

## ABOUT FIFE CARES AND THIS NEWSLETTER

Fife Cares is a partnership initiative run by the Fife Community Safety Partnership, focusing on increasing safety in the home and decreasing accidents involving our vulnerable residents. This newsletter brings to you information on a quarterly basis on home safety, current and future initiatives and events, trending issues and what our partners are saying and doing.

We hope you enjoy this first edition of our newsletter and are able to use some of the information it holds.

## BE GAS SAFE PROGRAMME



The BE GAS SAFE programme aims to make people aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide, the need for regular servicing of appliances by registered gas engineers and other key aspects of prevention such as ventilation and the use of carbon monoxide detectors. As part of the programme 10,000 families in the UK will receive carbon monoxide detectors and it is hoped that many thousands more will receive vital information and advice on how to stay gas safe.

As an organisation in regular contact with key risk groups in an area that has been identified as having potentially higher risk of CO poisoning we are well placed to become a key partner in delivering the programme for the second year running.

## SAFETY GATES - GUIDELINES



The BS EN Standard which relates to Safety Gates is BS EN 1930:2011. Defined within this standard, it tells us that the product is suitable for children up to the age of twenty four months (as opposed to age two, which could mean as high as 35 months i.e. still aged 2!) This is also on each set of fitting instructions. This is essentially a one year old child, as once they have their second birthday, they are over the age set within the safety guidance.

This does not mean that after that age the product becomes unsafe, as many safety gates are in homes where brothers and sisters are over the age of two, however it does mean that a parent is expecting the gate to do a job it was never intended to do if the product is fitted where the youngest child is more than 24 months. This leads to a false sense of security for the parent.

As a project able to supply this type of equipment, Fife Cares have a duty of care to take into account the relevance and effectiveness of a product we are supplying and will only recommend equipment suitable for the circumstances we find.

# BURNS FROM HAIR STRAIGHTENERS



**Hair straighteners can get as hot as an iron. So hot, in fact, you could cook your breakfast on them. Not something you'd want a baby or toddler to touch.**

The Electrical Safety Council and the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) have launched a major campaign to raise awareness of hair straightener burns in a bid to tackle the growing number of young children who are seriously injured by hair straighteners.

As the fashion for straight hair has grown, so has the number of children injured – it is believed that hair straightener burns have doubled in recent years.

Most injuries occur when crawling babies and toddlers grab at them, step on them, sit on them or pull them down. Hair straighteners can stay hot enough to burn up to 15 minutes after they have been switched off and can take up to 40 minutes to cool down completely.

Despite this, most parents don't know just how dangerous they can be. Over a third of parents report leaving hair straighteners to cool down on the floor, on furniture or over a door handle.

**If hair straighteners can fry bacon, imagine what they can do to babies' or toddlers' skin.**

[An article from the Daily Mail newspaper](#) highlighted the hazard associated with burns from Hair Straightener pouches.

*FACT: The South West Regional Paediatric Burns Centre in Bristol looked at the growing number of cases and the damage caused. Doctors found there had been 155 cases admitted over a five-year period, and that the number of cases had increased from 20 to 45 a year.*

## QUICK QUIZ ??

Up to what age is a safety gate suitable?

# ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTING

A successful application to the Electrical Safety Council's Fire Safety Fund for £5000 allowed Fife Cares in partnership with Fife Trading Standards to buy sufficient electric blankets to continue our very successful Electric Blanket Testing project into 2014.

In 2013 we visited 24 locations around Fife. Out of the 502 electric blankets that were tested 48% failed. A total of 228 replacement electric blankets were issued last year.



As part of the project, we are also introducing an adapter amnesty for customers. The ESC funding allows us to buy a stock of 4-way extension leads and run an exchange for the unsafe block adapters that are still in common use. This will be offered at testing events and by the home safety advisers during home safety visits.

