Fire Kills Campaign
Monthly Briefing Pack
February 2023 – Cooking
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1. Introduction

Welcome to the monthly briefing pack for February, covering cooking fire safety. Each year, cooking causes more accidental fires in the home than anything else. Cooking-related fires tend to result in the most non-fatal casualties and the second most fatalities (behind smoking products) so the importance of promoting cooking fire safety messages cannot be overestimated.

Cost of living campaign

As the coldest weather takes place in the UK from December to February, promotion of winter fire safety messages will continue during the month. The NFCC has developed a bespoke campaign ‘Stay Fire Safe’ with resources available to target potential fire safety risks associated with the rise in the cost of living, which is particularly pertinent during periods of cold weather. A toolkit and campaign resources were circulated to all fire and rescue services in September 2022.

If you have not received the Campaign Toolkit, please contact communications@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk. The material is also available on the Fire Kills Portal, here.

National advertising

The Fire Kills national advertising is likely to run from mid-February and/or March 2023. Media plans are being drawn up and more information will be shared as soon as these are firm up. As ever, the adverts themselves, which are the same as those used in 2021/22, will be made available to fire and rescue services through the Fire Kills Portal.

Fire Kills Review workshop

Thanks again to all those who attended the Fire Kills Review workshop on Monday 17 October. We are still analysing and considering all the feedback and will circulate a summary in due course. Despite this taking longer than planned to send out, this doesn't devalue the workshop and the feedback received.

It was apparent in the discussions that many people were not aware of the monthly briefing packs, the Fire Kills Portal or how to access it and the materials available on there. Therefore, please will each fire and rescue service ensure they have the appropriate people on the Fire Kills distribution list.

Fire Kills distribution list

These briefing packs, as well as notifications of campaign opportunities, new materials and resources, are sent to over 300 recipients across all fire and rescue services in England. If you would like to review who in your FRS receives these updates and/or update the list to ensure it goes to all those who would like them, please email James Webb.

Feedback

We hope that these packs support local initiatives and would welcome any feedback on areas for improvement, where we could do more and anything else
that you think will be beneficial to fire and rescue services. If you have any feedback or questions on the packs or the campaign more generally, please contact James Webb.

**Press templates and social media posts**
Draft templates are available within this pack to support local engagement with press and through social media.

**Fire and Rescue Campaign Calendar 2023**
The Fire Kills and NFCC campaign calendar was circulated with the November briefing pack and is also available to all FRSs through the Fire Kills Portal.
2. Cooking fire safety messages

Cooking fire safety covers a range of issues, from leaving it unattended through to electrical issues. This presents a range of messaging and the need for tailoring of messaging and activity to the relevant audiences. Obviously, having sufficient detection equipment and escape plans remains of high importance.

**Cooking safely**
- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of their reach to keep them safe.
- Take care if you're wearing loose clothing – this can easily catch fire.
- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob.
- Double check the cooker is off when you've finished cooking.
- Take care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk.
- Make sure saucepan handles don't stick out – so they don't get knocked off the stove.

**Take care with electrics**
- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water.
- Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls.
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order. A build-up of fat and grease can ignite a fire.

**Deep fat frying**
- Take care when cooking with hot oil – it sets alight easily.
- Make sure food is dry before putting it in hot oil so it doesn’t splash.
- If the oil starts to smoke – it’s too hot. Turn off the heat and leave it to cool.
- Use a thermostat controlled electric deep fat fryer. They can’t overheat.

What to do if a pan catches fire:
- Don’t take any risks. Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so. Never throw water over it.
- Don’t tackle the fire yourself – Get Out, Stay Out, Call 999.
3. Key Dates

**Valentine’s Day – 14 February**  
Although Valentine’s Day may provide only a tenuous link to cooking fire safety, it does provide the chance to be creative. In recent years, many fire and rescue services have used pun-filled headlines to promote fire safety tips, encouraging people to protect their loved ones with smoke alarms, or make sure that a romantic night for two doesn’t end in disaster.

‘Flee – Hot Date’, the video produced by FireAngel in partnership with London Fire Brigade and which is available to all fire and rescue authorities, demonstrates the danger of not being careful when cooking and using candles on Valentine’s Day. It’s a video perfect for promoting on social media.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g07Lkbbe5rA

**Pancake Day / Shrove Tuesday – 21 February**  
Similarly, Pancake Day provides further opportunity to get creative and use the Day to promote cooking safety tips and messaging.
4. Suggested local PR activity

Local engagement activity and PR events can boost the delivery of messages in your area.

