



Press Release

Press release from **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service** and **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority**
Making Derbyshire Safer

Tuesday, 24 January 2012

ELECTRICAL SAFETY WEEK – 23-29TH JANUARY 2012

The Fire Kills campaign and Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service are warning people not to let electrical failures set their world alight as part of Electrical Fire Safety Week this 23-29 January

Shocking statistics show that half of all accidental house fires in 2010/11 were caused by faulty or misused electrical equipment. From faulty fridges and abandoned irons to dodgy plugs and wiring, electrical equipment can be an unnoticed fire hazard in the home. With the recent cold weather, many sockets could still be overloaded with space heaters and electric blankets.

In 2010, accidental electrical fires in the home resulted in nearly 40 deaths across the country and were the cause of 241 accidental house fires in Derbyshire alone. Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service is working alongside Fire Kills and the Electrical Safety Council to bring this number down, however, every individual can take steps to help keep themselves safe by checking that the electrical equipment they use everyday is in good working order and is operated properly.

Representatives from Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service recently attend an Electrical Safety workshop hosted by the Electrical Safety Council, this helped them to learn more about the ways in which electrical fires can be prevented. Information from this event is now part of the Home Fire Safety Check resource pack.

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service will also be issuing additional safety advice for people with regard to their electrical intake meters. With an increase in the number of fires started by faulty electrical appliances and supply, this is fast becoming a safety priority. Stickers will be issued



email: enquiries@derbys-fire.gov.uk
www.derbys-fire.gov.uk

Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive
Sean Frayne
MBA GIFireE



to householders to remind them to keep the area surrounding their intake meter free of combustible items.

As part of our commitment to keeping people safe from the risk of fire, all of our Community Safety Officers are receiving further training in support of Electrical Safety Week. This training is to further enhance their knowledge about the dangers of electrics, common causes of fires in the home and how to prevent them.

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service were fortunate to receive additional funding to support our work around electrical safety which has helped to fund additional safety equipment, an electrical safety event in Derby City where second hands goods were tested for safety, and helped towards an event at a major employer of migrant workers, where we were able to give fire safety advice and practical tips about how to use electrical appliances safely.

As part of our on-going work to reduce the number of electrical fires, Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service will continue to promote the key electrical safety messages in all our fire prevention work and will be hosting another electrical safety event at Chesterfield Library, on Thursday, 9 February 2012.

Group Manager, Steve Helps said, "Electrical equipment is an inescapable part of all our lives, from essentials like heating and lights to luxuries like entertainment systems or beauty products. Half of all accidental fires begin with an electrical appliance, so it's really important to be sure that your electrics are in good working order and are used properly.

"Most electrical fires start in the kitchen, so be extra careful with cooking equipment. Fire in the home can be devastating, but many of these fires are preventable. By following some simple steps, you can help keep you and your loved ones safe from fire."

- Don't overload plug sockets
- Regularly check for worn or frayed wires
- Unplug appliances when not in use
- Keep appliances clean and in good working order
- Keep the area surrounding you electrical intake meter free of combustible items
- Consider using an RCD (Residual Current Device), these work like a circuit breaker to protect against electric shocks and reduce the risk of electrical fires
- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on each level of your home

The Electrical Safety Council advises that heaters should be kept clear from curtains and furniture and should never be used for drying clothes, while your electric blanket should be unplugged before you go to bed, unless it has a thermostat for safe all-night use.

If you would like any further information about keeping safe from fire, please visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk, where you can download our Home Fire Safety Advice and Checklist booklet. Or call the Community Safety team on 01332 771221.

Note to Editors/Producers:

Pam Thindal, Community Safety Co-Ordinator will be available for interview regarding aspects of Electrical Safety. Please call 01332 771221 Ext: 7256 regarding this.

ENDS

Rachel Palmer
T/Communications Officer