

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

HOME SAFETY GUIDE



You can help **keep your household safe** from fire and other risks.





**The Scottish Fire
and Rescue Service
(SFRS) is committed to doing
all it can to keep you and your
household safe from the risk of fire.**

1

This guide is designed to keep your household safe from fire and other risks.

Please take five minutes to complete our equality monitoring questionnaire to help ensure we are there for all of our communities when they need us. You can access it via this QR code.

Please visit our website to obtain a version of this document in Gaelic or other languages.



A large, stylized graphic of a flame in shades of red and orange, positioned in the upper half of the image.

How to prevent

FIRES IN YOUR HOME

Reduce the chances of a fire
happening in your home and, if
it does, **know how to respond.**

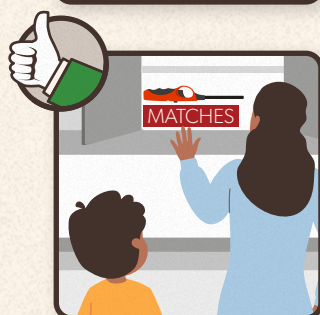
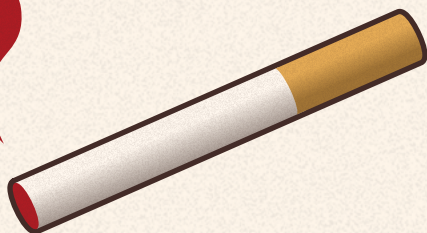
SMOKING SAFETY

Smoking is the **number one** cause of fatal house fires in Scotland.

TOP TIP!

If you smoke, always try to smoke outside. If not, smoke at an open window or door.

- ✦ If you're drinking or are feeling tired, never smoke in bed or on an armchair/sofa.
- ✦ If you do smoke indoors, stub out cigarettes/cigars before bed and douse in water before disposing – ideally in an outside bin.
- ✦ Always take extra care when alcohol is in the equation.
- ✦ Keep matches and lighters away from children.



KITCHEN AND COOKING SAFETY

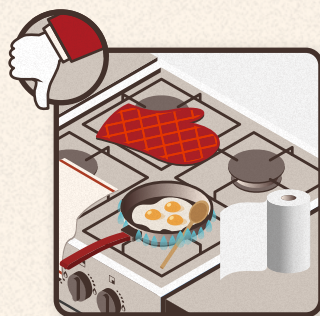


More fires start in the kitchen than in any other room in the house.

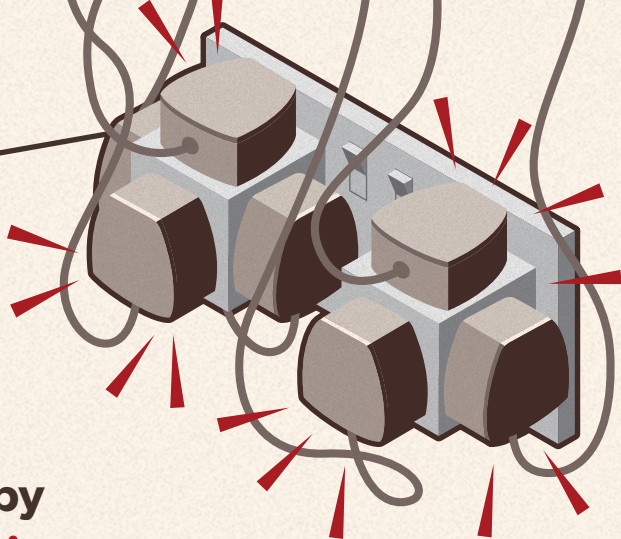
TOP TIP!

Keep the area next to your cooker or hob clear of combustible materials.

- ✦ Don't cook when drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
- ✦ Clean your oven/hob/grill and keep them free from grease.
- ✦ Avoid using traditional chip pans where possible.
- ✦ Only ever fill a chip pan to one third full and only fry in small amounts.

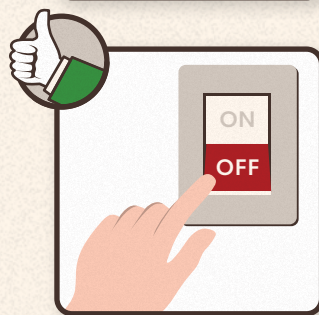
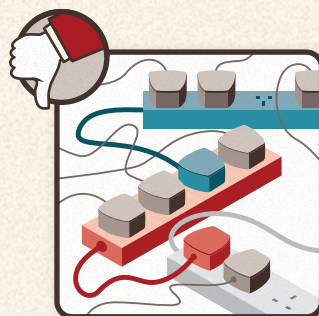


ELECTRICAL SAFETY



Many house fires are caused by misusing **electricity**.

