

Cold snaps sparks fire warning

Friday, 20 September 2019

Today's cold snap has prompted the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) to issue a warning urging the community to safely heat their home.

MFS Community Engagement Officer, Phil Evans said this weekend's chill may see South Australians take unintended risks in order to keep warm.

"We're all seeking to stay warm and comfortable as this cold weather passes over the state. However, what firefighters don't want to see are unsafe methods of home heating, increasing the risk of house fires and potential injuries or fatalities.

"If drying clothing indoors, remember to keep the clothing airer and other combustibles such as bedding, cushions and curtains at least two metres from heaters and open fires," MFS Community Engagement Officer, Phil Evans said.

The MFS and CFS have attended at least 23 fires relating to heating equipment during the 2019 winter period (June-August). The MFS urges the community to adhere to the following home heating safety tips to minimise the risk of damaging, or potentially fatal, house fires occurring during the wintery conditions:

- Keep items such as clothes, bedding – including pillows which may fall off furniture, curtains, and other combustibles at least two metres from a fire or heater.
- Clothes airers placed around or near heaters are a high fire risk. If they fall over clothing can become dangerously close to, or come in contact with the heater. If clothing needs to be dried inside it is safer to locate the clothes airer in a room with no heater but a good air flow.
- Turn heating equipment off when you leave the house, and do not leave it running for extended periods of time unless the appliance is specifically designed for that purpose.
- Discontinue use of faulty heating equipment immediately. Have it professionally repaired or replace it with a new item.
- Choose portable heating with an automatic safety switch that turns the heater off if it is tipped over.
- Children and animals should never be left unsupervised in rooms with fires or heaters operating.
- Regular maintenance of fireplaces, combustion heaters, flues and chimneys must be undertaken by a qualified person a minimum of once a year (at the start of the cold weather) to ensure that the heater or fire operates properly and safely.

Further home heating safety tips are available [here](#).

Early detection is vital. The MFS urges householders to combine the above safety tips with interconnected photo-electric smoke alarms that are less than 10 years old and a Home Fire Escape Plan.

For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770