**Smoke alarms newsletter copy**

*Heading*: Be Fire Safe: Test your smoke alarm

Fire and Rescue NSW knows that a working smoke alarm is the best early warning sign of a fire and cuts the risk of fire-related deaths in half. Despite this, nearly half the homes damaged or destroyed by fire in NSW last year did not have a working smoke alarm.

Complacency and inaction around smoke alarms are the biggest risk factors when it comes to home fire safety. Why? Because smoke is the greatest cause of injuries or fatalities.

Firefighters are urging the community to stop being complacent about their own safety. Check you have a smoke alarm on every level of your house or apartment, test that it is working and if it isn’t, contact Fire and Rescue NSW for a free safety visit: <https://fire.nsw.gov.au/safetyvisits>

**Escape plans newsletter copy**

*Heading*: Be Fire Safe: Plan, practise and protect with a home escape plan

A house fire can strike when you least expect it. And when a fire takes hold, every second counts. In less than 30 seconds, a small flame can turn into a major fire.

Make sure everyone in your home knows how to get out quickly and safely. Visit Fire and Rescue NSW’s website, download the template and draw your escape plan. Make sure you set out your floor plan, know your exits, choose a safe meeting point, and most importantly, practise it together as a family at least twice a year.

An escape plan only works if everyone knows it.

Security bars can trap you, so ensure windows and doors have quick-release devices. Apartments have specific evacuation plans; learn and practice them.

Remember, in case of fire: Get out. Stay Out. Call 000 (Triple Zero).

Protect your loved ones by planning and practising your escape plan. Download your plan today: <https://fire.nsw.gov.au/befiresafe>

**Kitchen fire safety newsletter copy**

*Heading:* Be Fire Safe: Keep looking when cooking

Did you know that almost half of all residential fires start in the kitchen? It's a sobering statistic, but with the right precautions, you can significantly reduce the risk.

Unattended cooking is the number one cause. If you’re cooking, stay in the kitchen—and keep flammable items well away from the stove.

As well as never leaving cooking unattended, Fire and Rescue NSW is urging you to follow these essential kitchen fire safety tips:

* Keep children away from cooking areas and consider installing stove guards.
* Heat cooking oil slowly in the right-sized saucepan to avoid splatters.
* Turn pot and pan handles inwards to prevent accidental knocks.
* Regularly clean stove grills, range hood filters, and kitchen appliances.
* Install a fire extinguisher and blanket, located at least 1 meter from the stove.
* Use non-slip mats around the stove and sink area.
* If a fire occurs, switch off the appliance, get out, stay out and call 000 (Triple Zero).

You should also check you have a smoke alarm on every level of your house or apartment, test that it is working and if it isn’t, contact Fire and Rescue NSW for a free safety visit: <https://fire.nsw.gov.au/safetyvisits>

**Lithium-ion battery safety newsletter copy**

*Heading:* Lithium-ion battery safety: a vital guide for your home

Lithium-ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales. They now power so many things in our daily lives – phones, laptops, e-bikes, e-scooters, power tools and even vacuum cleaners.

Lithium batteries make life more convenient, but when things go wrong, they go wrong fast. Fires caused by these batteries can explode, releasing toxic, flammable gases that ignite rapidly, making fires difficult to control and incredibly hard to put out.

Take simple steps at each stage of a battery’s life cycle—shop, charge and recycle safely.

Shop safely

* Buy from trusted sources – always buy lithium-ion battery products from a trusted source. Cheaper, knock-off batteries can be dangerous. If a price seems too good to be true, it probably is.
* Check for recalls - check the ACCC Product Safety website to see if there’s an active recall.
* Look for compliance labels - Make sure the batteries don’t show signs of damage and check for standards labelling.
* If you’re uncertain about a lithium-ion battery product’s quality, don’t take the risk.
* New regulations introduced on 1 February 2025 require e-bikes, e-scooters, hoverboards and e-skateboards to meet strict safety standards (new testing, certification, and marking requirements)

Charge safely

* Never charge while you’re asleep or out of the house - fires can start in seconds.
* Keep chargers away from doorways - you don’t want a fire blocking your way out.
* Charge on hard surfaces, not beds or couches - soft materials can catch fire easily.
* Use the right charger - cheap or mismatched chargers can overheat batteries.
* Check for damage – if a battery is swollen, leaking, or overheating, stop using it immediately.
* Avoid dropping, crushing or piercing battery cells and store batteries and devices in a cool, dry area, away from combustible materials
* Install smoke alarms in places where you charge your devices and test that your smoke alarms are working.

Recycle safely

* Dispose of old batteries properly.
* Never throw batteries in the bin—they can catch fire in garbage trucks or waste facilities.
* Recycle them instead—many retail stores, supermarkets, and Community Recycling Centres across NSW accept them. https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/household-recycling-overview/find-crcs-or-hcco

For further information, visit: <https://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/chargesafe>