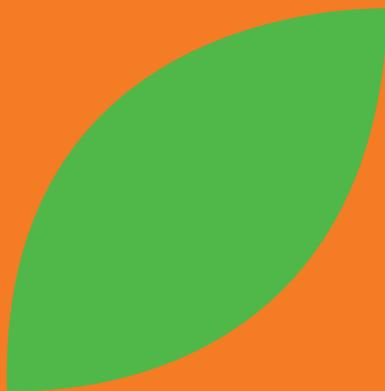


**FIRE
SAFETY**



**Protect you,
your family,
and your home**

**Creating homes
shaping places**





Fire can destroy homes and lives. The information in this leaflet explains what to do, what to check and what to avoid to help you reduce the risk of fire in your home.

DID YOU KNOW...?

- A working smoke alarm could save you in a fire;
- One fifth of deaths occur because of a broken smoke alarm;
- Most fires start when people are cooking;
- Smokers' materials (e.g. cigarettes, cigars or pipe tobacco) caused the largest share of deaths in accidental dwelling fires;
- Cooking appliances are the source of ignition in more than half of accidental fires in dwellings.

Source: www.gov.uk





GET EQUIPPED

Have you got a smoke alarm?

A smoke alarm reduces the risk of serious injury or death. Mains operated smoke alarms have been fitted to each floor in all of our properties.

You can fit additional alarms, which cost around £5 from supermarkets or high street stores. If your home has more than one floor, you should have at least one smoke alarm on each floor.

Maintain your smoke alarm

Once a week test your smoke alarm and change the battery once a year (unless it's mains-powered or has a 10-year battery). Vacuum the inside to remove dust twice a year.

HOW GOOD ARE YOUR ELECTRICS?

- Fit one plug per wall socket, unless you are using a multi socket extension lead;
- Check fuses in plugs are rated correctly;

- Worn or taped up electric cables are not safe and should be replaced;
- Hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow for no obvious reason, flickering lights, scorch marks on sockets or plugs, are all signs of loose wiring or other problems;
- Do not let cables or plugs get wet and keep liquids away from electrical appliances. For example, do not put a vase filled with water on top of the TV;
- Make sure your kettle does not leak and do not fill it up when it is plugged in.

Good habits

Switch electrical appliances off at the wall and unplug them when they are not in use.

Make sure your appliances are not left on standby – not only will this be safer but it is also environmentally friendly and will save you money.



KITCHEN SAFETY

Seven thousand people are injured in kitchen fires each year. Follow these simple steps to help ensure your safety:

Cooking – never leave pans unattended. Do not fill a deep fat fryer more than one-third full and never put food in it if the oil begins to smoke. Turn off the heat and leave it to cool. Water can make hot oil explode so make sure the food you are cooking in a deep fat fryer is dry. If there are flames, **do not** throw water over the pan, turn the cooker off.

Cooker – do not let electrical leads trail over or near the cooker. Do not hang tea towels or cloths on, or over, the cooker. Keep the oven, hob, and grill clean – a build-up of fat can quickly start a fire.

Microwave – do not put anything metallic inside the microwave.

Electrical – keep electrical leads away from water. Check the toaster is clean and kept well away from curtains or blinds.

Ventilation – make sure your extractor fans or ventilation units are working properly and are not blocked up, especially if you have a gas cooker.

Protection – place a heat detector in the kitchen.

Children – do not leave children alone in the kitchen. Keep matches out of their reach. Do not leave pan handles or kettles where they could be tipped or pulled over.

Good habits

Double check that the cooker or oven is turned off when you have finished cooking. Check it is turned off when you go to bed or go out.

SMOKING

If you smoke, you need to be aware of the fire risks and take steps to avoid them.

- It is advised that you do not smoke in bed as you may fall asleep with the cigarette still alight. This could cause a fire;



- Do not leave a lit cigarette, cigar, or pipe – make sure it is fully out. They can overbalance as they burn down, land on something flammable and start a fire. Never leave a cigarette burning on the edge of a shelf or table. Use a proper ashtray and make sure it can not easily be tipped over.

STAYING SAFE WITH CANDLES

Avoid placing candles on or near materials that could burn or catch fire like curtains. Do not leave lighted candles unattended.

GENERAL SAFETY

Has your chimney been swept?

If you have an open fire, you should get your chimney swept once a year.

Is your upholstered furniture fire resistant?

If it was made before 1988 then it is not fire resistant and can easily be set alight. This will produce clouds of poisonous smoke. You should check the label to make sure.