- ✦ Never overload sockets.
- ✦ Don't leave devices on standby – it saves energy and money.
- ✦ Avoid joining extension leads together (aka "daisy-chaining").
- ✦ When out or sleeping, make sure electrical appliances like tumble dryers, washing machines and dishwashers are not running.
- ✦ Follow instructions when using an electric blanket.



Electrical Safety First exist to provide safety guidance and product recall information. Visit their website below or contact them by emailing enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

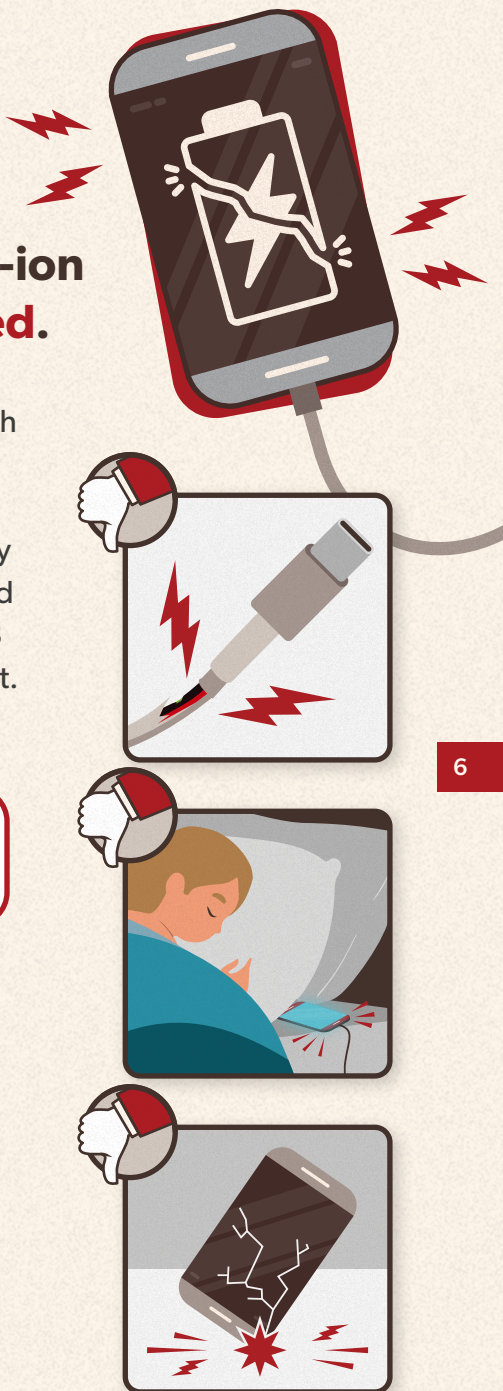
Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries **have increased.**

They are rechargeable batteries which are found in common items including mobile phones, e-cigarettes and some general household goods. They should always be charged, stored and disposed of responsibly. See page 18 for info on electric modes of transport.

TOP TIP!

Never overcharge a device that has a lithium-ion battery.

- ✦ Never use a damaged charger.
- ✦ Be aware of purchasing cheap, incompatible chargers online.
- ✦ Avoid charging your device while asleep or away from home.
- ✦ Never charge or store a device on top of a bed.
- ✦ A dropped or damaged battery can catch fire and explode.



CHIMNEY SAFETY, STOVES AND CARBON MONOXIDE



There are over **1,000 chimney fires** in Scotland each year. There is also a growing link between fuel poverty and fire.

TOP TIP!

Keep chimneys and flues swept and maintained.

- ★ Clean your chimney before use. Get it inspected and cleaned by a registered chimney sweep.
- ★ Extinguish any fire before going out/going to bed and remove embers using a non-combustible metal ash can.
- ★ Do not use outdoor heaters indoors.
- ★ Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and always use a fire guard.
- ★ Do not stack logs or other combustible materials adjacent to any stove, boiler or heater.
- ★ Be aware of the dangers of using alternative cooking methods with portable gas or BBQs.
- ★ Have a carbon monoxide detector in each room where there is a fuel-burning appliance.