Local press notice
To support the campaign, we have provided template press notices – on page 11 to assist with local PR and media opportunities. The press notices can, of course, be tailored as necessary to reflect local priorities, activities, spokespeople and messages.

Celebrity endorsement
You may wish to organise a campaign around staying safe in the kitchen, fronted by a local celebrity or spokesperson, possibly one who has young children. They could donate/create a recipe for cooking with children that could include fire safety tips.

Competition
There could be a linked competition for local people to create their own recipes, potentially with additional messages on healthy eating. The recipes could appear on your local website or could be used to place in the media alongside key statistics and tips on cooking safely in the kitchen. This could be promoted through community events…

Community events
You may also wish to organise events at local supermarkets as a good way to distribute leaflets and information/recipes on healthier cooking options, e.g. oven chips to local residents as an alternative to using chip pans.

Partnership activity
You may wish to consider working with health services and agencies to jointly promote the fire safety and general healthier eating message. You could consider other ways of promoting joint messages – for example with carers of older or disabled people or health visitors.

Digital activity
There are a range of videos available on Fire Kills Campaign Portal that you can download and use.
5. National Resources

Fire Kills Portal

The Fire Kills Campaign Portal hosts all the artwork and Fire Kills material and is available to all fire and rescue practitioners.

There is a single login for you to access the Portal (not for public sharing):

Please contact James Webb if you have any queries.

Fire Kills Campaign

Here you will find all the material for Fire Kills campaign. Check out the "Fire Kills Showcase" to see our pick of the best. Don’t forget to check the "Monthly Communications Briefing" area regularly for all the new stuff.
The online emergency services educational resources platform, StayWise, has a wide range of lesson plans, interactive games, activities and other resources to promote fire safety – and other safety messages – to children and young people. Many resources link to the other areas of the curriculum, allowing fire safety messages to be relayed as part of maths, English and science lessons, for example. Visit and promote the site – www.staywise.co.uk.

**Online home fire safety check tool**
The NFCC tool has been developed to complement the in-person home fire safety visits. It allows for a self-assessment of a household’s fire safety, taking into account the individual circumstances and providing person-centred, tailored advice. The tool has also proven very useful in identifying those people more vulnerable to fire and in securing referrals for in-person visits. The tool is now referred to on Fire Kills literature and the FireEngland.uk website.

For more information on how your fire and rescue service can get more from the tool, please get in touch with James Webb.

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**Welcome to the online home fire safety check**

This easy-to-follow home fire safety check has been developed through a partnership between the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), Fire Kills and Safelincs. It will take you through your home one room at a time and the simple questions will help you spot fire risks as you go around your home.

The tool will offer tips and advice on the steps you can take to reduce those risks. At the end, you will receive a personalised fire safety action plan to help keep you and your household safe from fire.

**Top tip**
Fit smoke alarms

**Top tip**
Plan your escape route

**Top tip**
Get out, stay out and call 999

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6. Draft social media posts
Cooking safely
#CookSafe, #HotDate, #PancakeDay #FrySafe

- It only takes one accident for a fire to start. #CookSafe #FireKills
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W13uGoe76S8
- Cooking fires make up half of all accidental fires in the home. #FireKills
- Fires from cooking appliances account for half of all fire injuries in the home. #FireKills
- Take care when cooking with oil – it sets alight easily #FrySafe #FireKills
- If a pan catches fire - don’t take any risks. Turn the heat off if it’s safe to do so.
  NEVER throw water over it #FrySafe #FireKills - Don’t Try This At Home - YouTube
- Keep matches and saucepan handles out of the reach of children #FireKills
- Take care if you’re cooking while wearing loose clothing – it can easily catch fire #FireKills
- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob #FireKills
- Double check the cooker is off when you’ve finished cooking #FireKills
- Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls #FireKills
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order. A build up of fat
  and grease can easily lead to a fire #FireKills
- Don’t tackle the fire yourself – get out, stay out, call 999 #FireKills

