



Press Release

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

ISSUED UNDER EMABARGO UNTIL MIDNIGHT 28 MARCH

RESEARCH INTO CHILDREN NOT WAKING TO SOUND OF SMOKE ALARMS CONCLUDED

A study testing the response of children to the sound of smoke alarms has concluded, supporting the theory that children do not respond universally to the sound of a standard smoke alarm operating.

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service Watch Manager Dave Coss commenced his research into children not waking to the sound of smoke alarms in conjunction with Dundee University. Over 600 children were involved in the study which tested responses to both a standard alarm and a low frequency sound using a human voice.

The children involved in the study were categorised into four groups: Male and Female and 0-9 years and 10-16 years old. From the 644 tests conducted, 28% of the children woke to the sound of the standard alarm and 77% woke to the new sound.

Speaking following these findings, Watch Manager Dave Coss said: "As a fire investigator, tragically I have come across incidents where children have lost their lives. One of the first things we look for in any fire investigation is whether smoke alarms were present, and if they were activated.

"I became interested in researching those instances where smoke alarms were present, but children weren't alerted to the fire. The research that I have been conducting, in conjunction with Dundee University indicates that the sound frequency is key, therefore parents and guardians need to ensure they wake their children in the event of a fire."

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Gavin Tomlinson said: "Planning a safe escape and having working smoke alarms are essential fire safety messages that we continue to promote to our

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communities. The findings of this research do not change this advice, they simply support the importance of parents and or guardians ensuring they plan to wake their children as part of their escape plan.”

Shaun Bennett, Derby Homes, Director of Investment & Maintenance said: “Having experienced the tragic loss of children to fire within the city we supported this research jointly with Efficiency East Midlands in the hope that lives would be saved in the future.

“As a result of our longstanding partnership with DFRS we fit fire safety sprinklers in all of our new homes.”

For more information about keeping safe, please visit www.derbys-fire.gov.uk alternatively follow us on our social media channels.

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