

Halifax press release

Gadgets graveyard: £2.6 billion of unused kitchen appliances

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Over a quarter of a million British households have more than £500 worth of abandoned kitchen gadgets stored away.

- Toastie makers and blenders top the league table of unused appliances
- Gadget-mad men spend a third more on unused kitchen appliances than women
- Calamitous cooks cause £64 million of damage to their kitchens each year with gadgets and appliances

New research from Halifax Home Insurance reveals British kitchens have £2.6 billion of kitchen gadgets rusting in cupboards completely unused. From spice shakers to blenders, kitchens are filled with unused appliances. Men spend an average of £119 on unused kitchen appliances, a third more than women who spend around £88. Over a quarter of a million British households have more than £500 worth of abandoned kitchen gadgets stored away.

Toastie makers (32%) top the list of unused kitchen gadgets abandoned in darkened cupboards, while a fifth (21%) of households with a blender haven't used it in over a year. The lean, mean grilling machine spends more time on the shelf gathering dust than helping the nation lose weight in the 17% of households that have the appliance. A fifth (17%) of those with steamers, juicers and electric carving knives never use them.

From scorching kitchen blow torches to electric carving knives slicing through worktops, kitchen gadgets often prove hazardous. Over £64 million of damage has been caused by cooks having accidents with appliances. Perhaps because they use gadgets without reading the instructions, men unfortunately live up to the stereotype of being klutzes in the kitchen causing one and a half times more damage than women.

David Rochester, Head of Underwriting at Halifax Home Insurance, said: "British kitchens are turning into a graveyard of unused gadgets. While Britons have the best intentions when buying kitchen gadgets, thousands of blenders, grills, steamers and juicers lie idle on worktops. Kitchen gadgets appear to have become merely decorative items in the kitchen for millions of wannabe chefs.

"Britons should ensure they always read the instructions before firing up a blow torch or electric carving knife as they could cause extensive damage to their property and potentially injure the user. Electrical items should be checked carefully, especially if they haven't been used for a long time to ensure the plugs, wiring and heating elements have not been damaged, which could cause a fire or electrocute the user."

On a regional basis those living in the South East have wasted the most money on unused kitchen gadgets (£119), closely followed by the North of England (£118). Thrifty Midlanders spend the least on unused kitchen appliances (£80).

Ends

Table one: Regional percentage of households owning unused kitchen appliances

| Gadget | Percentage of people owning the appliance but leaving it unused |
|-------------------------|---|
| Toasted sandwich makers | 32% |
| Blender | 21% |
| Tea/coffee maker | 19% |
| George Forman Grill | 17% |
| Steamer | 17% |
| Electric carving knife | 17% |
| Juicer | 17% |
| Bread maker | 15% |
| Water filter | 12% |
| Soda stream | 7% |
| Electric can opener | 7% |

Source: Halifax Home Insurance 2008

Table two: Average cost of unused kitchen gadgets by region

| Region | Average value of unused kitchen gadgets |
|----------------------|---|
| South East | £119 |
| Northern England | £118 |
| Scotland | £103 |
| Wales and South West | £88 |
| Midlands | £80 |

Source: Halifax Home Insurance 2008

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Editors' Notes

1. Research conducted by ICM amongst 1052 UK adults 25th-27th April 2008. Figures have been rebased using figures supplied by the Office of National Statistics.

Halifax Home Insurance

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