

WINTER PREP

Keep the pipes from freezing and the house warm, even if the heating fails.

Do this in **October**, before the first frost. It's on the autumn six-month check (P9).

 **Power cut = no heating.** Most gas boilers need electricity to run, so your central heating stops in a power cut. Plan another way to keep warm – see the warmth row on P1.

PIPES & WATER

- ☐ Lag pipes and water tanks in the loft, garage and outside walls
- ☐ Fit covers on outside taps
- ☐ Fix dripping taps before it freezes
- ☐ Check the stopcock turns (H1)
- ☐ Going away? Leave the heating on at least 14°C

DRAUGHTS & WARMTH

- ☐ Draught excluders on doors and letterbox
- ☐ Close curtains at dusk
- ☐ Blankets, hot water bottles and sleeping bags ready
- ☐ Pick one warm room to use if the heating fails

If a pipe freezes or bursts

1. Turn off the water at the stopcock.
2. **Frozen:** thaw it slowly with a hot water bottle or a hairdryer on low. Never use a flame.
3. **Burst:** switch off the electrics if water is near them, catch what you can, and call a plumber.

HEATING

- ☐ Boiler serviced by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- ☐ Bleed the radiators
- ☐ Test the carbon monoxide alarm
- ☐ Chimney swept if you use an open fire or stove
- ☐ Heat the rooms you use to at least 18°C

OUTSIDE & CAR

- ☐ Salt or grit, and a snow shovel
- ☐ Clear gutters and drains
- ☐ Car kit: blanket, scraper, torch, water, snacks, phone charger
- ☐ Check tyres, screenwash and battery

Never heat indoors with outdoor kit

Camping stoves, patio heaters and barbecues give off carbon monoxide, which can kill. Use them outside only, and keep a working CO alarm.

 **Check on neighbours.** Older people, babies and anyone with a long-term health condition are most at risk from the cold. A knock on the door can make a big difference.

