

# Top 12 Tips – (For avoiding Christmas crises)

Supplied by: (Bluefin Insurance)



## Top 12 Tips to avoid Christmas crises

### We present you with our twelve top tips to avoid Christmas crises

The more-organised of you have bought presents and probably wrote Christmas cards back in November. Now we are well into the annual countdown - advent calendars are being opened, the mulled wine is flowing and the decorations are up, which means that we are that close to Christmas we can almost taste the turkey.

While the office festivities provide a break from the daily grind and we all start to relax a bit, it is important that businesses ensure that their staff are protected and procedures are in place to combat the risks that are associated with the time of year.

Here are 12 quick tips to how to stay safe in the workplace over Christmas:

#### 1. Sidestep a slip in Swindon...

In 2014/15, slips, trips and falls accounted for more than a third of employee injuries in the workplace (1). Whilst putting up the office decorations, be sure that you allow sufficient space to put up and dress the tree, use the correct type of step ladders for the task, and avoid trailing wires across walkways or escape routes. Ensure that the tree is made secure and unlikely to topple over.

Mop up or make arrangements for the spilled hot chocolate to be cleaned from the floor to prevent slips. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require floors to be suitable, in good condition and free from obstructions. People should be able to move around safely (2).

#### 2. Foil a fire hazard in Falkirk...

Be aware of potential fire hazards when choosing decorations and where you place them. Before starting the decorating, ensure that all fire safety equipment and smoke detectors are in perfect working order. Christmas lights need to conform to the British Standard and any being reused from previous years should be subject to Portable Appliance Testing (PAT), as this will lower the risk of blowing the circuit or causing a fire. Avoid placing or draping decorations near an electrical point, and be mindful of not overloading the electrical supply.

Ensure that all electrical items are turned off at the end of the day when the workplace is unattended. Having one person in charge of this avoids confusion as to who is responsible for turning off the lights.

#### 3. Evade eggnog and 'headaches in Edinburgh...

The Christmas party is one of the most anticipated events of the year as it is a great way to boost morale and celebrate the year with colleagues. A fun and relaxed atmosphere can make it all too easy to over indulge on alcohol. Research suggests that UK adults consume 40% more alcohol over the Christmas period than any other time of the year (3). It is essential that employees arrange transport or accommodation after the party as to not be in danger of drink driving, and to mitigate potential legal liability to the employer.

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### 4. **Stay off the net in Newmarket...**

The combination of alcohol and internet access can be a risky one. Whilst it's important to have a relaxed atmosphere do make sure that everyone has logged off and shut down their computers, make it clear that this is a social time and no one should be sending emails from the start to the end of the party. Social media makes it very tempting to post compromising or unacceptable photos of colleagues on the internet. This could lead to a loss of reputation and trust between staff, and in serious cases could bring the organisation into disrepute.

### 5. **Take time in Stockton on Tees...**

The rush to finish work before the Christmas break is familiar to us all. However working longer hours and missing lunch breaks (and therefore vital sunlight) can lead to fatigue and therefore a higher risk of accidents or errors. Stay hydrated, prioritise, and don't have unrealistic expectation of both your home and work tasks. Work as you need to but not to the detriment of your health.

### 6. **Block a burglary in Bath...**

Over the winter and Christmas time the longer dark evenings and nights can increase the risk of burglaries. It is advisable to appoint a responsible person who will ensure that the office is safe and secure when everyone leaves for the Christmas break. Ensure that the CCTV and alarms are in working order, all keyholders know of the alarm procedure and know who the other keyholders are in case of an emergency.

### 7. **Combat the Cold in Carlisle...**

With UK average winter temperatures of 3.7 °C, the workplace can be affected by cold conditions. The temperature inside the workplace needs to comply with The Workplace Regulations 1992, which states that: "during working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings shall be reasonable". Outside the office, it is vital that the pavements, passageways and entrances that employees or customers use are gritted and entrance halls or foyers are kept free of water to minimise the risk of slipping and injury and to prevent the build up of ice. Bad weather can also prevent people from getting to their place of work so make sure that you have a well-rehearsed emergency procedure for staff to adhere to and ensure all employees will follow the same protocol and be safe in the event of an emergency.

### 8. **Elude the lurgy in Lincoln...**

Nobody wants to catch the dreaded cold and flu, especially over Christmas. There are many ways to prevent or reduce the risk of becoming ill in the workplace: wash your hands with soap and water, and/or hand sanitiser. Avoid shaking hands with others especially if you know they have been ill recently, and keep your work surfaces, keyboards and telephones clean by using cleaners designed for these items. Cover your mouth when you sneeze and cough to avoid spreading to others.

### 9. **Support the stressed in Skipton...**

Increased stress levels mean that the festive season can be distinctly unfestive for many employees. To combat group stress, be professional when speaking to colleagues and customers. Take pride in your work and strive to

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offer a high standard of service. This will reduce the likelihood of having to deal with unhappy customers or co-workers.

### 10. **Mind the mess in Maidstone...**

A cluttered workplace can lead to ergonomic issues and possible injuries. At this time of year, take the time to tidy your workspace so that it is clear for when you return from the Christmas break. Empty bins before everyone in the office leaves for the holiday - nobody likes to return to nasty smells or surprises!

### 11. **Happy and healthy in Harrogate...**

When the office treats and home baking commences, an unhealthy routine can begin. It is vital to keep healthy over the Christmas period which is easily done by eating healthily, partaking in exercise, sleeping well, and being mindful of alcohol consumption. Take care of yourself to ensure you have the best Christmas yet.

### 12. **Merry and bright everywhere...**

By following a few simple safety tips, it is easy to enjoy the festive season at work without any issues.

**We wish you a merry Christmas from all at Bluefin.**

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