Valentine’s Day
- It can take only seconds to cause a serious fire in the kitchen. #CookSafe
- Don’t remember #ValentinesDay for the wrong reason! Don’t drink and cook #FireKills
- Cooking for a #HotDate this Valentine? Take extra care to stop your date
  going up in flames like in this video - http://bit.ly/1lXldmo
- Don’t risk #ValentinesDay going up in flames – use LED candles and
  concentrate on your date. #FireKills

Winter fire safety
- Even if you’ve been drenched by torrential rain, don’t use portable heaters
  to dry your clothes. #FireKills
- Freezing weather getting you down? If you’re using heaters to warm you up,
  make sure they’re safe and away from materials that might burn. #FireKills
7. Template press releases

Cooking fire safety

During the February half term, many children across [the County/region] will be spending more time in the kitchen.

But whether they’re lending a hand or simply seeking a snack, it’s important to make sure that they know the hazards of a hot hob.

As part of the Fire Kills campaign, [FRS] is encouraging parents and carers to make any kitchen activities a chance for kids to learn about cooking safety.

[FRS spokesperson] said: “There are lots of creative ways to teach kids about cooking fire safety. And, it’s absolutely vital that they know what to do if the worst should happen.

“So, alongside the melting, mixing and making, why not take the chance to pass on your fire safety knowhow? Test your smoke alarms as part of the activity. And remember, never leave a child alone with a hot hob, and help keep them safe by moving matches and saucepan handles out of their reach.”

And the kids don’t have to be in the kitchen to change the way you work – distraction while cooking is a main cause of fire call-outs right across the country.

[FRS spokesperson] continued: “Half of all accidental fires in the home start in the kitchen - often because of distractions like phone calls or family. So, whatever happens elsewhere in your home, always make sure you have one eye on the hob or oven.”

Fire Kills’ top tips for staying safe in the kitchen are:

- Take care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking. Take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk.
- If a pan catches fire, don’t take any risks – Get Out, Stay Out, and Call 999.
- Double check the hob and oven is off when you’ve finished cooking.
- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob.
- Take care if you’re wearing loose clothing – this can easily catch fire.
- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of their reach to keep them safe.
- Take care with electrics - keep leads and appliances away from water and place grills and toasters away from curtains and kitchen rolls.
- Keep your equipment clean and in good working order. A build-up of fat and grease can ignite a fire.
- Don’t cook after drinking alcohol.
- Hot oil can catch fire easily - be careful that it doesn’t overheat.
- Never throw water on a chip pan fire.
- In the event of a fire, have an escape plan in place.
- Don’t take risks by tackling a fire. Get out, stay out and call 999.
• Make sure you have at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home and test them monthly.

- ENDS -
Pancake Day

Shrove Tuesday marks the beginning of Lent, when hundreds of people throughout the country make pancakes, before they begin a 40 day fast. When you are distracted by the haunting image of a delicious, warm pancake sprinkled with lemon juice and sugar, fire safety may not be at the forefront of your mind! However, fat and chip pan fires can be devastating, with a very high proportion of fires resulting in injuries.

[Suggested quote] [FRS spokesperson] of [Local] Fire and Rescue Service, said:
“Making pancakes can be lots of fun for the whole family and they certainly can be delicious. However, over half of all accidental fires in the home start in the kitchen so please take care, especially when cooking with hot oil.”

[FRS spokesperson] offers the following safety tips
When using a frying pan or cooking with hot oil, remember:
• Never leave the pan unattended when the heat is switched on
• Do NOT move the pan if it is on fire!
If the pan does catch fire:
• Don’t take any risks. Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so. Never throw water over it.
• Don’t tackle the fire yourself.
• GET OUT, STAY OUT, CALL 999.

“And when you have finished cooking, make sure that all the appliances are turned off and the cooking area is clear,” added [FRS spokesperson].

Working smoke alarms will greatly increase your chances of escaping unharmed. Have an escape plan and follow it - know exactly which way you will leave your home and know where you will go.

Stay alive, stay safe, and make sure your smoke alarms work properly;
• Test your smoke alarms every month
• Change the battery every year (unless it's a 10-year alarm)
• Clean it out properly at least twice every year, by vacuuming the inside.

For further advice on fire safety visit [www.fireengland.uk/fire-safety](http://www.fireengland.uk/fire-safety) or contact your [Local Fire and Rescue Service] on XXXXXX.