

SPREAD THE
WARMTH
IN CHESHIRE EAST

Top tips
to keep
everybody
warm, healthy
and safe this
winter



We can help you stay warm, stay well and stay safe this winter

Getting ready for winter doesn't have to be a struggle. Let the Spread the Warmth Partnership give you all the help and support you need to keep the cold at bay.

Whether you're worried about the cost of heating or wondering about the best ways to keep winter bugs and colds away, we can offer practical advice and useful information.

We've got loads of hints and tips on the best way for everyone to stay safe, sound and snug this winter... and all you have to do is ask.

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Stay warm

Keep your home warm

Maintain the temperature in your living room at around 21°C, and your bedroom at 18°C - give your bedroom a boost just before you go to bed.

You may qualify for a grant for insulation and heating. Be quick, the scheme ends in March 2013.

Contact Warm Front **0300 123 1234**
www.gov.uk/warm-front-scheme

For help with heating repairs, or to borrow a temporary heater, contact Care & Repair in Cheshire East on **0300 123 5017**
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/careandrepair

Don't leave the thermostat set too high or too low. Get to know how your heating works!

Get your boiler serviced regularly by a qualified engineer

If you have a gas boiler, check that your engineer is Gas Safe registered. If you have a coal fire, remember to have your chimney swept regularly. Oil-fired heating needs servicing too - use an OFTEC-registered technician.

Buy with Confidence with approved local traders – contact Trading Standards on **0300 123 5015**
www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk

Gas Safe Register **0800 408 5500** www.gassaferegister.co.uk

OFTEC **0845 65 85 080** www.oftec.org/technicians

Insulate your home to save money and keep the heat in

Loft insulation can save you up to £175 per year off your fuel bills, and cavity wall insulation up to £135 per year. Don't forget to draught-proof your windows and doors too - that could save you on average £55 per year - it all adds up!

For independent expert advice on saving energy in your home, contact Energy Savings Trust **0300 123 1234**
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Make sure you get what you're due!

1 in 10 older people cut back on their winter heating to make ends meet... but a range of help is available to help you cover the costs of winter.

Contact your energy supplier straightaway if you are having difficulty paying your bills.

• Winter fuel payments

If you were born on or before 5th July 1951, you should receive a payment automatically. To find out more, contact **0845 915 1515** www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

• Cold weather payments

When temperatures fall to an average of 0°C for 7 days, you should receive a payment automatically if you qualify. For more information, contact **0845 606 0265**
www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

• Warm home discount

Check with your energy supplier if you are entitled to discount of £130 on your fuel bill. Some people will automatically receive the discount; others who qualify will need to claim.

Dress for warmth

- Wear a few layers of clothes rather than one chunky layer; this will trap the heat better and keep you warmer.
- Cover yourself with a blanket or shawl if you're sitting for long periods.
- Put your feet up - the air is colder near the floor!

Get the money help you need all year round

More than £5billion of benefits go unclaimed by older people every year. Find out what you are entitled to and how to claim. Here are just some of the organisations who can help:

Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau
08444 111 444
www.cecab.org.uk

Age UK Cheshire East
01625 612 958
www.ageuk.org.uk/cheshireeast

Age UK Cheshire
01606 881 660
www.ageuk.org.uk/cheshire

For help with paying your rent or Council Tax, contact the Cheshire East Benefits service on
0300 123 5013
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/benefits



Stay well

Keep moving

Any kind of activity will help get the circulation going and make you feel warmer. If you can't move around too much, have you tried armchair exercises? (We can tell you more.) If the weather is good, why not go for a walk, or visit your local leisure centre?

There is a range of groups to help you stay active; activities such as Tai Chi, Pilates, walking groups, exercise classes and 'Men in Sheds' projects are a great way of being active and meeting new people.

The Health Improvement team organise a range of activities including Be Steady Be Safe exercise classes, and offer advice on preventing falls.
01270 685794

Age UK Cheshire East
01625 612 958
www.ageuk.org.uk/cheshireeast

Age UK Cheshire
01606 881660
www.ageuk.org.uk/cheshire

Leisure centres in Cheshire East
0300 123 5018
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

Eat, drink and be warmer – try and have lots of regular hot drinks and at least one hot meal a day to keep your energy levels up.