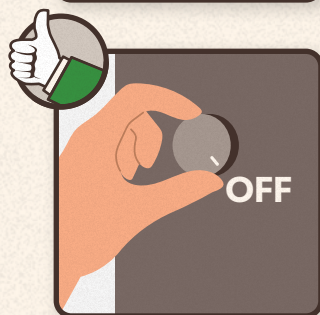
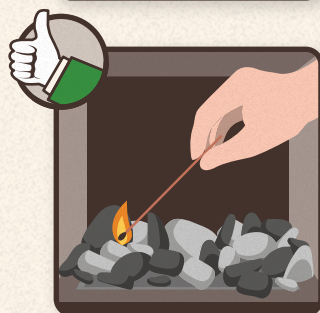
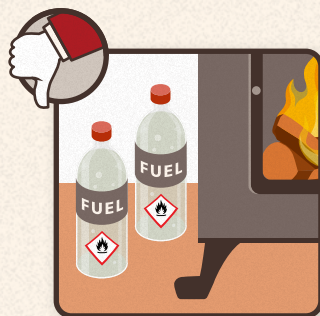
BIOETHANOL AND GEL FUEL BURNERS



Bioethanol and gel fuel burners do not emit smoke or ash but...
are flammable and can cause serious harm.

They look like “living” flames, but do not need a chimney flue.

- ✦ Keep fuel well away from ignition sources.
- ✦ Fireboxes should be kept away from combustible materials.
- ✦ Keep children and pets away from fireboxes and fuel.
- ✦ Extinguish all fires before going to bed and only use in a well-ventilated room.
- ✦ Clean fuel containers often with a damp cloth.
- ✦ Never leave unattended.



SMOKE AND HEAT DETECTOR GUIDANCE



Having working
interlinked detectors
is the law, but **they**
can also save
your life.

TOP TIP!

*Test your smoke
detectors every week.*

9



Smoke detectors
in hallways and
main living spaces.



Heat detector
in the kitchen.



Carbon monoxide alarm where
there is a fuel-burning appliance.



All owner occupiers are
responsible for fitting their
own interlinked detection.

You should be able to **hear a smoke detector activate in every room in the house, even with the doors closed.**

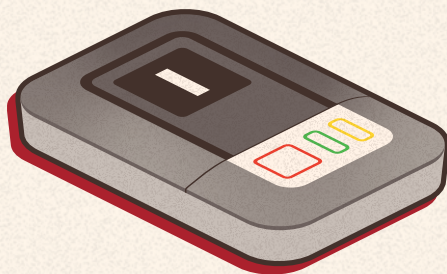
TOP TIP!

If you can't hear an alarm from a room with the door closed, consider fitting an extra alarm there.

- ✦ Have a smoke detector in the rooms you spend most of your time in.
- ✦ Never take batteries out – even for a short time.
- ✦ Avoid painting over or adding stickers on a detector.

DIGITAL HEALTH AND CARE

(formerly Telecare)



10

Digital Health and Care systems exist to support elderly and vulnerable people to live in their homes independently.

They provide a quick and easy way of contacting the emergency services in times of need.

They can also include smoke and heat detectors.

If you want to find out more, a self-check online tool has been developed to help you learn what services are on offer within your local area. This can be accessed via the link below or you can speak to your local authority.

DO YOU REGULARLY TEST YOUR DETECTORS?

During a Home Fire Safety Visit, we may provide and install smoke/heat/carbon monoxide alarms. However, maintaining these alarms is your responsibility, so...

please ensure they are regularly tested.

TOP TIP!

If you can't safely change the smoke alarm yourself, please ask a relative or friend to help.

The alarms we install are fitted with long-life batteries and the unit is sealed so the batteries cannot be tampered with or removed. If your alarm beeps at random intervals, there may be a fault with the device itself:

1. Try the test button on the smoke alarm – the alarm will sound briefly, but this may help to reset and clear any fault.
2. Differences in temperature may also cause the alarm to beep. If this is the case, the alarm may stop beeping once your home warms up.



3. Dust and insects can also trigger the alarm. **If it is SAFE for you to do so**, a quick clean with vacuum crevice tools or a duster may help.

