and how to make an appointment with Sandyford Sexual Health Service visit <https://www.sandyford.scot/>
- Problems, worries and concerns do not go away over the festive season; in fact, sometimes they may seem worse. If you need to talk to someone contact Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87 or Samaritans on 116 123. There is also a list of useful websites below. You can also head to NHS Inform (<https://www.nhsinform.scot>) where you will find more information to help support your mental wellbeing. In addition, <https://>

clearyourhead.scot/ contains hints and tips on how to clear your head and look after yourself and others.

<https://breathingspace.scot/>

<https://www.samaritans.org/scotland/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>

<https://www.sleepscotland.org/>

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Supporting family and friends with dementia

Dementia can cause many changes in your life including how you celebrate Christmas, which makes it a challenging time for all those affected by the condition. There can be a lot of pressure to have a wonderful time, which can cause guilt and sadness for carers. For more information, visit https://www.alzscot.org/sites/default/files/images/0002/3642/Christmas_with_dementia_Proof_2.pdf

Winter Driving Advice



East Dunbartonshire Council is part of the national 'Ready for Winter?' campaign and you will find a wealth of information by clicking the red box on the home page of the Council website (www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk).

The following tips are designed to keep you safe on the road.

On the road

Prepare your vehicle. Make sure your car is ready for winter by carrying out some basic checks now. Ideally, get your car a Winter service, if not:

- Check the anti-freeze and oil levels
- Check lights are working
- Make sure your car has plenty of windscreen wash, to the right winter concentration, and wiper blades are working
- Check tyre treads –they may save your life in poor conditions
- Get your brakes checked

Kit out your car with the following items

- A warm blanket
- Emergency food and drink
- A torch
- A shovel
- De-icer and scraper
- Tow rope
- Mobile phone – make sure it's charged

Be especially careful when driving during the festive season as there is an increased risk of tired or drunk drivers being on the roads.



Top Tips to Keep Cosy for Less This Winter

With winter just around the corner, here are a few top tips from Home Energy Scotland to help keep you cosy for less.

1. Set your heating controls to manage the temperature of your home. Remember to use the weekday and weekend settings.
2. By regularly bleeding your radiators, you will avoid cold spots and get the most out of your heating system.
3. Keep your radiators clear and avoid putting furniture against them. Drying your washing on the radiator can make your house colder, and can also encourage condensation and mould growth.
4. Your room thermostat should be set to the lowest comfortable temperature (typically between 18°C and 21°C). Turning down the room thermostat by one degree can save up to £80 a year.
5. A quick shower uses less water and energy than taking a bath. Cutting a minute off your daily shower could save you around £7 a year on your energy bills.
6. Use heavier curtains during the winter months and make sure you close them when it gets dark to keep the heat in and the cold out.



Other Formats

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or in audio format and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Communications Team at:

East Dunbartonshire Council, 12 Strathkelvin Place, Southbank,
Kirkintilloch G66 1TJ Tel: 0300 123 4510

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0300 123 4510

اس دستاویز کو درخواست کرنے پر (اردو) زبان میں ترجمہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ براہ مہربانی فون نمبر 0300 123 4510 پر رابطہ کریں۔

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੋਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0300 123 4510 ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Gabhaidh an sgriobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhith oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0300 123 4510

अनुवाद करने पर यह दस्तावेज हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फोन कीजिए।