



## Dudley Weather Alert

Please be aware that UK Health Security Agency has issued an AMBER Cold-Health Alert for the West Midlands until Friday 12 January 2024 due to a risk of cold temperatures. With the Met Office forecasting drops in temperature across the United Kingdom it is important to check in on the wellbeing of those most vulnerable to the cold.

Cold weather can increase the risks of heart attacks, strokes, and chest infections, so it can have a serious impact on health, particularly for older people and those with pre-existing health conditions.

This factsheet provides general information and advice, and hints and tips on helping you and others to stay safe during the cold snap.

### Are you winter ready?

**Basic supplies:** Make sure you have basic supplies in case you need to leave home quickly or your power and water are disrupted. It's worth putting together a 'grab bag', with bottled water, medicines, a torch, radio and batteries, copies of important documents and a change of clothes.

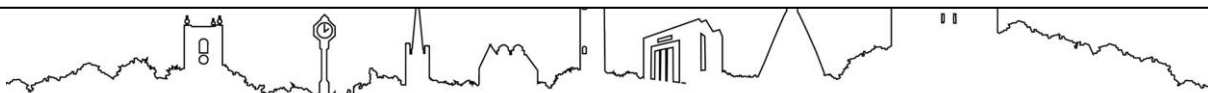
#### Make sure your home is winter ready:

- **Carry out basic plumbing checks:** Insulating pipes has two benefits – you'll keep the heat in, saving you money, but it also means reduced [risk of frozen pipes](#) which can burst, causing flooding, damage and leaving your home without water. It's also important to know where your [stoptap](#) (also called stopcock or stop valve) is and to check it regularly to make sure it is working. This will enable you to turn off the water to your home quickly should there be a problem.
- **Know what to do in a power cut:** call 105 to contact your Electricity Distribution Network Operator.
- **Check your roof.**
- **Clear your guttering.**

**Make sure your vehicle is winter ready:** [Checking your car is ready for winter](#) is really important. Take a quick check of your tyres. It's dangerous and illegal to drive in winter conditions with low levels of tread on your vehicle's tyres. Use a screen wash additive to keep your windscreen free of winter road grime caused by road salting and gritting. Getting stuck in your car in winter could be dangerous, so get a [winter car kit](#) ready. You never know when you might need it.

### Looking after others:

- Check on older neighbours or relatives, especially those living alone or who have serious illnesses to make sure they are safe, warm and well.





## Keeping safe and warm:

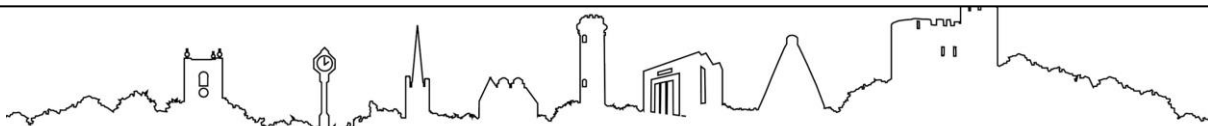
- Have regular hot drinks and eat at least one hot meal a day if possible. Eating regularly helps keep energy levels up during winter.
- Stock up on tinned and frozen foods so you don't have to go out too much when it's cold or icy.
- Make sure you have spare medication in case you are unable to go out.
- Wear several light layers of warm clothes (rather than one chunky layer).
- Keep as active in your home as possible. (Remember to speak to your GP before starting any exercise plans).
- Wrap up warm if you are going outside and wear good-fitting slippers with a good grip indoors and shoes with a good grip outside to prevent trips, slips and falls.
- If you have reduced mobility, are 65 or over, or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease, you should heat your home to at least 18°C and make sure you wear enough clothes to stay warm. It's a good idea to keep your bedroom at this temperature all night. (If you are under 65 and healthy, you can safely have your house cooler than 18°C, if you're comfortable).
- Use an electric blanket as instructed and get it tested every three years. Never use a hot water bottle with an electric blanket.
- Don't sleep in rooms with gas fires. You risk poisoning and even death from the silent killer – Carbon Monoxide!
- If people can't heat all the rooms they use, it's important to heat the living room during the day and the bedroom just before going to sleep
- Having plenty of hot food and drinks is also effective for keeping warm

## Keeping your home warm:

- Draw your curtains at dusk and keep your doors closed to block out draughts.
- Get your heating system and cooking appliances checked and keep your home well-ventilated.
- Fit draught proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors
- Make sure you have loft and, where appropriate, cavity wall insulation.
- Insulate your hot water cylinder and pipes.
- Make sure your radiators are not obstructed by furniture or curtains.
- Check if you are eligible for inclusion on the priority services register operated by your water and power supplier.

To find out more about energy efficiency visit [www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator](http://www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator) or phone the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234.

More information and support is available through the council's Winter Warmth Scheme on 01384 817086.





## Cost of Living – Help For Households:

- Check if you can save money by switching energy provider through either collective or on-line switching.
- Check if you are eligible for grants or benefits to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills. You can find out more by contacting Dudley Council or speaking to the Citizens Advice helpline (0808 223 1133).
- Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) are working in partnership with venues across the borough. With support from the council, they have launched Warm Welcomes. This brings together a network of more than 50 warm spaces where you can come this winter to keep down energy costs at home.

[Find your nearest Warm Welcomes hub](https://www.dudleycvs.org.uk/warm-welcomes/) (<https://www.dudleycvs.org.uk/warm-welcomes/>)

- Advice and information to support people struggling with the rising costs of day-to-day life can be found on the Dudley council's website at [www.dudley.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/costofliving). For anyone who does not have access to the website, they can contact 0300 555 2345 for help and guidance.

## Looking after your mental health:

If you feel your mood is low during the winter, there are some things you can try to help you feel better. These are just suggestions, and they may not always work for you. Different things work for different people at different times:

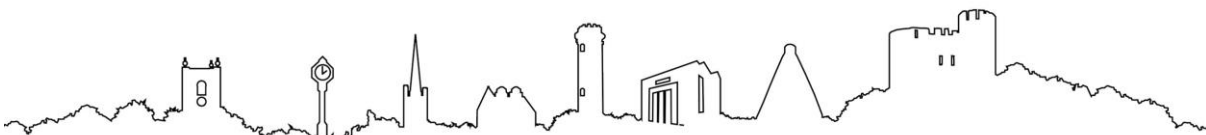
- Make the most of natural light.
- Plan ahead for winter.
- Talk to someone.
- Look after your physical health.

medical conditions; having temperatures slightly above this threshold may be beneficial for health

- the 18°C (65F) threshold also applies to healthy people (1 – to 64 years); if they are wearing appropriate clothing and are active, they may wish to heat their homes to slightly less than 18°C (65F)

### Overnight recommendations:

- maintaining the 18°C (65F) threshold overnight may be beneficial to protect the health of those 65 years and over or with pre-existing medical conditions; they should continue to use sufficient bedding, clothing and thermal blankets, or heating aids as appropriate
- overnight, the 18°C (65F) threshold may be less important for healthy people (1 to 64) if they have sufficient bedding, clothing and use thermal blankets or heating aids as appropriate





For more information, help and support please visit  
[www.dudley.gov.uk/winterwellbeing](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/winterwellbeing)

