

Halifax press release

Fire-proof your home this fire safety week

Wednesday 7th November 2007

This year Halifax Home Insurance is urging householders to conduct a home safety check during Fire Safety Week (November 14th – 21st) to reduce the risk of a fire in their homes.

- According to figures from the Association of British Insurers*, 200 homes suffer a fire every day in the UK.
- Last year alone Halifax Home Insurance had almost 3,000 fire-related claims, costing over £23 million to repair the damage
- Halifax's own claims data shows the average cost of a house fire claim last year was £8,452.00.

Vicky Emmott from Halifax Home Insurance said:

"With 200 house fires happening every day, there's definitely more that could be being done to protect people's homes and families from the risks of fire. We are urging all householders to spend a bit of time during Fire Safety Week checking their homes and improving fire safety measures."

Halifax Home Insurance recommends the following tips:

1. Consider how you and your family would escape from the home if a fire occurred and make sure this route is kept clear.
2. Keep internal doors closed, particularly at night, as this slows down the progression of a house fire.
3. Make sure you have at least one smoke alarm on each floor of your property and check the battery regularly.
4. Most house fires start in the kitchen. When cooking, ensure naked flames are not left unattended and if oil catches fire, smother the flames with a damp tea towel or lid, rather than pour water on it, which exacerbates the problem.
5. Ensure electrical wiring in the home is safe by using a qualified electrician for all work. Trying to tackle electrical work at home can be dangerous and could invalidate a home insurance claim if something went wrong as a result.
6. Avoid storing petrol or other flammable liquids in the home. Ideally they should be kept in a secure container in a shed or outbuilding.
7. Do not smoke in bed or when tired, as many house fires and injuries are caused by falling asleep while smoking.

Halifax Home Insurance is also reminding people who have a real fireplace in their home to make sure their chimneys are swept safely by a professional chimney sweep before lighting fires again this winter. Throughout the summertime leaves, paper and even birds' nests build up inside chimney flues. If not cleared, this debris can release poisonous fumes and become a serious risk to health when the fire is lit. The National Association of Chimney Sweeps has a network of fully insured members throughout the UK. To find a qualified chimney sweep in your area, visit www.chimneyworks.co.uk.

Ends

Contact:

For all enquiries, please contact Melanie Matthews, PR Manager: 0113 395 9801 or 07908 448310 or email melaniematthews@halifax.co.uk.

Notes to editors

* Association of British Insurers website www.abi.org.uk

- National Fire Safety Week was initiated by the FPA (Fire Protection Association) in 1975 and has been held every year since. Fire Safety Week gives local brigades and other interested organisations an opportunity to collaborate in addressing fire safety problems which particularly affect their communities.

Halifax Home Insurance

- Further details of Halifax Home Insurance products can be found online at www.halifax.co.uk/insurance, by calling 0800 169 8785 or by visiting their local branch.
- New customers receive up to 35% discount when buying Halifax Home Insurance online.