Portable heaters

Portable heaters should always be placed in a safe place where they cannot be knocked or tripped over. They should always be kept away from furniture and fittings. Never use a portable heater to dry clothing. Portable gas heaters should always be used in a well-ventilated room. Turn off the heater before you sleep or before leaving your home.

If you smell gas

It is important that you know where to find the gas safety valve in your home. In an emergency you may need to switch off the gas supply to your home.

If you smell gas:

- Turn off the supply by moving the valve to the OFF position;



- Contact National Grid gas immediately on 0800 111 999;



- Do not smoke or use any matches or lighters;
- Do not use electrical switches;
- Check to see if the pilot light to your boiler has been blown out or if a gas tap has been left on;
- Open doors and windows to increase air ventilation.

GETTING OUT

In the event of a fire:

Alert everyone. Make sure everyone in your home knows about the fire. If there's a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer. Try to remain calm.

Get everyone out. Do not delay for valuables or to investigate the fire. Before you open doors, check them with the back of your hand. If they feel warm do not open them – the fire is on the other side. Telephone the fire service by calling 999. Give the address and wait for the telephone operator to end the call before you hang up.

Do not go back in for anything – even pets.

If you are on the ground or first floor, get out using a window. Throw bedding or cushions onto the ground to break your fall. If you cannot open the window, use a heavy object to break the glass at the bottom corner. Make the jagged edges safe with a towel or blanket.

DO NOT JUMP OUT. Lower yourself down by using your arms from the window ledge before dropping. When helping children to escape lower them as far as possible before letting them drop. Get an adult below to break their fall if you can.

If you cannot get out, get everyone into one room.

If possible choose a room with a window and a telephone. Put cushions, bedding or clothing under the bottom of the door to block smoke. Open the window and call for help.

YOUR ESCAPE PLAN

Do you know what you should do if there is a fire?

Does everyone who lives in your home know?



Make your escape plan together. Include everyone who lives in your home, especially children, older people and lodgers. Talk through your escape plan including what to do and what not to do.

Choose an escape route. The best escape route is your normal way in and out of your home. Think of any difficulties you may have getting out – day or night. Where possible, choose a second escape route. Keep all escape routes clear of obstructions. If there are older people or children in the household, plan the order you would escape in so that if you have to go out of a window you can help them down.

Think about a refuge. If you cannot escape you will need to find one room to take refuge in – this is particularly important if you have difficulty moving around or going down stairs on your own.

Make sure everyone knows where you keep keys. Decide where the keys to doors and windows will be kept. Everyone in your household should know the location.

Make sure everyone knows what to do. Go through all the points about what to do in a fire. Everyone should know the do's and don'ts. Put your address by the telephone so that children can read it out to the emergency services. Put a reminder of what to do in a fire somewhere prominent.

Tell everyone about any equipment you have. If you have fire extinguishers or fire blankets, make sure you know where they are and how to use them. Extinguishers and blankets should only be used on an easily containable fire. The priority is always to keep people safe.

Practice the plan. Take a few minutes to “walk through” the plan with everyone. Regularly remind everyone of what to do and what not to do in a fire.

HOME FIRE SAFETY ASSESSMENTS

To find out if you are eligible for a home fire safety check by the Essex Fire and Rescue Service call 0845 601 2495 or visit the website: essex-fire.gov.uk

Please contact us if you would like a copy of this document in large print, on CD or in another language.

Proszę się z nami skontaktować, żeby otrzymać ten dokument w wersji dużym drukiem, na płycie CD lub w innym języku. (Polish)

倘若您需要本擋以大字體、音頻格式 (CD) 或另外一種語言提供, 請聯絡我們。 (Cantonese)

Bu belgeyi büyük boyutlu baskı olarak, CD ortamında veya başka bir dilde edinmek istiyorsanız lütfen bizimle irtibata geçin. (Turkish)

Kreipkitės į mus, jei norėtumėte gauti šio dokumento kopiją stambiu šriftu, jo garso įrašą kompaktiniame diske arba jei norėtumėte jį gauti kita kalba. (Lithuanian)

আপনি যদি এই নথিটির একটি কপি বড় অক্ষরের ছাপায়, সিডি তে অথবা অন্য একটি ভাষায় পেতে চান, অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন। (Bengali)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT US:

Tel 0300 555 0500
Text relay 18001 0300 555 0500
Email enquiries@chp.org.uk
Write to Myriad House,
33 Springfield Lyons Approach,
Chelmsford, CM2 5LB



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

