

## THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS SAFETY

As well as being the season of celebration, the festivities of Christmas can introduce additional hazards to business premises for which the following basic precautions are recommended:

### On the 1st day...

When buying a natural Christmas tree, select one that is fresh and place it in a water-holding tree stand and top up daily. If buying an artificial tree, ensure it is of a fire retardant type. Trees should be kept away from heating equipment or other sources of ignition, and fire escape routes be kept clear.

### On the 2nd day...

Take particular care over the selection and use of fairy lights and other illuminated decorations. Older sets of lights should be replaced preferably with low voltage LED lights which conform to BS EN 60598. Lights should always be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and outdoor lights should be specifically made for this purpose.

### On the 3rd day...

Cables and bulbs should be inspected for damage and light sets connected to the mains in a safe manner avoiding the use of long trailing leads without overloading sockets.

### On the 4th day...

Keep lights clear of decorations and other combustible materials and ensure that they are unplugged at the mains on closure of business each day.

### On the 5th day...

Care should be taken to ensure that all decorations are kept clear of light fittings, heaters and any other hot surfaces.

### On the 6th day...

Where sprinklers are installed, decorations and lights should not be suspended from, or attached to, sprinkler heads or sprinkler pipework.

### On the 7th day...

When positioning decorations ensure that intruder alarm movement detectors are not 'blinded' and also that unwanted alarms arising from the movement of decorations due to draughts and the effects of heating/air conditioning equipment are avoided.

### On the 8th day...

When hanging Christmas decorations always use good quality stepladders appropriate for the task. Use stepladders safely and take care not to over reach.

### On the 9th day...

In retail premises where stock levels are likely to be at their highest, care should be taken to ensure that fire safety is not compromised. This will include ensuring that fire escape routes are maintained clear and that storage and displays are kept clear of light fittings.



### On the 10th day...

Workplace parties should be properly supervised and alcohol consumed sensibly. An inspection should be made after the event to check that all non-essential electrical equipment is isolated and that the premises are safe and secure.

### On the 11th day...

Businesses that close down for an extended Christmas and New Year holiday may be at an increased risk from burst water pipes. Reference should be made to our Risk Bulletin Issue 2: Winter Weather Precautions, for guidance.

### On the 12th day...

Finally, natural Christmas trees will become dry and highly combustible, and should be removed from the premises as soon as the festivities are over.

Whilst these precautions are targeted towards the business community, much of the guidance given will also help to ensure a safe and enjoyable Christmas at home.

Season's greetings from 