The projected budget for the project will allow us to carry out 19 testing days throughout Fife starting in March. The programme for the first few months is as follows:

6 <sup>th</sup> March	Cupar, Corn Exchange	10am – 2pm
12 <sup>th</sup> March	Ballingry, Benarty Community Centre	10am – noon
12 <sup>th</sup> March	Kelty, Moray Institute	1pm – 3pm
19 <sup>th</sup> March	Leven, Balmaise Community Centre	10am – 1pm
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Dalgety Bay, Community Centre	12.30pm – 2pm
8 <sup>th</sup> April	Dunfermline, Tryst Centre, Abbeyview	10am – 1pm
23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Newport, Kinbrae Park Gardens	10am – noon
23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Tayport, Servite House	1pm – 3pm
29 <sup>th</sup> April	Kirkcaldy, Sinclairtown Library	10am – 1pm



For further information: [www.fifedirect.org.uk/electricblankets](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/electricblankets)

Updates to the outcome of this year's project and details of future venues will be provided in forthcoming newsletters.

## DOMINIC LITTLEWOOD'S TOP TIPS FOR FINDING A REGISTERED ELECTRICIAN



Dominic Littlewood, presenter of 'Fake Britain' and 'Cowboy Builders' supports the Electrical Safety Council's (ESC) campaign to encourage householders to use registered electricians.

The campaign urges people not to attempt electrical jobs themselves or to rely on friends' recommendations. Instead, guarantee yourself the peace of mind that comes with using a registered electrician.

ESC research found that a third of people had hired an electrician based on a friend's recommendation without bothering to check their credentials, and a quarter would knowingly use an unregistered electrician if they were in a hurry. It also found that nearly 1.3 million people have paid someone to fix botched work that was carried out by an unregistered electrician.

Registered electricians surveyed also warned about the dangers of relying on others, such as a builder, to select electricians on your behalf. Over half said they were aware of complex jobs, such as bathroom or kitchen fittings with electrical elements, which were carried out by unregistered or unqualified electricians.

To support the campaign, we also produced a short film that brings home the risk of using unregistered electricians in an impactful and shocking way. You can watch the film and find out how to find a registered electrician to carry out electrical work in your home at [www.esc.org.uk/findanelectrician](http://www.esc.org.uk/findanelectrician)

## TRUSTED TRADERS

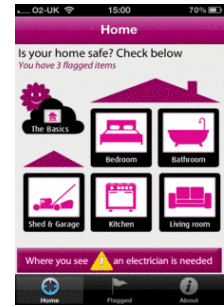


Not sure what company to use for that odd job around the house? Not sure who to trust? Fife Trading Standards has established a Trusted Traders scheme to help you choose a company recommended by others as having a track record of fairness and trustworthiness. To find out how this works, add a trader you can trust or find one for yourself why not go to our page on [Fife Direct here?](#)

## FREE ELECTRICAL SAFETY SMARTPHONE APP

The Electrical Safety Council offers simple advice to help you to keep yourself, your loved ones and your homes safe from electrical accidents and fires. They have a range of [leaflets](#) that you can download, as well as a 'calculator' that helps you to check you are not [overloading sockets](#).

The new free [smartphone app](#) guides you through simple visual checks of the electrics in your home. [CLICK HERE](#)



## ELECTRIC CHIPMUNKS

This year the Electrical safety council are using a different approach to talking about the dangers of counterfeit electrical goods.

A new short film, 'Electric Chipmunks', follows bargain hunter "Tara Cheadle" as she buys a hairdryer from a mysterious market trader, with disastrous results.

Despite the quirky approach, the message is a serious one and particularly relevant at a time when budgets are tight and people are looking for a bargain.

So, don't get exploded by dodgy electrics – instead visit [www.esc.org.uk/chipmunks](http://www.esc.org.uk/chipmunks) to watch the video.



### QUICK QUIZ ??

How long can hair straighteners take to cool down

## INTERNET SAFETY

Internet Safety is an ever increasing concern and it is important children and adults are educated on the dangers the internet can pose. Safer Internet Day was organised by the UK Safer Internet Centre to promote the safe and responsible use of online technology and mobile phones. More information can be found on their website at <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2014>



## CHILD PRODUCT SAFETY GUIDE

The European Child Safety Alliance (ESCA) has launched the Child Product Safety Guide: Potentially Dangerous Products. This guide contains key information on products that children and families have regular interaction with, but are at risk of injury during their use.

Across the 28 countries of the European Union in an average year

- > 19,000 children under 14 years of age will have injuries involving bunk beds,
- > 51,000 will have injuries involving trampolines,
- > 52,000 will have toy related injuries.

