YOUR OLD ELECTRIC BLANKET COULD BE DANGEROUS

WHAT’S THE DANGER?
Electric underblankets sold in the shops are made to strict safety standards. But they wear with age – and what’s more a not-so-old blanket can become dangerous too – and can even start a fire, if it is misused.

WHAT DO I DO?
Always follow the safety advice overleaf when using your blanket.

WARNING SIGNS
Have your blanket checked if
- the fabric is worn or frayed
- there are scorch marks anywhere
- the tie-tapes are damaged or missing
- the flex is worn or damaged
- any connections are loose
- you are in any doubt!

If the plug or mains lead is damaged, ensure this is repaired before use.

REMEMBER: Older blankets in regular use are much more likely to have one or more of these faults.

HELP AN ELDERLY PERSON
An elderly person is particularly likely to have an old and dangerous blanket. Help keep an elderly relative or friend safe by offering to take the electric blanket in to be checked.

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Department of Trade and Industry
SWITCH ON TO SAFETY

1 CHOOSING
- Always buy new. Don’t be tempted to buy a secondhand blanket.
- Look out for a Certification Mark such as BEAB on the blanket and the packaging and check that it complies with British, European or International Standards.
- Ask about blankets with overheat protection – they offer an extra degree of safety. All new blankets coming into the shops have this feature.

2 USING
- Follow the maker’s instructions exactly.
- A ‘preheating’ under-blanket must be switched off, disconnected and kept off when you get into bed. Never use it as an overblanket. Tie the blanket firmly to the mattress to keep it flat and check this every week.
- Never use the blanket if it’s wet, rucked or creased – and never switch it on to dry it out.

3 ROUTINE CHECKS
- Have your blanket checked at least every three years, or as recommended by the makers.
- Ideally these checks should be carried out by the makers but some local authorities have facilities for a limited amount of checking.

4 STORING
- An underblanket can be left tied to the bed all year round if you wish.
- To store an overblanket in hot weather, roll it or fold it with as few creases as you can and keep it in a dry place.
- Store separately from other bedding if possible or keep on top to avoid bedding pressing down on blanket.
- Either type of blanket can be stored by putting it on a spare bed – but make sure it stays dry and flat.

PASS IT ON...
If you have had your electric blanket checked please pass this reminder on to someone who may need it.