

National Fire Safety Campaign Monthly Briefing Pack November – Electrical Fire Safety

Electrical Fire Safety Week: 19-25 November 2018
International Product Safety Week: 12-16 November 2018



Home Office



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

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1. Summary

Electrical Fire Safety Week

The national fire safety campaign is working with Electrical Safety First to run Electrical Fire Safety Week from 19-25 November. This year, Electrical Safety First is looking at the consistently high percentage of electrical fires that have an electrical source and offers advice to consumers on safer behaviour in the home.

Bonfire Night

The month of November brings Bonfire Night. As you will be aware, fireworks safety does not fall under the remit of the national fire safety campaign, but that of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). However, the responsibility for promoting the message this year falls on the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS):

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/31866/10-1039-fireworks-safety-displays.pdf

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/consumer-issues/product-safety/firework-regulations/fireworks-resources>

More information is available on www.gov.uk/fireworks-the-law, which also references the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and Health and Safety Executive information.

Sky lanterns

With plenty of celebrations going on, it is very likely that a lot of people will be using sky lanterns.

The NFCC is against the use of Sky Lanterns and their Position Statement can be found here:

https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Position%20statements/Protection/NFCC_chinese_lanterns_2017.pdf.

You may wish to promote this message:

We recommend that you do not use sky lanterns as you have no control over them once they've been set off. They can kill animals, litter the countryside and can even start fires. If you do choose to set them off, always follow the manufacturers' guidance/instructions carefully.

International Product Safety Week

The International Product Safety Week takes place from 12-16 November. AMDEA's Register My Appliance Campaign will be supporting the Office of Product Safety & Standards by publishing Top Tips to help consumers to buy major domestic appliances safely online.

New research, press releases and social media assets will be distributed to Register My Appliance strategic partners, including fire and rescue services, focusing on sensible precautions to help the public safeguard their homes with wise online purchasing behaviour as soon as we have them.

2. Electrical Fire Safety Week

Electrical Fire Safety Week will run from 19-25 November. We will be running the Week in partnership with Electrical Safety First, an independent charity committed to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electricity in the home.

Background

In the last few years, themes for Electrical Fire Safety Week have included counterfeit electrical products, portable heaters and the risks of overcharging mobile devices. In 2017, we looked at the fact that although there has been a general drop in domestic fires, the percentage with an electrical origin has consistently stayed at around 54 per cent.

This year, the focus will be on older and more vulnerable people, to whom electrical accidents in the home can pose a significant risk. This is often due to old or poor-quality housing that contains faulty electrics and appliances. Over a quarter of fires in the home with an electrical source involve people aged 65 or over.

Age UK figures state that 3.6 million older people live alone, of whom over 2 million are aged over 75, and 1.9 million people say that they often feel ignored or invisible. Loneliness and social isolation can lead to deteriorating health as well as sensory and mobility impairments, making older people more vulnerable to safety risks in their homes. Find out more at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/loneliness/>.

The campaign will encourage relatives and neighbours to 'drop in' and carry out a few simple visual checks in the homes of older people, with the long-term goal of improving electrical safety standards that will allow older people to age safely in their homes.

Audience

The primary target audience will be relatives, neighbours and carers of older people. A secondary audience is older people living in their own homes - with simple messages to help keep them safe.

Timings

The media campaign will launch on Tuesday 20 November, with social media support throughout the week. Electrical Safety First will be seeking to engage MPs on the issue, with a parliamentary reception scheduled for the afternoon of Tuesday 20 November.

Electrical Safety First's Key Messages

- Older people are disproportionately at risk from electrical hazards in the home.
- Older people are also more likely to live in older houses, which have a higher chance of containing electrical hazards.

- We want relatives and neighbours to ‘drop in’ and help keep their older friends safe by doing a simple visual check of their homes, looking for hazards like:
 - Overloaded sockets.
 - Flammable “clutter” near electrical intake, on top of microwaves etc.
 - Damaged plugs, sockets, cables etc.
 - Trailing cables that cause a trip hazard.
 - Misuse of portable heaters (for example, using them to dry/heat clothes or leaving them unattended).
 - Electrical products that have been subject to a recall or safety notice (using Electrical Safety First’s online product checker).

