



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

Protecting Our Community

COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 1

CHIMNEY FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

Using a chimney sweep will

- Eliminate the build-up of soot
- Clear blockages such as nests, cobwebs and loose brickwork, which could obstruct the chimney
- Prevent fumes from a blocked flue entering the room, causing drowsiness and potentially, asphyxiation
- Provide valuable advice on any remedial work that may be necessary
- Help prevent chimney fires

Ensure you use a suitably trained person to service your chimney or flue

When to clean the chimney and liners

- Smokeless fuels – at least once a year
- Bituminous coal – at least twice a year
- Wood burning stoves – quarterly when in use
- Oil – once per year
- Gas – once per year (if designed for sweeping)

Precautions with open fires and stoves

- Do not overfill an open fire grate in case coals fall out
- Always use a spark guard, and if you have young children or pets consider using a safety guard
- Do not place a mirror above a fire, people may stand too close
- Do not position furniture too close to the fire
- Make sure the fire is out before going to bed at night or leaving the house
- Never interrupt the air supply by blocking air vents or air bricks
- Have a working smoke alarm on every floor and test it every week

How do I know when I have a chimney fire?

- Excessive amounts of smoke
- Embers falling down the chimney
- Sparks or flames visible from chimney top
- A loud roaring noise
- Brickwork around the chimney breast can be very hot



What to do in the event of a chimney fire

- Put the spark guard on and call 999
- **REMEMBER** – If it is left unattended, a chimney fire can spread into the rest of the house
- Some people fear that they will be charged for the Fire & Rescue Service attending a chimney fire – this is not true

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

- Ensure appliances are installed and serviced by competent engineers
- Without proper maintenance, any flue from a fire or stove can cause a dangerous build-up of Carbon Monoxide gas
- For further information on Carbon Monoxide & detection go to www.hseni.gov.uk/watchout.

FOR A FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECK RING 028 9266 4221

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