



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Campaign Toolkit



NATIONAL SPRINKLER WEEK 2019

Toolkit and resources for participating fire and rescue services



Raising awareness of sprinklers can help to drive the change needed to ensure communities are safer in the incident of fire. This change will help to reduce the impact of fire in homes, businesses, other buildings and the environment.

The NFCC is asking fire and rescue services (FRS) to take part in National Sprinkler Week 2019, which will run Sunday 19th May to Friday 24th May. This week aligns with sprinkler campaigns being held internationally in America, Canada and will also be supported by Australian FRSs.

Last year a 'mini-campaign' was held as part of the launch of a longer term plan to push for legislative change and also educate building owners and the public to dispel myths surrounding sprinklers.

The aim of the campaign this year is:

- to educate the public on what sprinklers are and how they work,
- to educate the public on the effectiveness and reliability of installing sprinklers as part of fire safety measures,
- to dispel myths about sprinklers,
- to raise awareness of the disparity in sprinkler legislation in the UK,
- to shed light on some international positions on sprinklers.

The vast benefits of sprinklers are proven through evidence and research however, there are still cases where communities have declined the retrofitting of sprinklers in their homes by their local council due to associated costs. This shows that there are gaps in the public understanding of sprinklers, but also that legislative changes are needed including funding for local authorities to make their communities safer.

A [General debate on fire safety and sprinkler systems](#) was held in parliament by the All Party Parliamentary group calling on Kit Malthouse MP to enact change in England. At the debate MPs quoted the expert position of NFCC alongside the position of other professional bodies in the building sector. It is important that this campaign raises awareness of NFCC's position on sprinklers and its asks for change in legislation.

If fire services have undertaken any particular work in relation to sprinklers then please feel free to include your own work as part of the messaging during campaign week.

Many fire services have funding or match funding schemes to assist organisations in installing sprinklers for vulnerable properties and people. If your service has monies available you could use the week to publicise the fact and provide information on who may be eligible and how they go about applying. Please use #ThinkSprinkler so we have sight of this and can support.



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Launch Day

Sunday 19th May

There will be a soft launch on day one of the campaign. We are asking FRSs to schedule the launch tweet for 10am asking their communities to follow the campaign throughout the week to help raise awareness about sprinklers, what they are, how they work, how effective they are and of government positions in the UK.

Please see the template press release below that has been prepared for FRSs to use. Feel free to amend the template to suit your service and communities; you may wish to gather and include some local statistics which would be of interest to local media and your communities.

Use the launch day to promote events/activities your service will be holding throughout the week, do let us know at NFCC so that we can also support in promoting these.

If you have taken advantage of the free sprinkler pamphlets from BAFSA or any other leaflets on sprinklers, let the public know where they will be available. Here is a link to the leaflet: pamphlet https://www.bafsa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/BAFSA_sprinklerprintandfold.pdf

Cheshire FRS have also shared a leaflet on sprinklers which FRSs may brand and distribute, please see resources folder in sharepoint in Workplace FirePro.

Suggested Tweets

- This week is National Sprinkler Week, to learn more about sprinklers and why experts and professionals in the fire sector want to see more of them fitted in homes, businesses and buildings follow us throughout the week. @NFCC_FireChiefs #ThinkSprinkler
- To learn more about what sprinklers are and do, follow us throughout the week. #ThinkSprinkler
- Did you know that sprinkler legislation is different throughout the UK? Follow us this week to find out. #ThinkSprinkler
- Sprinklers save lives, property and the environment. Find out how by following us this national sprinkler week. #ThinkSprinkler
- The @NFPA are raising awareness of domestic sprinklers this week in America and Canada, learn about domestic sprinklers by following #HomeFireSprinklerWeek.



Press Release

[Insert name of you FRS] is supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) National Sprinkler Week campaign this year. The campaign will run from Sunday 19th May to Friday 24th May.

NFCC and the National Fire Sprinkler Network (NFSN) carried out research to investigate the effectiveness and reliability of sprinkler systems. They found that sprinkler systems operate on 94% of occasions demonstrating very high reliability. Furthermore, it is evident that when they do operate they extinguish or contain the fire on 99% of occasions and are thus very effective. The evidence also demonstrated that in both converted and purpose built flats, sprinklers are 100% effective in controlling fires.

There is disparity in building regulations in regard to sprinklers in the UK. Sprinkler laws in Wales and Scotland are much less lenient than in England which means that their communities have more fire protection.