4. If after doing this your alarm is still beeping, it may be that it's faulty and you need to organise a replacement.

If you live in a rented property, your council, housing agency or landlord are responsible for replacing this for you. Please contact them in the first instance.



WHAT IF MY ALARM IS FAULTY?

12

If you think there is a problem with **equipment provided by SFRS**, please contact the manufacturer. They will send out a replacement alarm free of charge.

Please check the make of your alarm and contact:

✦ AICO Technical Team on
01691 664100 or email
technical@aico.co.uk

✦ or FireBlitz Customer
helpline: **0800 008 6568**

If you or no one can safely change your alarm, please phone us on **0800 0731 999**. Our staff will take your details and arrange for your replacement alarm to be fitted.

CANDLE SAFETY

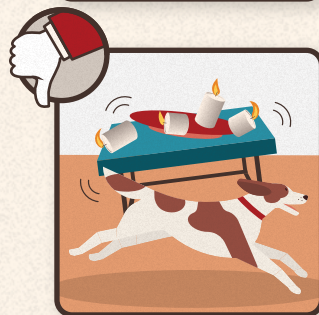
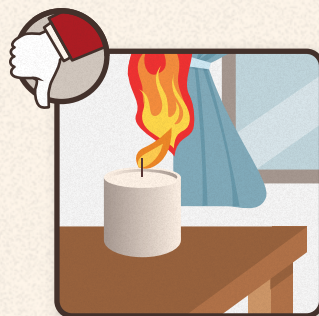


Lit candles
can **cause fires**
just as much as
any other flame.

TOP TIP!

*Keep well away from
curtains and fabrics.*

- ✦ Never leave unattended – even for a few seconds.
- ✦ Never place on soft furnishings or plastic (i.e. sofas or bath edges).
- ✦ Never use if under the influence of alcohol or drugs or feel sleepy.
- ✦ Be careful around pets in the home that could knock them over.
- ✦ Extinguish before going to bed or leaving home.



NIGHT-TIME ROUTINE

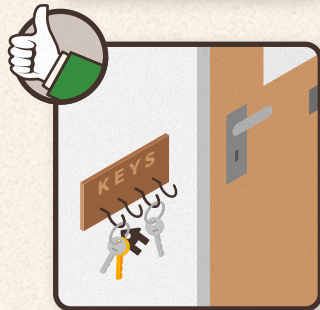


Follow this routine every night to **reduce the chances of fire.**

- ✦ Switch off / unplug appliances.
- ✦ Stub out cigarettes before bed and douse in water before disposing.
- ✦ Put fireguards around open fires and don't build up the fire before bed.
- ✦ Make sure your main door keys are in a readily accessible place.
- ✦ Have a phone at your bedside.
- ✦ Switch off portable heaters.

TOP TIP!

Close all doors before bed. If there's a fire, this will slow it spreading.



Practising a **HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN**

CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!

PLAN A

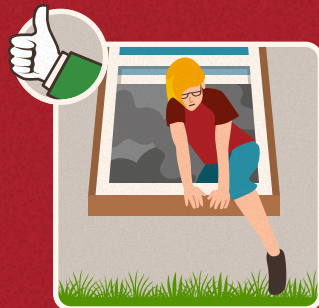
Your first choice of escape is always via the main door of your property.

Remember children can sleep through a smoke detector alert, so factor in waking them up.



PLAN B

Always have another way of getting out and make sure everyone within your property is aware of it.



PLAN C

Go to a 'safe room' with a window and a phone. **Call 999!**

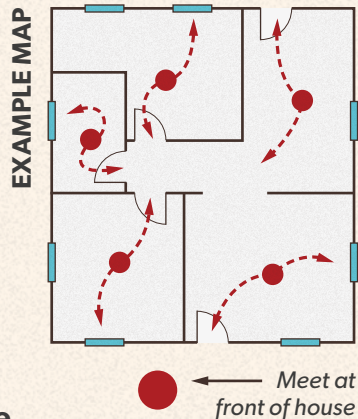
Pack clothing or bedding around the door to keep smoke out.

Then stand by the open window and **shout 'FIRE' for help.**



YOUR HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN:

- ★ Draw a map or floor plan of your home. Show all windows and doors.
- ★ Mark two ways out of each room. If in an upstairs room, mark a safe way out or follow Plan C.
- ★ Choose and mark a meeting place outside in front of your home.



