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### TIPS TO KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE FOR VISITORS THIS CHRISTMAS

- **Liberty Insurance research identifies the most common accidents that have happened to visitors in Irish homes, including trips, burns, cuts and falls**
- **Risks increase over Christmas as households welcome more guests**
- **Safety around Christmas decorations, pets and in the kitchen are the simplest steps householders can take**

DUBLIN, 6 December 2023

**Christmas is one of the busiest times of the year for hosting visitors in the home. New research by Liberty Insurance has identified some of the pitfalls and watchouts for Irish households to ensure safety when welcoming guests this festive season.**

The research, conducted by Red C on behalf of Liberty, has identified the most common incidents and accidents that have happened to visitors in Irish homes, and the insurer is advising of simple measures householders can take ahead of the holidays.

According to the research, more than a quarter (26%) of Irish householders have had a visitor trip while in their home. More than one in ten (11%) have seen a visitor burned by a stove or hot water, while the same number have witnessed someone cut by something sharp in their home.

Other incidences that have occurred frequently while visiting include falling from a height (5%), having something fall on them (5%) and being bitten or injured by a pet (4%). While some of the percentages are thankfully relatively low, at a time of year when visiting friends, family and neighbours is extremely common, hosts will be looking to avoid any accidents happening in their homes.

#### **Most common accidents that Irish households have seen happen to visitors include:**

1. Tripped over something – 26%
2. Burned by a stove, oven or hot water – 11%
3. Been cut by a sharp object – 11%
4. An object fell on them – 5%
5. Fell from a height – 5%
6. Bitten/injured by a pet – 4%

To help mitigate the risks of accidents in the home, Liberty Insurance is advising on a number of key measures that householders can take this Christmas.

#### **1. Ensure Christmas Lights are plugged in safely**

Loose Christmas light cords can be one of the biggest trip hazards at Christmas. When hanging Christmas tree lights, do so as close to an outlet as possible. If not, run any long, loose cords along the wall, or behind furniture. If for any reason you need to run a cord across a major walkway in your home, consider taping it down.

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### 2. Keep pathways clear

Coats and bags can be another common trip hazard – particularly if lots of guests were to visit at the one time. Ensure you have a safe place to store guests' coats and bags, such as a coat rack, to avoid leaving any potential trip risks on the floor – especially as many guests may be moving freely around your home.

### 3. Kitchen safety

Food and drink at Christmas is an important part of hosting guests at Christmas. While it's a busy time, make sure to store knives or other sharp implements safely, and be vigilant when using the oven. Many guests will offer to help preparing food, and while their help is always great to receive, if they're not familiar with your kitchen, they run the risk of inadvertently getting a burn or cut. Have a look around your kitchen for the things you take for granted, but which guests may not – especially children – and let anyone volunteering to help know.

### 4. Consider child gates or protective rails

If you're likely to be hosting children in your home, there may be additional risks of falling on stairs or over low railings. Especially for those not familiar with the layout of your home, consider if there are any places where children might potentially trip or fall, and if you could install a child gate to keep them safe.

### 5. Bonus Tip: Pet Safety

Many cats and dogs love nothing more than welcoming new visitors to their homes. However, this is not always the case. To minimise risk of any unfortunate incidents, have a separate area available for your pet if you can, inform visitors of any potential risks, and ensure pets are comfortable and well-behaved during gatherings.

**José Luis García Camiñas, Product Leader for Liberty Seguros in Europe said:**

*"We can never totally eliminate the possibility of an accident happening, but by knowing what the most common ones are, householders can be aware of the risks to watch out for.*

*"Hosting friends and family is a really important and cherished Christmas tradition for so many Irish homes, and we want to help people ensure they stay as safe as possible over the holidays.*

*"There are a few simple steps you can take to avoid stress and strain at this special time of year. Being vigilant to any little features of your home that could trip up those who are not familiar with it, and taking care to safely install and stow Christmas decorations can go a long way.*

*"On behalf of Liberty Insurance, I want to take this opportunity to wish all our customers and their families a peaceful, happy and safe Christmas."*

**ENDS**

#### Research note

Research commissioned by Liberty Insurance and carried out by RED C as part of an online survey. 505 interviews were conducted online during September and October 2023 amongst a



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nationally representative sample of home insurance owners aged 17-75. Quotas are set on gender, age, social class and region.

Simultaneous research was carried out on the same topics in Spain (800 adults) and Portugal (500 adults) by Kantar.

### **For more information, please contact:**

- **Gerard O'Shea, 360, A FINN Partners Company:** [gerard.oshea@finnpartners.com](mailto:gerard.oshea@finnpartners.com) / 087 413 7471
- **Darragh Duncan, 360, A FINN Partners Company:** [darragh.duncan@finnpartners.com](mailto:darragh.duncan@finnpartners.com) / 085 121 5011

### **Notes to the editor**

#### **About Liberty Insurance**

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