Research

Research from Hampshire FRS will identify the areas of the country in which older people are most vulnerable. ESF will also use their own research tool to find out more about older people and their feelings around loneliness as well as general understanding of electrical safety issues as they affect people aged 65 or over.

Case Studies

The campaign will need strong case studies of older people who have experienced an electrical accident or fire. If you have a case study that would help support this initiative at the national level, please contact Penny Walshe on 020 3463 5125 or penny.walshe@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk.

Digital Support

Electrical Safety First will reach out to younger people online and ask them to share a photo of themselves with their grandparent(s) alongside a heart-warming message. The message is not to neglect/forget about our older loved ones whilst weaving in messages on electrical safety.

A blog post will be published to provide simple safety tips for friends and relatives looking out for older people.

Social media content will be provided to FRS contacts for sharing during the week.

Stakeholder Support

The campaign will be supported by a new initiative for older people, Stay Safe, a non-promotional, not for profit national information/ education programme – which offers events, online resources and a website signposting older people, their carers and professionals to vital resources.

Target media

Audiences will be targeted through traditional print, broadcast and online media. With the geographical breakdown in the research, regional broadcast and print will be targeted. A compelling case study could attract the attention of BBC Breakfast and or Sky Sunrise. There is also the possibility of syndicated coverage through BBC GNS or Sky News Radio.

Template Press Release

A Template Press Release, along with a social media pack, will be sent to FRSs for use in promoting messages around the week in due course.

3. Additional Electrical Fire Safety Messages

Electrical Safety First and national fire safety campaign have pulled together some key messages that could be promoted throughout November.

Electrical fire safety messages can cut across electrical distribution, faulty appliances and wiring and even misuse of electrical equipment. This highlights the need for tailoring messages and activity to relevant audiences. Having sufficient fire detection equipment and escape plans remains of high importance.

- **Check that your electrical products have not been recalled**

In the last six years, over 250 recall notices have been issued for electrical products, mostly due to a risk of electric shock or fire. Yet response rates are worryingly low with most recalls only achieving around 10-20 per cent. Use Electrical Safety First's online product checker to make sure the appliances in your home are safe: www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/recall.

- **Make sure you register your electrical appliances** so that you are the first to know of any safety repairs or recalls. You can do this through the manufacturers' websites, or through the register my appliance website: www.registermyappliance.org.uk.

- **Carry out a visual check of your electrics**

Encourage people to carry out visual checks in their homes to ensure their safety and reduce the risk of electrical fires. It is often the simple things that people could check that lead to a serious fire – such as an appliance lead near a hot surface or an overloaded socket.

The 'Home Electrical Safety Check' app can guide householders through visual checks (www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/visualchecks).

- **Keep combustible materials away from sources of heat**

Encourage householders not to store combustible materials close to their electrical intake equipment (service head meter and/or consumer unit) in their homes. The warning is particularly appropriate where, for example, the electrical intake equipment is in a cupboard which is used to store items such as coats, cleaning materials and other things that ignite easily.

- **Don't overload plug sockets**

An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take so, to help reduce the risk of fire, be careful not to overload them. Try to keep to one plug per socket.

Use Electrical Safety First's online 'Socket Overload Calculator' to make sure that you are not overloading the sockets in your home.

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/overloadingsockets

- **Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order**

Look out for fuses that blow, circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reason and flickering lights to prevent appliances triggering a fire.

- **Regularly check for frayed or worn cables and wires**

Check to see if the cable is fastened securely to the plug and check the socket for scorch marks. You should always carry out these checks before you use an appliance.

- **Switch off appliances at the socket when not in use**

This helps to reduce the risk of fire. Switch off appliances when you go to bed or when you go out unless they are designed to be left on, like freezers.

- **Buy your electrical chargers from a reputable source**

Many imported chargers do not satisfy UK safety regulations and can cause serious electric shock, injury or fire.

- **Get Out, Stay Out, Call 999**

Never use water on an electrical fire and don't take any risks with your safety. Pull the plug out or switch the power off if it is safe to do so. Get out, stay out and call 999.



- **Residual Current Device**

Encourage homeowners to fit and use RCD protection, if they do not already have it. An RCD (residual current device) is a life-saving device which is designed to prevent you from getting a fatal electric shock if you touch something live, such as a bare wire. It provides a level of protection that ordinary fuses or circuit-breakers cannot provide. RCD protection is particularly important when using electrical equipment outdoors.