Don't wait for a fire! Practice your escape plan and keep those within your home safe.

This image shows a full page of blank graph paper. The background is a light beige or off-white color. Overlaid on this background is a precise grid of thin, dark gray lines. The grid consists of small, equal-sized squares that cover the entire area of the page, leaving no margins or other markings.

HIGH RISE FIRE SAFETY



If there's a fire in your building
(**OUTSIDE YOUR FLAT**), **stay**
in your flat, keep the front
door closed and **call 999**.

If there's fire in your flat:

Follow your building's 'Fire Escape Plan'.

Alert your household and exit quickly.

Close doors behind you to prevent
smoke and fire spread.

Always take the stairs to exit the
building – don't take the lift.

Once out, stay out. Call 999!

If you are trapped in your flat:

Go to a 'safe room' which should have
a window and a phone. **Call 999!**

Pack clothing or bedding around
the door to keep smoke out.

Then stand by the open window
and **shout "FIRE" for help**.



FLAT EXAMPLE

ELECTRIC MODES OF TRANSPORT



If involved in a fire, electrical modes of transport (i.e. e-bikes or mobility scooters) **can release large volumes of smoke and generate significant heat** in a very short period.

18

TOP TIP!

Only charge when someone is present.

- ✦ Do not charge when sleeping.
- ✦ Don't store or charge within a hall/lobby or escape route.
- ✦ Store in a separate room with a smoke detector.
- ✦ Consider removing battery when not in use.
- ✦ Ensure item receives regular maintenance.

MEDICATION AND SPECIALIST HEALTHCARE EQUIPMENT

Interlinked smoke / heat detectors should be in rooms where any of the following equipment is used.

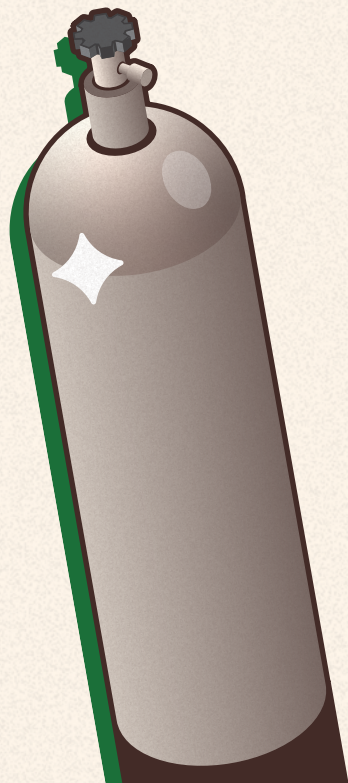
TOP TIP!

If you smoke, take care when using medical equipment.

MEDICAL OXYGEN

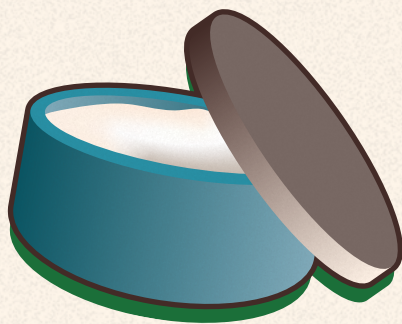
It can be a fire risk due to the levels of concentrated oxygen within.

- ✦ Turn oxygen off when not in use.
- ✦ Always keep away from naked flames.
- ✦ Take extra care when wearing emollients if using medical oxygen.
- ✦ Use in well-ventilated areas.
- ✦ Store away from flammable materials.
- ✦ Avoid cooking while using a portable oxygen unit.



EMOLLIENT CREAMS

They are moisturisers which are treatments for various skin conditions. Many contain paraffin and can make...



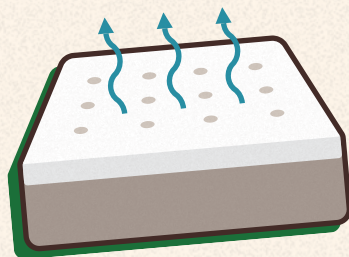
bedding and clothing very flammable.

- ✦ Don't smoke or use naked flames while using emollient creams.
- ✦ Don't go near anything which may cause a fire e.g. a portable heater.
- ✦ Change clothing and bedding often and wash items at 60 degrees.
- ✦ Always take extra care when cooking or using an open flame.

