

5 November 2020

Don't let your winter end with a snap, crackle and pop

Homeowners are being reminded about the risks of house fires as temperatures drop and events such as Guy Fawkes Night, Diwali and New Year's approach.

Lloyds Bank Home Insurance saw a 13% reduction in fire claims between September 2019 and 2020. However as the nights draw in many will be looking forward to lighting candles, sitting round a fire or indulging in home baking with Bake Off back on screens.

Whilst these are all enjoyable winter-time activities, the fun could easily end up in flames if care isn't taken.

Tim Downes, Senior Claims Manager, Lloyds Bank Home Insurance, said: "Some of the things that we most associate with the colder months are sitting round an open fire, lighting candles and fireworks or treating yourself to homemade cake.

"However, all of this involves some source of heat, and with homes more full than ever this winter as we'll be going out less, the chance of a house fire may also increase.

"It's easy for a candle to be knocked over with children and pets running around or to become distracted in the kitchen and leave the stove or oven unattended.

"Taking extra care at home this winter will help people enjoy cosy nights in and avoid any fun going up in smoke."

Top tips to prevent against house fires:

1. **Fire alarms:** think about having a fire alarm installed and make sure the battery works. Regular tests will give you piece of mind that it is working correctly.
2. **Candles:** make sure that all candles are snuffed before bed and are out of the reach of children and pets. Flameless candles can create the same atmosphere, but be a safer option.
3. **Fire places:** Use a safety screen on your fireplace to stop any sparks being blown into your living area. Also make sure you have your chimney cleaned by a specialist at least twice a year.
4. **Keep heated areas clear:** don't put anything directly in front of a heat source, such as a fireplace or portable heater, as this could easily catch fire.
5. **Stay in the kitchen while cooking:** It's easy to get distracted when you're in the kitchen, especially if the doorbell goes or if there are children needing your attention. If you need to leave the kitchen make sure all heat sources are turned off.
6. **Insurance details:** Make sure you have the details of your insurer to hand should the worst happen.

Notes to Editors:

*72 fire claims in September 2020 versus 83 in September 2019.

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