PRESTIGE
UNDERWRITING

CUSTOMER GUIDANCE
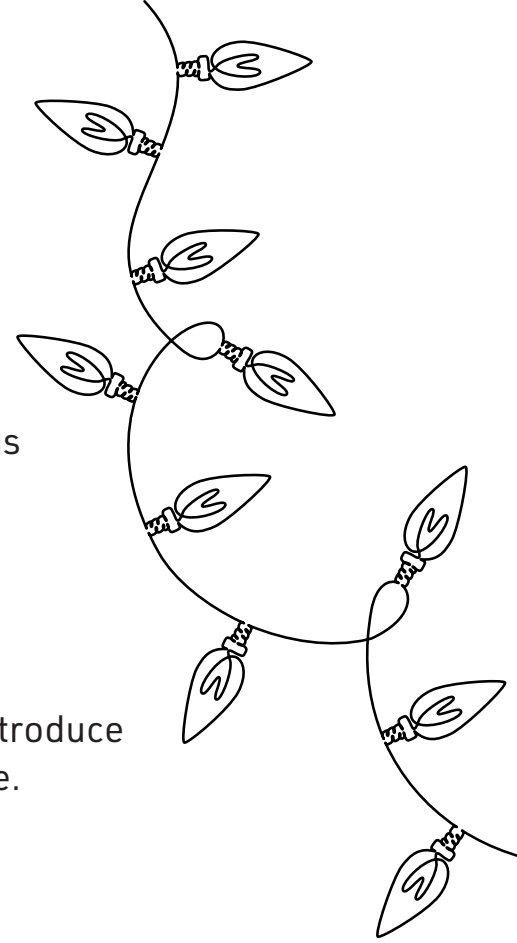# KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE THIS CHRISTMAS

As the build up to Christmas begins in many homes across the country, we must be mindful of the added hazards that can be in the home at this time.

Christmas is a time when we use more and more lights, with the need for additional plugs and / or extension leads. Also candle lovers will have a sea of festive scents filling their home. Each of these things can be extremely dangerous if not managed or controlled in the correct manner.

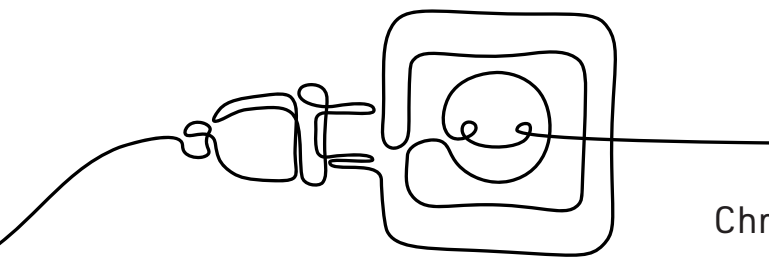It is essential that homeowners are aware of the additional hazards that Christmas can bring.

We would like to remind you of the simple checks you can introduce this festive period to ensure your home is as safe as possible.

- **Inspect Christmas lights and electrical decorations**

This may seem common sense, but it is very important to do a check on all leads, cables and plugs before using them. Anything with a frayed end should be fitted correctly or replaced.
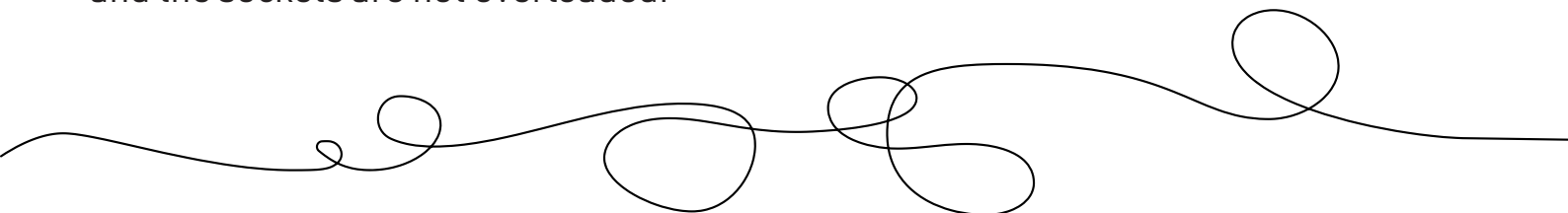
- **Do not overload sockets**

