

news release

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For Immediate Release

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Home fire safety warning after bedroom fire

Firefighters in West Sussex are reminding residents to take extra care with candles following a fire in a teenager's bedroom on Tuesday.

Two crews from Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath were mobilised to a property on West Street, Burgess Hill, at 12.52pm after candles on the teenager's bedroom window set fire to the curtains.

Upon arrival at the house, crews found the fire had already been extinguished by an adult living at the property, but crews offered some safety advice to the household and helped ventilate the property.

Ed Swain, Crew Manager at Burgess Hill Fire Station, said: "Luckily there was an adult in the property at the time when the fire broke out and he managed to deal with the fire himself upon hearing the smoke alarms actuating.

"With the latest advice from the government to help curb the spread of Covid-19, people should be staying at home and observing social distancing guidance.

"We would like to take this opportunity to remind people of the dangers associated with naked flames and candles and the importance of keeping them away from flammable materials. They should only be used in a proper candle holder, and they should be extinguished before you leave the room or go to sleep. Candles should never be left unattended.

"By following these simple steps you can enjoy having a candle lit, without putting the household at risk of fire.

"In this instance, it didn't take much for the curtains to catch fire, and this had the potential to become a much more serious incident. There was a fair bit of heat damage to the curtains and the teenager's bed, as well as smoke damage to the rest of the room.

"Fortunately this house also had a working smoke alarm fitted, which gave the family an early warning that something was wrong."

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) have issued some home fire safety tips with more people working and being in the home due to coronavirus (Covid-19).

Advice includes:

Smoke alarms should be on every level of the home. Check they're working regularly.

Avoid smoking in comfortable furniture or beds #DontSnoozeAndSmoke

Fires in chimneys can start at any time. Take this time to clean yours.

Electrical items should be checked, don't overload plug sockets.

Try and be more careful in the kitchen. 50% of home fires start here.

You should close your doors at night in case a fire breaks out. This will help to contain the fire and prevent the spread of toxic smoke by up to 20 minutes.

Nicki Peddle, Head of Prevention at WSFRS said: "In these uncertain and difficult times we really want you to be as safe as possible at home. That is why we are offering some extra tips to help keep you and those you care for safe from fire.

"They are really simple things that we build in to our new routines, but they will have a big impact on reducing the risk of a fire in our home."

If you have a fire in your home – get out, stay out, call 999.

For more information on home fire safety visit: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/home-fire-safety/>