Close your bedroom window at night - did you know cold air on the head at night can increase blood pressure?

Colds and flu

Keep a few simple cold, flu and sore throat remedies in the house. If they don't seem to work, talk to your pharmacist or if the symptoms get worse, contact your GP.

NHS Direct **0845 46 47**
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Choose well – choose the right NHS service to make sure you get the best treatment.
www.choosewell.org.uk



Fancy a big winter book?

There's FREE reading at your local library and you can also borrow music and films for a small charge, or access the Internet.

The mobile library also visits villages every 3 weeks.

Libraries in Cheshire East **0300 123 5018**
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/libraries

Keep your spirits up

Winter can often affect your moods. Even if you can't visit family and friends, phone them regularly for a chat. If you're feeling down for several weeks, it's important you talk to your GP.

Samaritans **01625 426000** or **01270 216666** **www.samaritans.org**

For more information about Seasonal Affective Disorder (or 'winter blues') **www.sad.org.uk**

Are you a carer?

There is help available for carers all year round.

Find out how Cheshire East Council supports carers
0300 123 5010 **www.cheshireeast.gov.uk**

Cheshire Carers Centre offer information, advice and support for carers **0800 085 0307** **www.carers.org/cheshire**

Making Space offer support and breaks for carers -
01270 848516 or **01625 509504** **www.makingspace.co.uk**

Stay safe

Is your electric blanket safe? If in doubt, don't use it.

Look out for these danger signs:

- Scorch marks or discolouration
- Wires are visible or poking through the fabric
- The fabric is frayed or worn
- Damage to the electrical cord
- The control makes a buzzing sound or smells
- The connector is damaged or over-heating

Remember: don't use a hot water bottle and electric blanket together.

Fire safety at home

Smoke alarms can give you the extra time you need to escape a house fire - make sure you test it regularly.

If you have a gas fire, boiler or cooker, fit a Carbon Monoxide detector. This will alert you to danger and could save your life.

To book a home safety visit from Cheshire Fire Service, **0800 389 0053** or carry out your own home safety check online at **www.cheshirefire.gov.uk**

Hand rails and grab rails

Think about fitting a grab rail if you have steps at the front or back door, or to help you get in and out of the bath.

The Independent Living Centre has loads of information and equipment for you to try before you buy. **01625 374080**

Care & Repair can fit hand rails and grab rails for you: **0300 123 5017 www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/careandrepair**

Strangers at your door

During these dark nights, protect yourself against strangers at your door.

Key safes are a good idea if you have carers or friends visit regularly, so they can let themselves in without you having to leave the door unlocked.

Don't forget to use the door chain if you answer the door, and always check the caller's ID.

If you are worried about opening your front door to strangers, arrange for a trusted neighbour, friend or relative to be your '**Nominated Neighbour**'. Contact **08454 040 506** for more information.



Worried about your own safety, or someone else's safety?

If you have any concerns about the welfare or safety of an adult call **0300 123 5010** (8.30am - 5pm) or **0300 123 5022** outside these hours.

Domestic Abuse helpline **01606 363 532**, or the national 24hour helpline on **0808 2000 247**

Action on Elder Abuse
0808 808 8141 www.elderabuse.org.uk

Worried about a child?

Call **0300 123 5012** (8.30am - 5pm) or **0300 123 5022** outside these hours

Childline **0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk**

Don't get caught out by the weather

Listen and watch out for weather warnings on the radio and television, and don't go out in the snow unless you have to.

It's even worthwhile making sure you have a small supply of tinned or frozen food in... just in case you can't get to the shops for a few days.

Wrap up warm when you go out, and wear shoes with a good grip.

The Spread the Warmth Partnership is a group of local organisations who have joined together to reduce the number of unnecessary winter deaths in Cheshire East, by improving the health of local people and creating warmer homes. Partners include Cheshire East Council, NHS South Cheshire CCG, NHS East Cheshire CCG, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, Plus Dane Housing, Wulvern Housing, Peaks & Plains Housing Trust, Age UK Cheshire, Age UK Cheshire East, Citizens Advice Service Cheshire East, Energy Projects Plus, and other partners.

