

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

IMPORTANT SAFETY MESSAGE

It has been highlighted that there has been an increase in the number of dwelling fires in the UK where electrical charging devices have been identified as being the source of ignition. In addition, recent media campaigns have established a trend of fires caused by e-cigarette chargers. The concern for the Fire and Rescue Service is that lives are being put at risk when poorly made or counterfeit charging devices are used to charge phones, music devices, gaming machines and other similar electronic goods



A recent incident involving a defective electrical charging device in Airdrie, North Lanarkshire resulted in three youths being

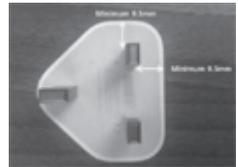


hospitalised for smoke inhalation. Another incident in Elgin resulted in one casualty suffering burns to his arm while similar but more serious incidents have resulted in fatalities at incidents in England.

Electrical Chargers : Three point safety check when purchasing and using an electrical charger:

Plug Pins: Check there is at least 9.5mm between the edge of the pins and the edge of the charger, otherwise there is a risk of an electrical shock when plugging in and unplugging.

- Does it plug in easily? If not, do not use. If the pins do not fit in the plug properly then overheating, arcing and mechanical damage can occur to both the socket and the charger.
- If the pins are loose, do not use



Markings:

Look for a manufacturer's brand name or logo, model and batch number. Ensure you use the correct charger for the device.

Check for a CE mark.

Check the output voltage and current ratings marked on the charger and your electrical device are the same.



Warnings and Instructions: As a minimum, information must be provided on conditions and limitations of use, how to operate the charger safely, basic electrical safety guidance and details of how to safely dispose of the charger when at the end of its useful life.

E-cigarette Chargers : The most common cause of fires relating to electrical chargers for these products appears to be the use of incorrect chargers (battery capacities and charging voltage vary according to manufacturers) or over-tightening of the screwed connection to the rechargeable battery (resulting in mechanical damage which can begin to decompose the battery cells, creating heat and possible failure).