All are serious enough to require a visit to the local emergency department. This guide can be accessed through the ESCA web link: <http://www.childsafetyeurope.org/archives/news/2013/dec-05-product-safety.html>



# FIRE SAFETY AND OLDER PEOPLE



Age Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, has produced a fact sheet on fire safety and older people. People over fifty are more at risk of fire than younger people, and the risk of fire injury or death is higher in Scotland than elsewhere in the UK.

Risks which affect alertness, concentration and the ability to react quickly are long term medical conditions or disabilities and some types of medication. People who are on a low income can also be at risk if they cannot afford to repair or replace faulty equipment such as cookers, electric blankets and electrical sockets.

The fact sheet offers simple advice and guidance on reducing fire risk. If you have friends, family or neighbours who would benefit from this advice, please share it with them. Even if you don't think of yourself as an 'older person', the advice applies to us all.

Click here for the fact sheet [Age Scotland SFRS - Factsheet - Fire safety and older people in Scotland.pdf](#)

## QUICK QUIZ ??

How many children have injuries involving bunk beds?

## HELP PROTECT YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR COMMUNITY FROM TRAGEDY

The latest stage of the Join Scotland's Fight against Fire campaign emphasises the need for all homes to be protected by working smoke alarms, which are known to have a dramatic impact in preventing injuries and deaths.

Members of the public have been urged to help fire fighters reach vulnerable residents, so they can prevent house fires and the deaths, injuries and emotional trauma they cause.

Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Lewis Ramsay, the SFRS Director of Prevention and Protection, explained: "Fire in the home can be both terrifying and tragic, but simple steps will significantly reduce the risk of it happening to us. I am calling on everyone to consider the risks in their homes and the homes of people around them, and then to take potentially life-saving action".

"In the past year our crews conducted more than 56,000 free home fire safety visits, where they gave residents tips to prevent fire starting and to buy vital time if it does strike. Fire fighters conducting free home fire safety visits will even install long life battery smoke alarms wherever they are needed – and it's completely free of charge".

Anyone can arrange a free home fire safety visit by calling the SFRS Free phone number **0800 0731 999** or by contacting their local fire station.

Further information on how to keep your home fire safe is available on the SFRS website:

[www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)



# LIVES TO BE SAVED FROM “SILENT KILLER” WITH C.O. LAW CHANGE, IN SCOTLAND

A new law making carbon monoxide (CO) alarms compulsory in Scottish properties will save lives in the fight against the “silent killer”, according to The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents in Scotland.

From October 1 2013, [new building regulations](#) in Scotland, requires that all new-build properties must be fitted with CO alarms. The law will also require houses, hotels, guest houses and care homes to have an alarm installed at the same time as a new boiler or gas appliance. The move aims to prevent deaths from the deadly gas, known as “the silent killer” because it cannot be seen, heard, smelt or tasted. Cases are commonly caused by faulty or badly-serviced gas appliances and other fossil fuel-burning systems.



[CO poisoning](#) kills at least 50 people every year in the UK and leads to more than 1,100 hospital admissions. Latest figures from [Health Protection Scotland](#) show there are around two accidental deaths every year, and there were 135 people admitted to hospital as a result of toxic effects of the gas between 2008 and 2010.

For information on carbon monoxide safety, click on [Gas Safe](#) or go to [www.rospea.com](http://www.rospea.com).

## NEW STANDARDS ON BLINDS

From 2014 stringent new standards governing the manufacture, selling and installation of new blinds come into effect with the aim of reducing child accidents. It’s likely that the new standards will be published in February or March 2014.

The new standards will mandate:

- Safety devices for preventing any cords or chains from forming a hazard
- The testing of all safety critical items of internal blinds
- The installation of safety devices on the product at the point of manufacture
- Maximum cord and chain lengths
- Warnings and instructions / packaging and point-of-sale information



27 children are known to have died in the UK since 1999 as a result of becoming entangled with a blind or curtain cord or chain. Over half of these deaths have occurred in the last three years, and most have happened in the bedroom when parents thought their child was asleep. Toddlers are most at risk of becoming entangled in a blind cord. They are naturally inquisitive, and are especially vulnerable to strangulation because their heads weigh proportionately more than their bodies compared to adults and their muscle control isn’t fully developed, both of which make it harder for them to free themselves if they get tangled up..

Later this year you can use the launch to encourage parents who are looking to buy new blinds for their homes to buy blinds that are safe by design – for example, blinds that are operated by wands rather than cords or chains. Click here - [BBSA’s Make it Safe website](#) for more information.

