

Fire safety tips when working from home

- ★ Regularly test your smoke alarms
- ★ Ensure the routes to your exits are kept clear at all times
- ★ Make sure you know your emergency escape routes

Electrical equipment safety:

- ★ Keep electrical appliances clean, dry and in good working order
- ★ Try to keep to one plug per socket, especially for high powered appliances
- ★ Ensure that cable drum extension leads are always be completely unwound to avoid overheating, and be careful not to overload extension leads
- ★ Avoid plugging multiple extension leads together or plugging many multi-socket adaptors into a single socket
- ★ Look out for scorch marks on equipment, plugs and sockets, flickering lights, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reason
- ★ Unplugging appliances helps reduce the risk of fire
- ★ Unplug appliances when you're not using them or when you go to bed

Cooking safety:

- ★ Try not to leave cooking unattended on the hob or grill – if you have to leave the kitchen, turn off the heat
- ★ If you do not feel well, you're very tired, have been drinking alcohol or are taking medication that might make you drowsy try not to cook
- ★ Take care not to lean over a hot hob, and always keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob
- ★ Try to keep the oven, hob, cooker hood, extractor fan and grill clean – built up fat and grease can ignite and cause a fire
- ★ Use spark devices to light gas cookers, they are much safer than matches or lighters, as they don't have a naked flame. They are safer around children, too
- ★ Double check the cooker and hob are turned off when you've finished cooking
- ★ Check toasters are clean and not placed under kitchen cabinets or close to anything that can catch fire
- ★ Never put anything metal in the microwave
- ★ Always keep a close eye on children and pets in the kitchen, don't leave them unsupervised, put matches away and keep saucepan handles out of reach
- ★ If the pan catches fire, turn off the heat if it's safe to do so. Never throw water over it and don't tackle the fire yourself

Safe use of portable heaters:

- ★ Make sure heaters are well maintained and in good working order
- ★ Check that your heater isn't on a recall list – there have been many fires in the past year connected to heaters that have been recalled

- ★ Never install, repair or service appliances yourself
- ★ Make sure anyone who does is registered with the Gas Safe Register (for gas appliances), the Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS) (for solid fuel appliances), or the Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) (for oil appliances)
- ★ Don't take risks with old heaters – if it's electrical and getting older, get it tested by a qualified electrician or buy a new one
- ★ Where appropriate, secure heaters against a wall to stop them falling over, or fit wall-mounted heaters
- ★ Keep heaters well away from clothes, curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes
- ★ Always sit at least one metre away from a heater as it could set light to your clothes or chair
- ★ Before attempting to move your heater, turn it off and allow it to cool first

Smoking

- ★ It is safer to smoke outside *as long as you maintain social distancing*, but make sure cigarettes are put right out and disposed of properly
- ★ Never smoke in bed, and avoid smoking on arm chairs and sofas – especially if you think you might fall asleep
- ★ Take extra care when you're tired, taking prescription drugs or if you've been drinking alcohol
- ★ Use proper ashtrays, which can't tip over and stub cigarettes out properly
- ★ Don't balance cigars or cigarettes on the edge of an ashtray, or anything else – they can tip and fall as they burn away and cause a fire
- ★ Don't leave lit cigarettes or pipes unattended
- ★ Always empty ashtrays carefully. Make sure smoking materials are out, cold and preferably wet them before throwing into a bin – never use a wastepaper basket
- ★ Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach, and buy child resistant lighters
- ★ Never smoke if you use healthcare equipment like medical oxygen or an air flow pressure relief mattress. If you use paraffin-based emollient creams, ask for non-flammable alternatives instead

Vaping & e-cigarettes

- ★ Never let your battery come into contact with metal items such as coins or keys in a pocket or bag, as this can cause a short circuit and explosion
- ★ Store removable and spare batteries in a plastic case to prevent accidental contact and out of reach of children
- ★ Don't mix a battery from one supplier or product with a charger from another
- ★ Regularly inspect your vape batteries. If your battery is damaged in any way, leaking or not functioning properly, stop using it and replace it
- ★ Only use the charger that came with your vape, never charge your vape with a phone, tablet or other charger

- ★ Don't charge your vape overnight, or leave it charging anywhere without regularly checking on it
- ★ Unplug your vape once it's fully charged, don't leave it charging for an extended period of time
- ★ Charge your vape on a clean, flat surface, away from anything that could easily catch fire, and somewhere you can clearly see it—not on a sofa or pillow where it is more prone to overheat or get switched on accidentally
- ★ Only buy vape equipment and chargers new, from reputable sellers, second hand or counterfeit equipment may be dangerous
- ★ Only use batteries recommended for your device as not all batteries are suitable for vapes. Don't mix different brands of batteries, use batteries with different charge levels, or use old and new batteries together
- ★ Only buy batteries from reputable sellers
- ★ Make sure you read and understand the manufacturer's recommendations for use and care of your device. If your vape did not come with instructions or you have further questions, contact the manufacturer
- ★ Look for any safety markings or warnings displayed on the battery or packaging
- ★ Protect your vape from extreme temperatures by not leaving it in direct sunlight or in your car on a freezing cold night. Prevent it from getting wet, or from impact damage
- ★ Consider using vape devices with safety features, such as protection against over-charging, firing button locks and vent holes
- ★ Don't remove or disable safety features that are designed to prevent battery overheating and explosions

Before going to bed:

- ★ Close inside doors at night to stop a fire from spreading
- ★ Turn off and unplug electrical appliances where possible unless they are designed to be left on – like your freezer
- ★ Check your cooker is turned off
- ★ Don't leave the washing machine on
- ★ Turn heaters off and put up fireguards
- ★ Put candles and cigarettes out properly
- ★ Make sure exits are kept clear
- ★ Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them

Actions in the event of a fire:

- ★ Keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible
- ★ Don't waste time investigating what's happened or rescuing valuables
- ★ If there's smoke, keep low to the ground where the air is clearer
- ★ Before you open a door check if it's warm or if there is smoke coming through. If it is, don't open it – the fire is on the other side
- ★ Call 999 as soon as you're clear of the building