

FACT: Smoke alarms help to save lives.

Make sure smoke alarms are **fitted and working** on all floors: they will give early warning and give a chance of escape should a fire start.

Make sure **everyone** knows what to do should a fire break out in the home; **have a plan** – just in case. Every second may count.

If you have a fire in your home – **get out, stay out, dial 999** and ask for the Fire Service.

If you know someone who you think may be at risk from fire, you can request a **free Home Fire Safety Check** from West Midlands Fire Service. Call free on **0800 389 5525** or register online.

For safety advice for older people go to:
www.ageconcern.org

To find out how to stay safe from fire call
0800 389 5525

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Crash and burn...

FACT: Cigarettes and alcohol are the biggest cause of death by fire in the home.

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FACT: Every year over 12,000 people are killed or injured in house fires in the UK.

FACT: Fires started by smoking materials account for 30% of all fire deaths.

FACT: Every year 500 children are injured in house fires.

Both the young and old are at risk from fire in the home caused by **careless use of smoking materials.**

Never leave a lit cigarette unattended: **stub it out!**

Use a proper ashtray, on a safe surface – not on an armrest of a chair, or where they could be easily knocked over. Keep them away from items that could catch fire.

Keep lighters and matches well away from small children.

Never smoke in bed. Duvets and sheets are flammable. It is too easy to fall asleep without realising a cigarette is still alight.

FACT: Alcohol causes 25% of all fires in the home, especially at night and weekends.

Alcohol numbs the senses and awareness and reaction times are slowed down.

The risk of fire is far greater if you smoke when you have been drinking.

Medication, especially those that cause drowsiness, can also have the same effect.

FACT: A third of all fire deaths are older people aged 65 and over.

Older people may have difficulty responding quickly to danger. Mobility and sensory difficulties may mean they take more time to react.

Take time, especially over the winter months, to check on family members, neighbours and friends.

Find out if gas and electric companies will undertake **free** safety checks on the heating systems of the elderly people you know.

Make sure they are aware of **basic fire safety measures** including not sitting too close to the fire where clothing could catch alight and also using fireguards on open fires.