

## Facilities Management from A to Z



Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard  
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# Xmas

Xmas is a difficult time for facility managers. Xmas holidays, Xmas decorations and Xmas parties are all great fun for everyone but can create real headaches for the operational FM. The mail room comes under pressure and new safety and security issues crop up daily. No matter how long the holiday, there will be facilities operational staff working and the facility manager will be on-call or on-site supervising activities.

As well as the normal facilities cleaning, security and maintenance activities that still need to be carried out during a holiday closure, Xmas is usually the longest holiday period and presents an ideal opportunity to carry out larger maintenance or refurbishment works without disruption to normal business activities.

In manufacturing facilities, it is common practice to carry out deep clean activities during the Xmas shutdown. Commercial kitchens are usually subjected to a deep clean every six months. Equipment like canopies, extractor fans and filters need to be thoroughly cleaned for safety and effectiveness along with ovens, deep fat fryers, fridges, ceiling tiles, wall tiles and floors. Xmas is an ideal time for this following a period of busy seasonal cooking.

Despite the growth of electronic greeting cards, mailrooms still see a big increase in activities in the weeks leading up to Xmas. This raises the question of how to handle personal mail. Most organisations have a policy controlling the use of company systems for sending private mail but Xmas is a time when mailroom staff often find it difficult to differentiate between piles of corporate and personal Xmas cards.

The biggest impact in recent times is the practice of receiving personal mail at the workplace as a result of the growth in online shopping. Busy employees anxious to avoid delivery failure give their office address and the mailroom gradually fills up with boxes and packages that are nothing to do with the organisation itself.

Of course, there are many facilities in sectors like retail, utilities, healthcare, entertainment and justice that will be operational throughout the Xmas period because they are essential to everyone else enjoying their holiday. In this, as in so much else, facilities management provides crucial but often unseen service to business, government and society.

*Health and safety is often labelled as a killjoy at Xmas. Not only does this needlessly ruin the festive spirit but it also trivialises the true purpose of health and safety: protecting people from real risks at, or connected with, work. The HSE list the top 10 Xmas safety myths on their website at [www.hse.gov.uk/myth/xmasmyths](http://www.hse.gov.uk/myth/xmasmyths)*