20

AIRFLOW MATTRESS

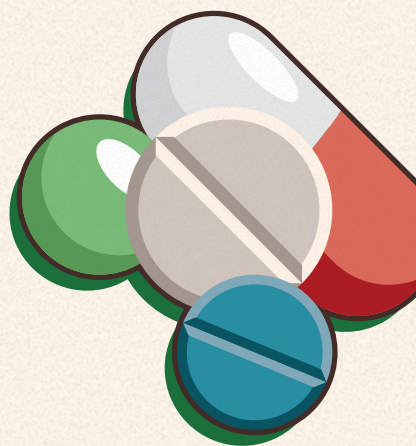
A punctured air pressure mattress can cause a fire to spread rapidly.



- ✦ Never smoke near an air pressure mattress or use close to naked flames.
- ✦ Avoid using with an electric blanket or placing hot items close by.
- ✦ Keep mattresses away from open fires.
- ✦ Ensure your mattress is kept away from electrical equipment.

MEDICATION

Certain medications can make you less aware of your surroundings and impact your ability to react to a fire.



Side effects can include dizziness, drowsiness, being unsteady on your feet, blurred vision or difficulty thinking clearly.

- ✦ Avoid alcohol.
- ✦ Be more aware when cooking.

21

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ADVICE

Alcohol and drugs increase the risk of fire in the home, particularly around cooking and smoking.

If you or your family is affected by alcohol and drug dependency, please contact the charity **WithYou**.



A stylized graphic of a house in shades of blue. The roof is a large triangle at the top. Below it is a chimney on the right side. The main body of the house is a dark blue rectangle. At the bottom, there is a door on the left and a window on the right. The door has a small white square with a black dot in the center, and a black horizontal bar below it. The window is a rectangle divided into four smaller squares by a black cross. The title 'SAFETY IN THE HOME' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the house body.

SAFETY IN THE HOME

**Key guidance on wider safety
in and around the home.**

FALLS

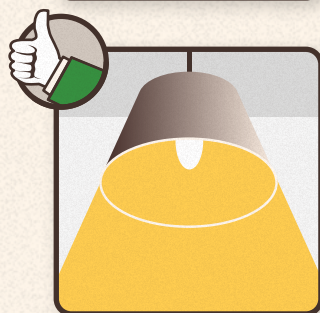
Anyone can have a fall, but **older people are more vulnerable** than others.



If you have had a fall, or are worried about your general health, speak to your GP practice. For guidance, call NHS Inform on **0800 224 488**.

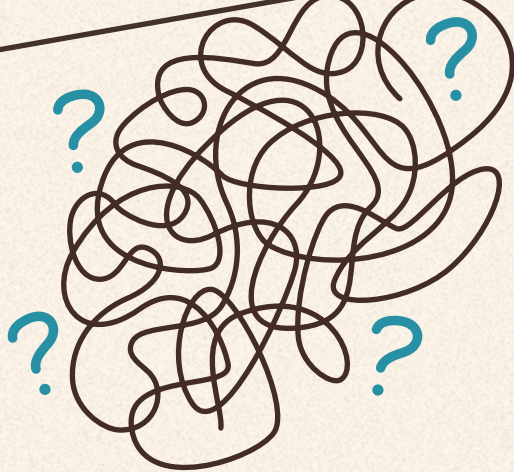
You can assess your own risk of falling and create a personalised falls prevention plan by visiting: **fallsassistant.org.uk**

- ✦ Detect any trip hazards and tidy clutter in your home which may increase chances of a fall.
- ✦ Maintain an active lifestyle where possible.
- ✦ Ensure adequate lighting is in place.
- ✦ Consider use of community alarms and pendants.
- ✦ Consider use of walking aids and keep well maintained.
- ✦ Adapt furniture or furnishings to provide more support.



DEMENTIA

Dementia can cause sensory loss and affect a person's ability to spot a fire.



People with dementia may also find it difficult to escape a fire or understand what is happening.

If you care for a person with dementia, please test smoke and heat detectors regularly.

So, it is vital that anyone with dementia has a clear escape route and sufficient lighting.

Please also talk about escape plans and ensure they are aware of what to do.