Chief Fire Officer of Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service, Terry McDermott, also NFCC lead for Sprinklers, said:

“The evidence speaks for itself, our research proves that sprinklers are very effective and provide strong fire safety protections as part of a fire safety package.

Wales and Scotland recognise this and have implemented measures to make their communities safer from fire; we want to see these same changes in England and Northern Ireland as matter of urgency.

Fire does not discriminate and is just as dangerous in England as it is in the rest of the UK.”

NFCC is asking people to support the campaign by following the hashtag #ThinkSprinkler on social media to raise awareness on sprinklers.

The National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFPA) will be holding sprinkler campaigns during this week in America and Canada also. The hashtag for these campaigns is #HomeFireSprinklerWeek.

Australian FRSs will also be supporting NFCC sprinkler week.

Fire & Rescue Services

Please include any work on sprinklers.



Monday 20th May

What are sprinklers and how do they work?

Sprinklers are also known as Automatic Water Suppression Systems (AWSS) which automatically apply water to a developing fire to control or contain the fire, other examples include water misting systems and fog systems. Sprinklers systems are activated by intense heat caused by fire. Only the sprinkler head closest to the fire will be activated and it attacks the fire quickly and directly so less water is needed. As they also operate the fire alarm, the flow can be quickly turned off when the fire is out.

Sprinklers use typically 60 litres/min of water to control the fire. This is between 1/25th and 1/100th of the water used by each fire service hose - so in the event of a fire water damage is minimised. In fact, sprinklers use even less water than this because they tackle the fire immediately, when it is still small. Smaller fires need much less water to control them which means much water is conserved and less water damage to buildings.

Houses which suffer major fires are seldom able to be lived in afterwards and are often demolished. Rooms protected by domestic sprinklers can usually be back in use within a few hours, and the rest of the house is usually unaffected.

Suggested Tweets

- Installing a sprinkler system is like having a firefighter in every room of your home!#ThinkSprinkler
- Sprinklers do not 'false alarm' – they will only operate if there is an actual fire. And the chances of sprinklers malfunctioning are 16 million to 1! #ThinkSprinkler
- Only the sprinkler head(s) directly affected by the intense heat from a fire is triggered. Sprinklers do not cause flooding in buildings as depicted in some movies.
- An operating smoke detector will warn you of smoke caused by fire and relies on someone putting out the fire. But a sprinkler system will detect the fire and work to extinguish or control the it.
- It is a misconception that sprinklers cause more damage than an actual fire. They actually contain or extinguish fires when they are very small and so use a lot less water than a firefighter's hose #ThinkSprinkler



Tuesday 21st May - How reliable and effective are sprinklers?

- Sprinklers are the most effective way to ensure that fires are suppressed or even extinguished before the fire service can arrive
- They save lives and reduce injuries, protect firefighters who attend incidents and reduce the amount of damage to both property and the environment from fire
- NFCC and the National Fire Sprinkler Network (NFSN) have worked together to investigate the effectiveness and reliability of sprinkler systems
- Evidence produced indicates that sprinkler systems operate on 94% of occasions demonstrating very high reliability. Furthermore, it is evident that when they do operate they extinguish or contain the fire on 99% of occasions and are thus very effective
- The research also found that in both converted and purpose built flats that sprinklers are 100% effective in controlling fires.
- The average area of fire damage in a non-residential building where a sprinkler system was present was 30 m². This is half the average damage area when there are no sprinklers.
- Fires in dwellings where sprinkler systems operated had an average area of fire damage of under 4 m². This compares to an average area of fire damage of 18 to 21m² for all dwelling fires in England between 2011/12 and 2015/16.
- NFCC recognise that sprinklers are an effective part of an overall fire safety solution and can be used efficiently to improve fire safety in a range of new and existing buildings
- NFCC support the concept of risk assessed retro fitting of sprinklers in existing buildings.
- NFCC have submitted a response to the government review of the Building Regulations (Approved Document B), you can view this here: <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/News/nfcc-submits-recommendations-to-government-aimed-at-improving-building-standards-in-the-uk/222468>

Videos

- Jersey Fire and Rescue Service have produced a video which talks about the benefits of sprinklers and shows them working in a live demonstration. They have agreed that NFCC and fire services can use <https://youtu.be/mv2cRK0pcRA> - please use on social media or on your websites and please credit Jersey Fire and Rescue Service.
- Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service - Think Sprinkler live burn demonstration: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-yZs00s9pg>

Suggested Tweets

- Sprinklers reduce death and injury from fire and reduce risk to firefighters. #ThinkSprinkler
- Sprinklers protect property and heritage, reduce the environmental and financial impact of fire resulting in less disruption to the community and business. #ThinkSprinkler
- Sprinklers can be retrospectively fitted in existing buildings. Research shows sprinklers are 100% effective in controlling fires in flats. #ThinkSprinkler
- Sprinklers are good for the planet too – they use less water to fight a fire than a firefighter's hose resulting in lower greenhouses gas emissions.



