

KEEPING TOASTIE

AS ENERGY BILLS RISE, DO YOU FEEL A TWINGE OF DREAD EACH TIME YOU TURN UP THE THERMOSTAT?

If so, take heart. There are things you can do to get a handle on your heating.

Remember too that it's essential that you look after yourself.

Letting your home get too cold can harm your health – especially if you're in later life. By following some of Age UK's simple suggestions – and claiming what you're entitled to – there really are ways to stay healthy, safe and comfortable this winter.

Some of them will get you feeling warmer right away – while others are longer-term steps to keep you cosy.

Or you can switch to Age UK Energy provided by E.ON and receive a guaranteed cold weather payment if you are a single gas or dual fuel customer. Call **0800 404 5007** to find out more.



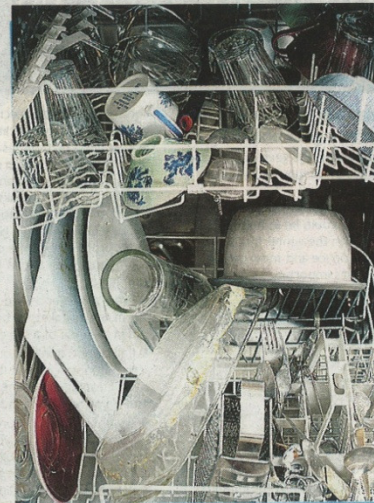
Electric blanket checklist

More than 5,000 house fires are caused by damaged electric blankets every year.

It's people over 65 who are the greatest risk, suffering six times the national average of deaths.

So if you rely on an electric blanket for warmth in winter, make sure you stay safe.

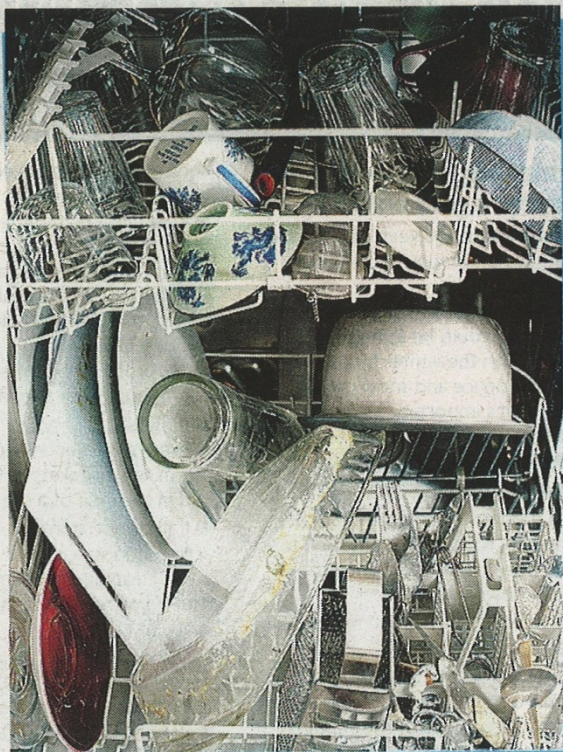
- Never switch on an electric blanket on to dry out if it's wet.
- Always spread the blanket out flat – never use it folded or creased.
- Never use a blanket with scorch marks or an exposed element.
- Never use a hot water bottle and an electric blanket together as you could electrocute yourself.
- Check the plug cord for any signs of wear or damage.
- Always buy a blanket new as second hand blankets may not be safe.
- Always read – and follow – the manufacturer's instructions.
- Don't plug the blanket into an adaptor or multi-socket block with another appliance plugged in.
- Store your blanket carefully when you take it off your bed – see the manufacturer's instructions on how best to do this.
- Most electric blankets are not designed to be washed – always check the instructions.
- Get your blanket checked every 3 years.



You don't have to sit there freezing because of the cost:

Other easy ways to keep your fuel bills low you can do today.

- Turn off lights when you're not in the room.
- Don't leave TVs, video players, DVDs and other appliances on standby – switch them off.
- Only boil as much water in a kettle as you need.
- Use a 30°C programme on your washing machine.
- Be conscious not to leave electrical appliances charging unnecessarily, like laptops, mobile phones, says energy saving experts Energenie.
- Make sure that radiators are not obstructed by decorations, Christmas trees or re-arranged furniture as it cuts the heat they give in.
- Always fill the dishwasher fully before putting it on after Christmas dinner – or any meal – so it's more energy efficient.



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