24



THE HERBERT PROTOCOL

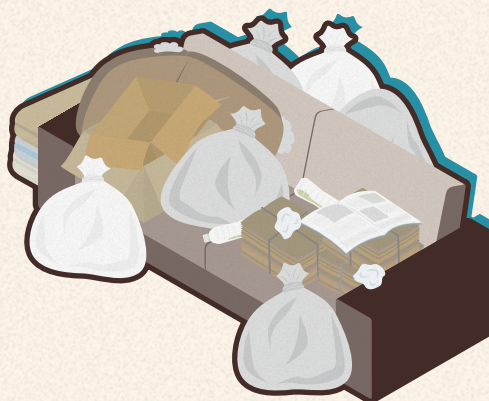
It encourages carers, family and friends to provide useful information, which can then be used in the event of a vulnerable person going missing.

It consists of a form that contains vital information about a person at risk that can be passed to the police at the point the person is reported missing.

Find out more info on [ageuk.org.uk](https://www.ageuk.org.uk)

HOARDING

People who hoard often **have an excessive number of possessions.**



This can impede on day-to-day life, prevent a quick escape in the event of a fire and result in fire spreading further.

It can also prevent firefighters from gaining entry to a property to carry out their duties.

Please contact your local authority or social services department who may be able to provide you with further info.

25

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Anyone living alone may become more **vulnerable to fire.**

Loneliness can occur at any age or stage in life and can be damaging to a person's health, it is possible for people who appear well connected socially to feel lonely.



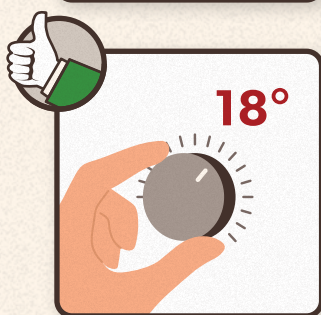
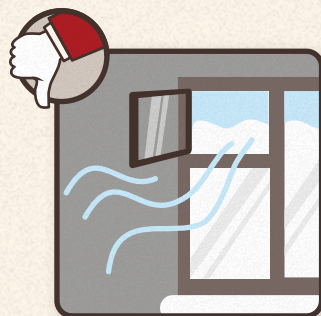
WINTER WARMTH

Being cold for any length of time **can increase your risk of suffering ill health.**

TOP TIP!

Keep bedroom windows closed at night so you do not breathe in cold air.

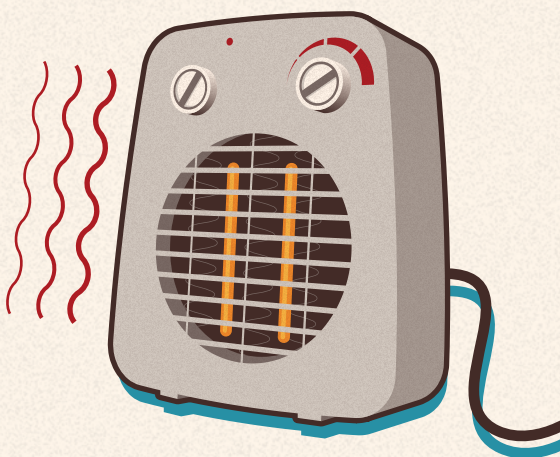
- ✦ During winter, maintain a temperature of at least 18 degrees within your home.
- ✦ Close internal doors to keep heat in.
- ✦ Layer clothing and try not to sit down for long periods.
- ✦ Consider if support is available to help make your home more energy efficient.



IF USING

PORTABLE HEATERS:

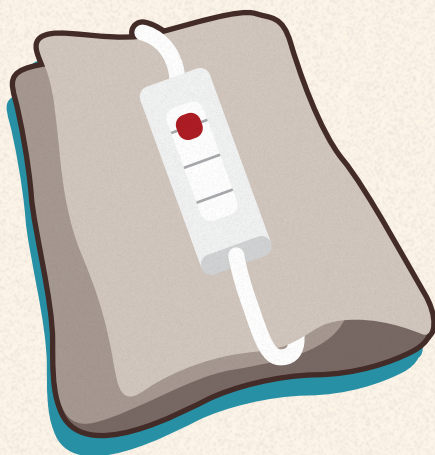
- ✦ Use on level surface, well away from anything that could knock it over or anything combustible.
- ✦ Never use it to dry clothes.
- ✦ Don't leave unattended.
- ✦ Never power from an extension lead.



