



Topic: - Fire Safety for Carers

Caring for Carers

The help and advice you need to keep vulnerable people safe

Whether you help a loved one maintain their independence or spend your working days caring for others, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service are here to support you.

Why it matters

A third of the people that die in fires every year are looked after by a carer, whether that is a family member, friend or a professional carer. We believe that by working together, we can reduce fire deaths and injuries of vulnerable people.



Who may be at Risk

People who need extra consideration

- Older people, people with disabilities, people with visual and hearing impairments, and people who are vulnerable for other reasons all need careful consideration when it comes to fire safety. There are 4 main reasons why:
- They may not be able to respond to a fire quickly.
- They may not be able to escape a fire.
- They may be more at risk due to lifestyle factors.
- They may use healthcare equipment such as oxygen or emollient creams that are flammable.

So, what do you need to know to give the best possible care?

- Be aware of the risks
- Know what you need to do
- Take action
- Know where to go for help





What to Consider

Is there an increased risk of Fire?

There are some behaviours that make a person more at risk of a fire. What to look out for:

Is there an ignition source present?

- **Smoking** are there signs of unsafe use of smoking or vaping materials (e.g. smoking in bed, unsafe disposal of cigarettes, burn or scorch marks on clothing, flooring or furniture)
- **Unsafe cooking practices** e.g. cooking left unattended are there signs that pans have been burnt, is there evidence of burn marks on or around the cooking area?
- **Unsafe heating of the home** is there an open fire (log burner or coal), can you see burn marks around the fire place on flooring. Is there old electric bar heaters in use?

How can you reduce the risk?

- **Smoking?** – is there a smoking bin in the property? Make sure there are no other materials such as paper, latex gloves, medical equipment being disposed of in the smoking bin.
- **Unsafe cooking practice** – Do they need to prepare food themselves? Can you unplug a toaster, kettle or microwave? Could you switch off mains switch to the oven/cooker/hob?
- **Unsafe heating of the home?** if there are any heaters, where are they sited e.g. placed too close to materials that could catch fire including furniture. If there is an open fire place a fireguard in front. Unplug and remove where possible all old heaters.

What else can you look out for to help reduce other risks within the home?

- **Check** - Emollient Creams – Do they use lotions, creams or gels to prevent dry skin
- **Check** – Do they use an air pressure mattress or oxygen cylinders
- **Check** – Are there any overloaded electrical sockets/adaptors or extension leads.
- **Check** – Are there any obvious signs of damaged or faulty wiring
- **Check** – Do they use an electric blanket
- **Check** – Have there been any previous fires or signs of near misses
- **Check** – Is there signs of any unsafe use of candles/tealights e.g. too close to curtains or items that may catch fire, within reach of pets or children
- **Check** – Do they have smoke alarms – if so are the working? Can you test the alarm?

If you see any of these risks make a referral for a Safe and Well Visit through the contact centre, details are below.

If they have had a sprinkler fitted and they are bed bound IS the bed sited under the sprinkler?

**Other Factors**

- **Response** – reduced ability to react to a fire or a smoke alarm without help
- **Mobility** – could they escape from a fire without help
- **Hoarding Disorder** – Sometime people like to collect and hoard things leading to an increased risk to fire. Is there escape route kept clear

Get Out, Stay Out and Dial 999

What you can do to help

It's important that we do our best together to reduce the risks from fire in your homes. Please let us know if you think someone maybe vulnerable from fire.

Please give us a call and have a chat with your Community Safety Officers. Service is completely confidential.

0800 024 1999 or email: - contactcentre@staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Your Local Community Safety Officers

wsgprevent@staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Brad Robins – Cannock Chase Area – 07967573504

Joyce Underwood – Stafford Borough Area – 07528983160

Wendy Gamston – South Staffordshire Area – 07971893247

Mark Downes – Prevent Delivery Lead (West) – 07989943124

In the event of an emergency Get Out, Stay Out and Dial 999

Have you participated in any of our online **Olive Branch workshops**? A workshop is held every month and is promoted via Eventbrite. Free to attend

If you would like to learn more about our Olive Branch Workshops please contact us on contactcentre@staffordshirefire.gov.uk