



Position Statement

Domestic Fire Detection

July 2015

Publicity Line

CFOA is committed to creating safer, healthier and more resilient communities.

In support of this strategic objective it is considered that improving the standard of fire detection within dwellings would contribute significantly to reducing fire casualties and fatalities and also materially reduce fire losses arising from accidental fires.

In addition it is important that public fire safety information and advice keeps pace with changing technical standards, advances in technology and also reflects the range of products being manufactured, supplied and retailed in the UK.

The primary intent of this revised position statement is to harmonise and update the information and advice being provided to the public and others in respect of Domestic Fire Detection.

Background

In 1987, only 9% of households in the UK had a working smoke alarm. Current figures show that approximately 90% of households now have a working smoke alarm. This improvement has largely resulted from a significant programme of home safety visits undertaken by Fire and Rescue Services, and from regular publicity campaigns around the simple messages of fitting smoke alarms and testing them regularly.

Current Position

Despite the significant increase in ownership of working smoke alarms, dwelling fire fatalities are still occurring, even in properties where smoke alarms are fitted and working. In some instances smoke alarms are not fitted in the right place. Advances in technology also mean that we have a greater understanding that different types of smoke alarms respond in different ways to some types of fires.

To prevent fire injury and minimise fire damage it is crucial that any outbreak of fire in the home is quickly detected and the alarm raised at the earliest possible stage of smoke production and fire growth. Given these issues, the fact that current advice is nearly 30 years old and smoke alarms are less expensive now, CFOA is updating its advice as follows:

- Fitting a smoke alarm on every floor of a home should be recognised as a minimum standard (in a circulation space such as a hall or landing).
- It is recommended that, additionally, smoke alarms are fitted in every room in the house which is regularly inhabited (i.e. bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms) based upon the fire risk to the occupants.
- It is additionally recommended that a heat alarm should be fitted in the kitchen.

Where possible, these alarms should be inter-linked so that all will actuate if one does.

Public Safety Information Line

Key public fire safety messages and prevention activities such as home safety visits should be aimed at protecting the occupants of dwellings as much as possible by encouraging those who can (or have a legislative responsibility to do so) to provide suitable and sufficient fire detection and warning and support those who can't, due to age, ill health and/or social circumstance to get the help and assistance needed to adequately protect themselves from fire.

Specialist domestic fire alarms are readily available for persons with impaired hearing to increase audibility and consideration should be given to the provision of an interlinked smoke alarm within the bedroom.

CFOA's aim is to ensure that all homes within the UK are provided with a standard of fire detection and warning that is appropriate to the layout, fire risks and hazards within the home and best suited to the health and circumstances of the occupants.

England ✓	Wales ✓	Scotland ✓	Northern Ireland ✓
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