



Hoarding - Safety Tips

**For Care Agencies, Support Agencies,
Social Landlords, Family & Friends**

**Do you know, or work with, someone who stores large
amounts of possessions in and around their home?**

Help keep these highly vulnerable individuals safe from fire by following the advice overleaf. Our 'top tips' are small, simple steps that can easily be included in the regular weekly/daily clearance sessions.



**For further information on help for hoarders
visit our website www.esfrs.org**

East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

Whether using a traditional oven/hob, or other methods of cooking such as a portable stove, make it a priority to keep the cooking area clear.

Do not place items on, or close to heaters, lamps or other electrical equipment.

Do not store cylinders in the home as they are a serious hazard during a fire. If there is a medical need for cylinders, they should be kept upright and outdoors where possible – never store cylinders in basements, under stairs or in cupboards with electric meters/equipment.

Smokers should use a proper ashtray that won't burn and put it on a flat, stable surface so that it can't tip over easily. Don't leave lit cigarettes unattended.

Put candles/tea lights in heat resistant holders that hold the candle/tea light firmly and ensure it is placed on a flat, stable, heat resistant surface. Keep candles/tea lights away from anything that can catch fire, and never leave them unattended.

Make sure there is a working smoke alarm and test it as part of regular clearance sessions. Contact the local fire and rescue service for advice.

Plan and practise how to escape if there were a fire. Choose an escape route and keep it clear of possessions – in the event of a fire this will aid a quick escape or allow firefighters to rescue anyone inside.

Ensure possessions are stored on stable surfaces and do not stack items to a height that they become unstable – they could fall over blocking the escape route.

Newspapers and mail stored in bulk are highly combustible and will cause a fire to spread rapidly. Sort mail and newspapers on the day they are received and recycle them on a regular basis.

In the event of a fire, do not attempt to put it out yourself – leave straight away and call the fire and rescue service once safely outside. Do not stop to collect possessions and do not go back inside.

If you feel that you need some help or assistance with the above, there are many organisations that will support you through the process free of charge - for details, go to www.helpforhoarders.co.uk/resources/

To request a home fire safety visit for a suspected hoarder contact us on 0800 177 7069. Alternatively, you can contact Adult Social Care (East Sussex) on 0345 608 0191 or Access Point (Brighton & Hove) on 01273 295555 for help and advice.