Wednesday 22nd May – Sprinkler regulations in the UK

The Position in Scotland and Wales

Over recent years, Scotland and Wales have revised/enforced laws to make people safer from fire in buildings.

In Scotland, all new enclosed shopping centres, residential care buildings, high-rise domestic buildings above 18m, sheltered housing complexes, new schools, and some warehouses must be fitted with sprinkler systems.

In Wales, sprinklers are now a legislative requirement in all new residential premises including care premises.

The NFCC support these changes and would like to see them mirrored in England and N.Ireland.

England and Northern Ireland

Currently in England, it is not mandatory for sprinklers to be fitted in buildings as long as other fire safety measures are present. As a result, many buildings including high rise flats above 30m or 10 storeys, do not have sprinklers fitted. Our research shows sprinklers were 100% effective in controlling fires in both converted and purpose built flats.

NFCC wants to see sprinklers retrofitted in all high rise buildings above 18m during refurbishment.

The Government are currently carrying out an urgent review of Approved Document B; a document that addresses fire safety measures for buildings in England, NFCC has submitted a response to this review: <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/News/nfcc-submits-recommendations-to-government-aimed-at-improving-building-standards-in-the-uk/222468>

However, this will take time and is due to be published in the summer. The NFCC wants to see change enacted now, just as it has been in Wales and in Scotland. The following suggested tweets will help raise awareness on the NFCCs position on sprinklers.



Wednesday 22nd May – Sprinkler regulations in the UK

Suggested Tweets for the NFCC's position on sprinkler building regulations:

High Rise

- @NFCC_FireChiefs want review of building regulations to advise that sprinklers be retro fitted in existing high rise residential buildings over 30 metres served by a single staircase as a priority due to the high chance of injuries or death to occupants and firefighters if a fire occurs #ThinkSprinkler
- If a high rise building is due to be refurbished @NFCC_FireChiefs would like building regulations to advise sprinklers to be retro fitted #ThinkSprinkler
- All new residential properties, including care homes, in Wales must be fitted with sprinklers. It's great that Wales #ThinkSprinkler but it would be even better if the rest of the UK did this too.
- In both converted and purpose built flats including high-rise, sprinklers are 100% effective in controlling fires. #ThinkSprinkler

Educational Institutions

- A fire in a school can cause a lot of disruption. Imagine if your child's school closed due to fire damage - sprinklers reduce the damage caused by fire & lessen the impact of an incident on the wider community #ThinkSprinkler
- Fires in UK schools disrupt the education of 90,000 children and students every year. Installation of sprinklers in schools can reduce this #ThinkSprinkler
- In 2007 about 70% of new schools were built with sprinklers installed. This fell to about 30% by end of 2016, @NFCC_FireChiefs wants to see all new build schools fitted with sprinklers. #ThinkSprinkler
- Sprinklers are mandatory in all new schools in Scotland and Wales - England and Northern Ireland need to #ThinkSprinkler



Wednesday 22nd May – Sprinkler regulations in the UK

Specialised Housing

- Sprinklers save lives – in properties where sprinklers are fitted the risk of death or injury from fire is reduced. @NFCC_FireChiefs would like them to be fitted in homes of those who are vulnerable such as residential care homes #ThinkSprinkler
- New sheltered and extra care housing in Wales and Scotland must have sprinklers installed to comply with building regulations. Not in England and Northern Ireland - surely the same rules should apply throughout the UK #ThinkSprinkler
- Many vulnerable people may not be able to self evacuate in the event of a fire incident. Sprinklers start fighting fire as soon as they are activated - it is a matter of life and death #ThinkSprinkler

Warehousing

- Where sprinkler systems have been installed fire deaths - including those of firefighters have almost been eliminated, fire injuries reduced by 80% and property damage reduced by 80% #ThinkSprinkler
- Some of the largest and most prolonged fire incidents are those at waste management and recycling centres - high risk for firefighters, disruptive to the community, damaging to the environment. Sprinklers can control the fire and reduce these problems #ThinkSprinkler

Visuals

Social media headers have been created that can be used with some of the above messages.

