



Press Release

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

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SMOKERS REMINDED OF DANGERS OF CIGARETTE AND E-CIGARETTE FIRES

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service (DFRS) is highlighting the dangers associated with smoking, after it emerged a third of all fire deaths in the home, across the country, were caused by cigarettes. One person dies every six days from a fire caused by a cigarette or smoking materials, making them the biggest killer in accidental house fires across the country.

Fires caused by cigarettes or other smoking materials often happen because of careless behaviour such as not emptying an ashtray or leaving smoking materials unattended. Something as simple as lighting up whilst in bed and falling asleep with a lit cigarette in hand is a very common, yet preventable occurrence. The proximity to the resulting fire seriously lowers that individual's chance of making an escape.

DFRS would like to remind smokers that a few simple steps can help prevent a cigarette fire from occurring in the home.

- Make sure your cigarette is fully extinguished. Put it out, right out.
- Never smoke whilst in bed and take extra care when you're tired. It's very easy to fall asleep while your cigarette is still burning.
- Never smoke indoors when under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If your lit cigarette starts a fire you may be less able to escape.
- Never leave lit cigarettes, cigars or pipes unattended, they can easily overbalance as they burn down.
- Use a proper, heavy ashtray that can't tip over easily and is made of material that won't burn.
- Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home and test them weekly. Working smoke alarms can give you vital early warning of a fire giving you and your family time to get out, stay out and call 999.

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

Terry McDermott MA
Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive



If you don't have any working smoke alarms you are at least seven times more likely to die in an accidental fire in the home.

E-cigarette devices and chargers are known to cause house fires if they are poorly made/counterfeit or if they are not used correctly. E-cig users are advised to only buy e-cigarettes and chargers from reputable outlets and to always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Users should also avoid leaving an e-cigarette charging unattended or overnight and devices should not be used or charged if they have been damaged.

Prevention and Inclusion Group Manager Steve Ratcliffe said: "In 2017 alone, we attended 46 separate fires where the source of ignition was identified as some form of smoking materials. Every smoker should be made aware of the risks they take each time they light up, especially whilst in bed or under the influence of alcohol, or when using e-cigarettes.

"With the rise in popularity in e-cigarettes, fires caused by these devices and chargers are expected to grow. All users should be aware of the potential fire risk that comes with e-cigarettes. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and never use if either the device or charger becomes damaged.

"I'd also like to highlight the importance of having at least one working smoke alarm on every level of your home and remind you to test them weekly. A safe escape plan should also be in place in case of a fire. Working smoke alarms can give you the extra time you need to escape if the worst should happen, allowing you to get out, stay out and call 999."

For more information regarding home fire safety, visit: www.derbyshire-fire.gov.uk/keeping-safe/common-fire-prevention/

DFRS post weekly social media reminders to test your smoke alarm via #TestitTuesday.

ENDS