

Guidance on Chimney Fires

Any fire, whether accidental or for a purpose, can cause injury if not treated with respect.

Many people forget that a fire in the hearth can still be dangerous. Chimney fires can spread into the roof space or floor cavity and endanger the lives of people in the house as well as causing extensive damage.

Suffolk County Council's fire service offers the following advice to people who use traditional open fires or woodburners to heat their properties:

- Chimneys must be swept regularly, at least once a year;
- If you frequently burn wood on your open fire the chimney must be swept more often, as resin builds up in the chimney; and
- Flues to woodburners must also be inspected to ensure that heat cannot pass through to a combustible beam or roof structure.
- Always keep a fire guard in front of a burning fire.
- Extinguish the fire before going to bed or leaving the house.
- **Never** use petrol or paraffin to light your fire.

Anybody who suspects their chimney may be on fire should call out the fire service immediately.



Things to look out for include excessive smoke, embers falling back into the hearth, the walls of the chimney breast or adjacent walls becoming very hot to the touch or even flames showing from the pot.

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