



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

Protecting Our Community

COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 33

CARAVAN SAFETY

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service wants everyone to stay safe during the summer holiday period. If you are heading somewhere to stay in a caravan, it is important to think about fire risks in your new surroundings. To ensure your caravanning holiday goes smoothly, please be aware of these key safety issues.

- Ensure caravans are spaced at least 6 metres apart and preferably away from vehicles to prevent fire spreading;
- Fit a smoke detector and ensure it is tested once a week;
- Fit a carbon monoxide (CO) detector and ensure it is tested once a week; CO is a lethal gas which is colourless, odourless and tasteless; it is produced by any fuel burning appliance such as gas cookers, portable barbeques, camping stoves and heaters;
- Take extra care when cooking; don't leave cooking unattended; turn off all cooking appliances after use;
- If you smoke, it is much safer to smoke outside the caravan; use a suitable ashtray and ensure butts are completely extinguished before placing in an outside bin; never smoke in bed;
- It is advised not to use candles inside a caravan; if you do burn candles, then keep them away from any materials that can catch fire such as furniture, curtains, bedding, carpets, books, paper, etc; always use an appropriate candle holder;
- Keep lighters and matches out of the reach of children; children should never be left alone in a caravan;
- Gas cylinders should be kept outside the caravan; turn gas cylinders off when not in use; a 'Gas Safe' engineer should be employed for any maintenance;
- Never use a barbeque inside a caravan; barbecues should not be used below any awning, or within 1m of any caravan or combustible surface;
- Open fires should be prohibited on sites;
- Don't block air vents; always keep caravans well ventilated; any build-up of gases could prove fatal;
- To avoid the risk of fire spreading, prevent the build-up of litter and rubbish around the caravan; grass and other vegetation should be cut at frequent intervals to prevent it becoming a fire hazard;
- Have a fire escape plan and make sure everyone who stays in your caravan knows what actions to take should a fire start;
- Know the location of the caravan site's portable firefighting equipment;
- Make sure everyone knows the caravan site's fire safety arrangements and the location of the nearest telephone; and
- Always remember, in the event of fire, **GET OUT, STAY OUT AND CALL 999.**

For further information phone NIFRS HQ 028 9266 4221 or visit www.nifrs.org   **#STOPfire**