Never overload electrical sockets as this is extremely dangerous and can be a very common hazard in the home particularly at Christmas when there is an array of decorations and electrical ornaments used.
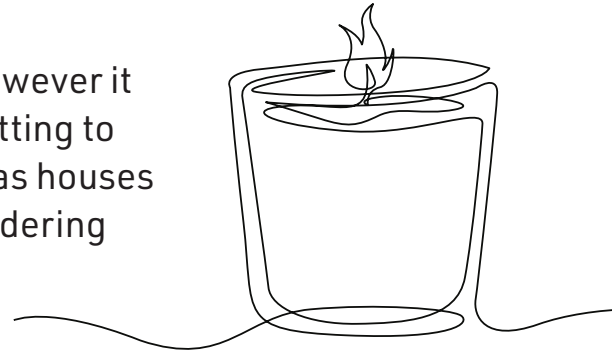
- **Minimise the use of extension leads**

If you need to use an extension lead, make sure there are no trip hazards, and the sockets are not overloaded.

• Never leave candles unattended

Festive candles can produce some beautiful scents however it can be easy to light candles and leave the room, forgetting to blow them out which can be easily done at Christmas as houses may be more lively than normal. It may be worth considering introducing battery operated candles this Christmas.

• Real Christmas trees

Many people opt for the real Christmas tree when transforming their home into a Christmas Wonderland. However, it is important to remember real trees can in fact catch fire a lot quicker than artificial trees. Be mindful of this when decorating it with Christmas lights and never have them exposed to a lit fire. Also, real trees need to be watered daily to avoid drying out. When watering your tree be extremely careful to avoid any water getting in contact with electric items or plugs.

• Never leave cooking unattended

Christmas is a time when foodie fans get extra busy in the kitchen, it is important to never leave anything unattended from pots to pans. This is particularly important if there are young kids in the house.
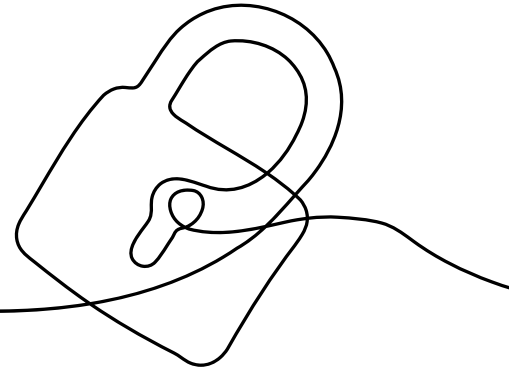
• Turn off lights, plugs and sockets

When leaving the home or going to bed make sure to turn everything off. The easiest way to do this is getting into the habit of it from first putting up your decorations and following this routine. Furthermore, Christmas can be a time when more electrical items and gadgets are purchased for presents. It is important when charging such items, they are turned off when finished with.

- **Lock doors and close curtains/blinds**

Ensure you home is secured, not only when you are leaving but also when you go to bed. Ensuring doors are locked and curtains / blinds are closed are simple ways to deter thieves. If you have Christmas gifts stored in the home, make sure they are safely stored away.
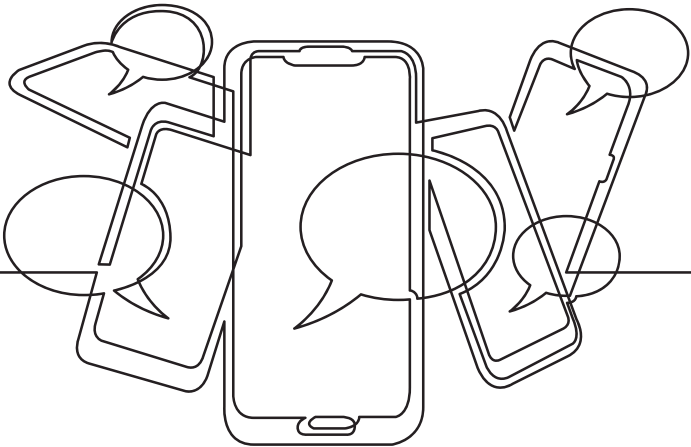
- **Be selective what you share**

The nation has become so reliant on social media and everyone scrambles for the picture-perfect Instagram post not forgetting the very popular live stories on social media platforms.

As they show real-time what you are up to and your whereabouts, it is important to be careful when posting and sharing content on social media.

- **Be cautious with outdoor decorations**

The majority of homes will have some outdoor decorations even if it is just a gentle twinkle, while other homes have a full on lit up grotto in their garden. It is vital that all safety measures are considered like indoors. This includes everything from ensuring leads, cords and plugs are checked before using them. Outdoor sockets shouldn't be overused and if you use extension leads make sure there are no trip / health and safety hazards.

Stay safe this Christmas from everyone at Prestige Underwriting

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