



Caring for your home and keeping safe during colder weather



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Keeping you safe in your home is really important to us. This leaflet provides you with some helpful advice for caring for your home during the colder weather, so that you and your family can stay safe, comfortable and warm.

What you do if you smell gas?

- If you smell gas or are concerned about fumes from your gas appliance, please call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999.
- Turn off the gas supply at the emergency control valve and turn off the appliance. Do not use it again until it has been checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Do not use any naked flames or smoke.
- Do not use any electrical switches. If it is on leave it on and if it is off leave it turned off.
- Open doors and windows to ventilate the area.
- If you are feeling unwell, seek medical attention.



**If you suspect
a gas leak call
the National Gas
Emergency Service
on 0800 111 999**

Having your gas boiler tested regularly is really important. It's one way to help reassure you that your home is as safe as it can be. That's why it's important to get in touch and book in your gas safety check as soon as you hear from us that it is due. Here are a few other reasons why it's important:

- Getting your gas checked regularly can help us identify issues before they become problems – especially during the winter.
- Although it is your responsibility to have your own gas fires and cookers checked regularly by a qualified professional, our gas contractors can visually check them and help identify any issues early on.
- People not allowing us access to their home requires a lot of time and energy to chase up and re-arrange. This means that our contractors' time can be wasted and that they may be less responsive to emergency callouts.
- Gas safety checks are a legal requirement. It is a breach of your tenancy to not allow our contractors into your home to complete this important safety work.

If you allow access for your gas safety check at the first appointment, we will put your name into a monthly prize draw for £50.

Below are a few helpful tips that may help you save money and use less energy:

- Check your energy tariff. An annual check can make sure you are on the most competitive tariff.
- Switch off lights when not needed, using energy efficient light bulbs can also help long term cost savings.
- Switch off appliances or unplug them when not in use. Leaving an appliance on standby still uses energy.
- Use your washing machine at a lower temperature. Washing your clothing at 30 degrees Celsius can save electricity, while still getting your clothes clean.
- Switch off your oven early. Your oven will retain its temperature for up to 10 minutes and continue to cook your food but still allowing you to save energy.
- You can save water by using the shower rather than the bath.
- Only fill your kettle with the amount of water you need.
- Buy energy efficient appliances. All appliances come with energy efficiency ratings so that you can compare to see which is the most economical.



Our services during extreme weather

Whilst every effort is made to attend to every emergency appointment on time, there are occasions where we may experience delays, such as extreme weather conditions. During a heavy snowfall, for example, which causes an increase on the demands of our services, we and our partner contractors work to a traffic light system. This means that we have to prioritise the most urgent repairs for the most vulnerable customers and there may be delays to our services and contractors reaching you.

**For the latest updates
on how severe
weather is affecting
our services, visit our
website at orbit.org.uk**



Helpful advice specifically for the winter:

During the colder weather we understand the importance of keeping your home warm and your energy costs down.

Some additional tips and hints:

- Never use your oven to heat your home
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly and change the batteries annually.
- In extreme weather conditions check on your neighbours.
- Before it turns cold, test your central heating system to make sure it is working correctly. Run the heating for 30 minutes as this will allow you to check your radiators heat up correctly. This means any problems are identified and can be resolved before winter, avoiding any heat loss when you need it the most.

Get your home ready for winter:

- Draw your curtains at dusk and shut your doors. This will minimize heat escaping through windows and keep the heat in the room you are in
- Ensure your doors and windows are draft free. Block up any gaps that let warm air out. This will not only keep your house warm but also save money on your energy bills as you won't need the heating on as high or as often.
- Use your gas heating timer. Set your heating to only come on and off as you need it. It is not cheaper to leave it on all the time.



Some things you can check yourself before reporting a repair:

If your boiler is not working during snow or heavy frost it could be that the plastic pipe running from your boiler to outside is frozen. Please see the self-help video on our website at orbit.org.uk/frostdamage

Have you run out of credit on your gas or electric meter? If so, please top up and hold the reset button on your boiler.

Is your gas meter showing a fault code? If so, please contact your gas supplier as only they can assist.

If your boiler is not firing, please turn the room thermostat up and see if this brings your heating on. The boiler will only fire once the room drops below the temperature set on the thermostat.

If one room feels cold have you checked the radiator valve? Thermostatic radiator valves have a heat setting between one (low) and five (high). If set on low, adjust the setting by turning the head as indicated.





Get in touch:

You can visit our website:

orbitcustomerhub.org.uk

For more information,
please contact us at:

**[orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/
contact-us](https://orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/contact-us)**

Or to talk to us, please call:

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Textphone:

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Take a look on social media:

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