

COOKING FIRES – A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Cooking related incidents are the most common cause of accidental house fires. Thankfully, with the fitting of smoke detectors in homes, a lot of fires have been prevented from becoming more serious as people are getting the early warning.

What we don't like to see is detectors being taken down because they keep going off when meals are being prepared. Many modern detectors have a 'hush' facility that allows them to be silenced for around ten minutes whilst cooking is being carried out.

With the decline in the number of traditional chip pans, less people are being killed or seriously injured as a result of these fires. However, that is not to say the risk of getting injured in a fire has gone away. We would still like to see these pans done away with altogether or at least a safer alternative used instead e.g., thermostatic controlled deep fat fryers.

Grill pans can also generate a nasty fire if oil and grease is allowed to collect in the grill tray. By simply cleaning out the residue each time after it is used, this will go a long way to prevent such an occurrence.

In the majority of the incidents we are attending, a pan, oven or grill has been left on and forgotten about. This can occur through distraction or tiredness, very often following the consumption of alcohol.

If people are going to cook, always remain in the kitchen until you are finished and never try and prepare food if you've been drinking too much.

After a night out, try to grab a take away on the way home or leave out something that can be quickly heated in the microwave, a far safer alternative to grilling or frying.

Some of our most vulnerable older citizens are getting caught out in the kitchen, with dementia and other age related issues often affecting their judgement. In some cases supply of ready meals and the removal of the cooker can sometimes be all that's needed to maintain independent but safer living.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is working hard behind the scenes to reduce all types of fire related incidents in the city and we are asking the public to do their bit by being more careful in the kitchen. Not only will it save them the heartache of the damage that it can cause, it will also reduce the risk of injury to themselves.

Each cooking related incident that can be prevented results in a cost saving to the tax payer and it also means that Aberdeen's streets are safer as less emergency vehicles are travelling at speed to incidents.

Together we can all contribute to making Aberdeen a fire safe city.

