



**Northern Ireland  
Fire & Rescue Service**

**Protecting Our Community**

## **COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 26**

### **SMOKING – KEEPING SAFE AND WELL**

Having a smoke-free home will provide a safer and healthier living environment for you and your loved ones. Smoking is one of the leading causes of accidental fires in the home and the top cause of preventable illness and death. Stopping smoking will reduce the risk of developing many related illnesses such as cancers, heart disease, bronchitis and emphysema (COPD).

If you or someone in your home smokes, you need to take extra care to stay safe. If you choose to smoke, follow this advice to keep everyone safe from fire:

- Get into the habit of smoking outside; this will significantly reduce the likelihood of a fire starting in your home.
- It's vitally important that you never smoke in bed, particularly if you have been drinking alcohol or have taken medication that could make you drowsy.
- If you have mobility issues, including being confined to a bed/chair, you are at greater risk from fire. Often clothes or bedding are the first items to ignite which leaves you in a particularly vulnerable position.
- Stub your cigarette out properly; use a deep sturdy ashtray and don't let it overfill.
- Putting water on cigarette butts is a good idea; ensure the contents of an ashtray are cold before they are emptied into a suitable waste bin outside your home.

Additional information on preventing fires from smoking is contained in our Community Information Bulletin No. 22 found at [www.nifrs.org/fire-safety/community-information-bulletins/](http://www.nifrs.org/fire-safety/community-information-bulletins/).

The benefits of stopping smoking start immediately and the good news is the risk of serious illness starts dropping as soon as you stop. Breathing becomes easier and improves as lung function increases and, within one year of quitting, a person's risk of a heart attack is halved. In order to increase your chances of success, it helps to be in the right frame of mind and to want to stop.

The best way to stop smoking is a combination of medication and support, both of which are available on the NHS. For help and advice to stop smoking, contact your GP or your local Stop Smoking Service.

#### Useful Contacts

Public Health Agency [www.publichealth.hscni.net/directorate-public-health/health-and-social-wellbeing-improvement/stopping-smoking](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/directorate-public-health/health-and-social-wellbeing-improvement/stopping-smoking)

Want to Stop [www.want2stop.info](http://www.want2stop.info)

NHS Stop Smoking [www.nhs.uk/livewell/smoking](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/smoking)

For further information phone NIFRS HQ 028 9266 4221 or visit [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org)



**#STOPfire**