

Preparing your property for winter

Preparing for winter during COVID-19

- Revisit your COVID secure risk assessment to ensure you've considered the colder weather, especially if you're at a testing site where people are queuing outside.
- If you have any COVID-19 related facilities management requests, contact our FM Helpdesk on 0808 196 2045 (urgent and emergency issues) and www.property.nhs.uk/newrequest (non-urgent issues).

Turning your heating back on



- Ahead of cold weather, turn boilers and radiators on as a simple test to ensure that they are in working order.
- If you need to make an adjustment to the controls, make it a little at a time, and give it time to react.
- The recommended set point for your heating is 21°C. If you have radiators, we recommend adjusting them to a 3 or 4 instead of maximum, so they will automatically adjust to maintain a comfortable temperature.
- Don't open a window if the heating is on.
- Don't block vents and grills. If you're getting a draught, try using the control to adjust the grill, or turn the fan speed down a little. If all else fails, ask your Facilities Coordinator for help. Blocking the grilles could cause damage to the unit (and you!).
- Check your hot water and heating is working at the beginning and end of each day so we can respond as soon as an issue arises rather than discovering it the next day when temperatures could have dropped massively.

Dealing with snow or ice



- Please check gritting has taken place in the event of cold weather. The type of grit we use may not be as visible as your usual household grit. Your occupancy agreement will outline if this service is undertaken by NHS Property Services for your property.
- Ensure standby arrangements for snow clearance are in place.
- If you are responsible for opening the building in the morning and the locks have frozen, use deicer spray or pour lukewarm water over it.
- Make sure you assess the risk of slippery internal floors and take precautions.

Using portable heaters



- Due to COVID-19, don't use fan heaters, and instead use convection heaters
- If you have to use a portable heater, ensure cables are tucked away to reduce trip hazards
- If you haven't used your heater since last winter, ensure it is free of dust and debris otherwise this can burn at first use and initiate the fire alarm. Also request a PAT test to further reduce fire risk
- Make sure you don't block your heater with anything, including your wet clothes, gloves and hats etc, and position it away from combustible materials to reduce a fire risk.
- Don't forget to turn them off when they're not needed, or better yet, use an automatic timer.

Putting up Christmas decorations



- Before putting up any festive decorations, check with your Facilities Coordinator to avoid any safety or fire risks.
- Buy new Christmas tree decoration lights or test old ones before using to minimise fire risk.
- Make sure you switch off Christmas tree lights at the end of every day.
- If you're putting up banners, please ensure they do not cover fire sensors or security alarm sensors.
- If you're sticking decorations to walls and ceilings, make sure you use blu-tac or semi-adhesive pads that will not cause damage. Do not use Sellotape
- Ceiling tiles should not be lifted to hang decorations to avoid damaging them.

Contacting NHS Property Services

Please report any building issues to the FM Helpdesk:



0808 196 2045 (urgent and out-of-hours)



www.property.nhs.uk/newrequest (non-urgent)

If you want to know more about occupying an NHS Property Services building, read our [Occupier Handbook](#)