However, the new standards do not apply to blinds already installed in people’s homes. If parents have blinds at home that are operated by cords or chains, it’s vital that they understand the risks and the simple steps they can take to make their blinds safer – for example, by moving furniture away from blinds and fitting and using cleats, so blind cords and chains are kept well out of reach of young children.

## PASS PLUS



The Fife Pass Plus Subsidised Initiative offers new drivers an opportunity to gain more knowledge and practical driving skills in a discounted scheme which is subsidised by Fife Council and the cost to the pupil being only £30. It is open to all new drivers who have passed their test within the last two years and are resident in Fife.... The course is also available to some drivers, resident in Fife, who have been passed their test for longer but would like to benefit from more confidence behind the wheel of their car.

Drivers wishing to benefit from the subsidised initiative must attend one evening at Police HQ in Glenrothes and these evening are held once every month.

To sign up to take part in the Initiative please e-mail [fife.roadsafety@btconnect.com](mailto:fife.roadsafety@btconnect.com) or for more details contact the Road Safety Support Unit on 01383 318604.

## BETTER LATE THAN DEAD ON TIME PLAY



Theatre & Learning in partnership with Road Safety Scotland and Fife Community Safety Partnership are offering an interactive road safety performance called 'Better Late than Dead on Time' for all generations from **12 years + to elderly**. The **FREE** performance will be held at Kirkcaldy High School on Thursday 6th March from 6.30-7.30pm.

The performance/play aims to raise awareness of the dangers of the road and examine the impacts of driver and pedestrian behaviour in a realistic and humorous way.

For more information or to book a space on the evening please e-mail [fife.roadsafety@btconnect.com](mailto:fife.roadsafety@btconnect.com) or phone 03451 555555 ex 406753



### QUICK QUIZ ??

How many children are known to have died in the UK since 1999 as a result of becoming entangled with a blind or curtain cord or chain ?



## DIARY DATES FOR 2014



<b>16 – 20 June</b>	<b>Falls Awareness Week</b>
<b>23 – 29 June</b>	<b>Child Safety Week</b>
<b>15 – 21 September</b>	<b>Gas Safety Week</b>
<b>21 – 28 September</b>	<b>Electrical Safety Week</b>
<b>6 – 12 October</b>	<b>Fire Safety Week</b>
<b>17 – 21 November</b>	<b>Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week</b>

## FIFE CARES

Fife Cares is part of the Fife Community Safety Partnership delivering expert home safety and security advice free of charge to vulnerable residents of Fife. We provide advice to parents and guardians of children under 5 years of age and vulnerable adults as our most at risk community groups. We can conduct home safety visits and, with the help of our partners in Police Scotland, we can provide home security visits. Our advice is always relevant and up to date, based on the best we can get from RoSPA - Scotland, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Police Scotland.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

To apply for a Fife Cares Home Safety or Security check, you can either phone the contact centre on 01383 441177 or follow the following procedure and do it online:

Log on to [www.fifedirect.org.uk](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk)

Press **Do it online** tab at the top of the home page.

Press **Request** button

In the **Request It** box click **Fife Cares Visit – Request Form**

Press **Go to form**, select visit type

and follow the form entering the necessary details from there.

For Road Safety information or further details of Pass Plus sessions taking place, please contact Gillian on **01383 318604** or email [fife.roadsafety@btconnect.com](mailto:fife.roadsafety@btconnect.com)

Anyone can arrange a free home fire safety visit by calling the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Free phone number **0800 0731 999** or by contacting their local fire station.



## RESOURCES/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Child Accident Prevention Trust](#)

[Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents](#)

[Scottish Burned Children's Club](#)

## QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS

Up to what age is a safety gate suitable?

**Answer – 24 months**

How long can hair straighteners take to cool down completely?

**Answer – 40 minutes**

How many children have injuries involving bunk beds?

**Answer - 19,000**

How many children are known to have died in the UK since 1999 as a result of becoming entangled with a blind or curtain cord or chain? **Answer – 27**

## FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

For more information on all aspects of community safety please like our Facebook page:



[www.facebook.com/fifecommunitysafety](http://www.facebook.com/fifecommunitysafety)

or follow us on twitter:



[www.twitter.com/safeinfife](http://www.twitter.com/safeinfife)