IF USING

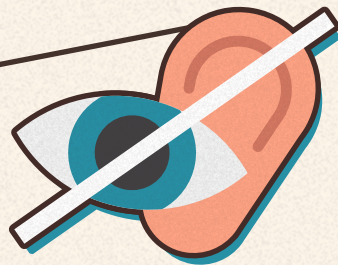
ELECTRIC BLANKETS:

- ✦ Examine your blanket regularly for signs of wear and tear.
- ✦ Do not use a hot water bottle at the same time.
- ✦ Do not touch the blanket with wet hands or feet.
- ✦ Do not use whilst still folded or creased.



Home Energy Scotland provide free support and advice on how to reduce the cost of heating your home. They can also share guidance on accessing further support and financial grants. See their contact below.

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT



Sensory impairment increases with age.

It can affect a person's ability to notice, assess and respond to a fire.

Specialist smoke detectors and linked equipment is available and can save lives.

Items can include strobe lighting, pagers and vibrating pads.

Call Action on Hearing Loss on 0808 808 0123 or text 0808 808 9000.

Call RNIB Scotland on 0303 123 9999.

UNDER-5s SAFETY



28

Accidents among young children can be preventable.

On average, half of under-5s attend Accident and Emergency every year following an accident that didn't have to happen.

The most common accidents appearing in A&E include:

- ✦ Burns and Scalds
- ✦ Choking
- ✦ Drowning
- ✦ Poisoning
- ✦ Strangulation and Asphyxiation

CPR ADVICE



CPR can increase someone's chances of survival following a cardiac arrest.

Phone 999 immediately and then start CPR. Ask anyone else present to locate a defibrillator.

Kneel next to the person, then:

- ✦ Place the heel of one hand in the centre of the person's chest. Place your other hand on top of your first and interlock your fingers.
- ✦ With straight arms, use the heel of your hand to push down firmly and smoothly, so that chest is pressed down and then release.
- ✦ Do this at a rate of 100 to 120 chest compressions per minute – or to the beat of the song "Staying Alive".
- ✦ Keep going until an ambulance crew takes over, or the person shows signs of regaining consciousness.



ONWARD REFERRAL CONSENT FORM

I consent to Scottish Fire and Rescue Service sharing my personal data with their partner agency listed below:

SFRS Representative to record Organisation name/s here:

I understand my personal details shared with the above will be:

✦ Name; ✦ Address; and ✦ Contact details.

I have read and understand the Privacy Notice which provides me with the details of how my personal data will be processed and my rights in respect of Data Protection legislation.

30

Name (PRINT)	
Signature	
Date / Time	

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is committed to processing information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Contact details:

If you have any questions relating to this consent form or the way we are planning to use your information, please contact by emailing:

SFRS.HFSVadministrators@firescotland.gov.uk

If you have any questions relating to your data protection, please contact our Information Governance team by emailing: **SFRS.GDPR@firescotland.gov.uk**

SIGNPOSTING LIST



Advice Direct Scotland

Call **0808 164 6000**
or visit **advisedirect.scot**

Age Scotland

Call **0800 12 44 222** (Mon to Fri, 9am – 5pm) or visit **agescotland.org.uk**

Breathing Space

Visit **breathingspace.scot**

British Heart Foundation

Call **0300 330 3322**
or visit **bhf.org.uk**

Carers Trust

Call **0300 772 7701**
or email **scotland@carers.org**

Children 1st

Visit **children1st.org.uk**

Citizens Advice Scotland

Call **0800 028 1456**
or visit **cas.org.uk**

Crimestoppers

Visit **crimestoppers-uk.org**

Hourglass (Safer Ageing)

24/7: **0808 808 8141**
or text **07860 052906**

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland

Call **01786 463732** or visit
neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

NHS Inform

Call **0800 224488**
or visit **nhsinform.scot**

NHS 24

Call **111** or visit **nhs24.scot**

Outside the Box

Visit **otbds.org**

Red Cross

Visit **redcross.org.uk**

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)

Visit **rospa.com**

Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)

Visit **samh.org.uk**

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)

Visit **sepa.org.uk**

SGN (Scottish Gas Network)

Visit **sgn.co.uk**

Scottish Women's Aid

Call **0800 027 1234**
or visit **womensaid.org.uk**

Shelter Scotland

Visit **scotland.shelter.org.uk**



firescotland.gov.uk

SFRS Home Safety
Guide Version 2 –
January 2025