Cheshire FRS have also kindly shared some gifs which you can brand use alongside these messages if you so wish.



Thursday 23rd May – Latest Sprinkler research

This event will be hosted by NFCC Sprinkler Lead CFO Terry McDermott and Derbyshire FRS. At the event the latest research on fire deaths and injuries in buildings with sprinklers will be launched. The research looked at data gathered over five years from 2013 to 2018.

Below are some headline findings from the research concluded in February this year.

Incidence of Deaths and Injuries in Sprinklered Buildings

The data:

- 3046 Fires Recorded as having sprinklers present
- 1300 recorded as the sprinklers having activated

In these 1300 fires:

- there were a total of 156 recorded casualties
- 5 fatal casualties were in dwellings where there were fixed systems present
- no fire fatalities were recorded in sprinklered buildings that were not dwellings

Results of analysis

- Analysis of the data revealed that the fatal casualties were vulnerable people who were not mobile, often substance dependent and often smoked
- They typically died from direct burns from their clothing or bedding
- Use of emollient creams or oxygen were a factor in the death
- In the UK sprinklers are not currently widely used to protect the general population but used to try and protect the most vulnerable
- Findings demonstrate a strong evidence of reduction of injuries
- You are twice as **unlikely** to be injured in a fire where sprinklers are fitted.



Fire Casualties

Building	Not fitted with sprinkler system	Fitted with Sprinkler system
Dwelling	1 casualty every 5.27 fires	1 casualty every 10.5 fires
Other building type	1 casualty every 17.32 fires	1 casualty every 33.1 fires

Efficiency effectiveness conclusions

- This extensive, independent, data analysis shows that sprinklers are highly reliable and effective.
- They work as intended in 94% of cases and control or extinguish fires in 99% of cases over a range of building types.
- In both converted and purpose built flats, sprinklers are 100% effective in controlling fires.
- There is significant evidence of reducing fire damage.
- The report is consistent with other similar research findings

Reduction in harm conclusions

- Clear evidence that you are less likely to be injured in a fire where sprinklers are present
- There is a significant reduction in the effects of smoke.
- Clear evidence that you are less likely to require hospital treatment
- Clear evidence that the type of injury is reduced
- In buildings other than dwellings where a sprinkler has activated in a fire, there has not been a single fatality
- The circumstances surrounding fatalities in dwellings with sprinklers, indicates that there is still some development to be done to protect those who are extremely high risk.



Thursday 23rd May – Latest Sprinkler research



Suggested Tweets

- Did you know that you are less likely to be injured in a fire if there are sprinklers present. #ThinkSprinkler
- You are twice as **unlikely** to be injured in a fire where sprinklers are fitted. #ThinkSprinkler
- There is a significant reduction in the effects of smoke in fires where sprinklers have activated. #ThinkSprinkler
- In buildings other than dwellings where a sprinkler has activated in a fire, there has not been a single fatality. #ThinkSprinkler

Watch the event

The event will be live streamed by Derbyshire FRS, you can view it on their social media pages.

The BBC will also be covering the event.



Friday 24th May – Sprinkler Saves in the UK

Fire and Rescue Services are being asked to share cases of sprinkler saves on Friday 22nd May, to showcase where sprinklers have saved life/property/business.

It is advisable that FRSs avoid cases where an absence of sprinklers has resulted fire fatalities, this is particularly sensitive as we approach the anniversary of the Grenfell tragedy.

Below is a list of sprinkler saves by various FRSs which you can publicise on your social media pages, but feel free to use examples from your local area.

Success stories - Sprinkler saves

1. Debenhams Bristol - <https://www.avonfire.gov.uk/bristol-incidents/2458-sprinklers-control-commercial-property-fire>
2. Sprinklers save Rotherham supermarket from fire - <http://www.syfire.gov.uk/sprinklers-save-rotherham-supermarket-from-fire/>
3. Historic Southampton mill building saved by sprinklers - <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/.../historic-southampton.../>
4. Marks & Spencers in West Quay: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/incidents-news-and-events/news-releases/2017/sprinklers-save-lives-and-livelihoods/>

Special thanks to:

British automatic fire sprinkler association (BAFSA)

Cheshire FRS

Derbyshire FRS

FRSs for sharing material on their work on sprinklers.