4. Fireworks

Fireworks campaign plan

BEIS has confirmed there has been a ministerial commitment to review the guidance around the safe use of fireworks, to test robustness, along with a commitment to speak with MPs about the issue.

We are awaiting further information from the OPSS about next steps and will share this once available.

Key messages (general)

- Enjoy fireworks responsibly – go to an organised display if possible. If not, always follow the instructions on the box
- Always buy from legitimate and licensed sellers
- Be considerate (observe curfews)
- Don't let children handle fireworks
- Keep pets safe

For children

- Never handle fireworks
- Fireworks are dangerous
- Always remain with a responsible adult while watching fireworks

5. Draft Social Media Posts

Electrical Fire Safety

A social media toolkit with suggested social media posts and digital content that can be shared using the hashtag #EFSW and others that will be included in a separate pack will be sent in due course.

Bonfire Night

Bonfires can be a lot of fun but can be dangerous. Be safe while celebrating with fireworks. Don't remember the 5th of November for all the wrong reasons. #Stay Safe on Bonfire Night. #Put Bonfire works out safely. #Fire Safety.

Fireworks

Planning a fireworks party? Have a quick look at some advice for running a safe and fun night - <http://bit.ly/2e6Ntqm>.

6. Available Resources

National Fire Safety Campaign Portal

The National [Fire Safety Campaign Portal](#) hosts all of the national fire safety campaign artwork and material and is available to all fire and rescue practitioners.

There is a single login for you to access the Portal:

Please contact Laura Udeh – laura.udeh@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk if you have any queries.

National Fire Safety Campaign

Here you will find all the material for the national fire safety campaign. Check out the "National Advertising Showcase" to see our pick of the best. Don't forget to check the "Monthly Communications Briefing" area regularly for all the new stuff.



2018 National advertising campaign



Archive



Brand



Fillers



Kids



Leaflets



Monthly Campaigns



Partner Pack 2016



Photos & Icons



Posters



Social

Electrical Safety First leaflets

A wide range of literature is available covering a variety of electrical safety issues. These include:

- How Safe is your Home? – general safety advice
- Electrical Safety for Older People – for relatives, friends and carers
- Electric Blanket Safety
- Electrical Safety at Christmas – looking after your Christmas lights
- Safe Shopper's Guide – avoiding counterfeit goods

- Fire Factsheet

These leaflets are available to support your activities, free of charge subject to quantities ordered. Copies can be requested by contacting: enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk.

Alternatively, you can download copies of these and the full range of safety leaflets from the Electrical Safety First website, www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk.

Home electrical safety checks app

The free 'Home Electrical Safety Checks' App (visual checks App) is available to download for iPhones/iPads and Android phones from the Electrical Safety First website.

The app enables you to carry out basic visual checks around the home to keep you and your family safe and has a simple checklist function to note the items that need improvement, highlighting any that are potentially dangerous and require urgent remedial action from a registered electrician.

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/visualchecks

Socket Overload Calculator

The online 'Socket Overload Calculator' is available on the Electrical Safety First website.

The calculator was developed in response to feedback from fire and rescue authorities that while overloading sockets is a major cause of accidental domestic fires, it is difficult to explain the risks to householders without a visual representation. The calculator is a virtual tool that allows people to "plug in" typical household appliances and check the impact of the load on a standard four-bar extension lead. If you would like to display the calculator on your website please visit:

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/overloadingsockets.

Visit the Electrical Safety First website to get the calculator – you will need the code and instructions to display the calculator on your own website.

Product Recall Checker

Electrical Safety First's online product checker helps people find out if an electrical product that they own is under a recall notice. Visit the website to get the code and instructions to add the tool to your website:

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/recall.

Over 300 recall notices have been issued for electrical products in the last five years, and the majority of these have been due to a risk of electric shock or fire. But with an average success rate of just 10-20 per cent, it is clear that people do not know about recalls or do not fully understand the importance of the need to act on them.

Electrical Safety First contact details

For any queries about Electrical Safety First's PR or media activity for the week, please contact Penny Walshe on 020 3463 5125 or penny.walshe@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk.

7. Template Press Notice – Electrical Fire Safety Week

We will forward this separately once we receive it from Electrical Safety First.