



R B F & R S

news release

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RBFRS Warns Berkshire Residents: 'PULL YOUR FINGER OUT'

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is delivering the stark message '**Pull Your Finger Out**' and **check your smoke alarm**, as part of a new government campaign launched today (15 January).

This national campaign is supported by a new wave of TV advertising, which will run from 15 January to 9 March. Fronted by Julie Walters, the advert depicts the devastating aftermath of a fire in the home, highlighting the potentially fatal consequences of not testing your smoke alarm.

According to new survey results from the Fire Kills campaign and TNS¹, although 94% of households polled in the South East own smoke alarms, a staggering 83% of those do not check their alarm often enough, risking the safety of their homes and loved ones. The main reason given by people in the South East for not testing their alarms is apathy, with 50% of people polled blaming forgetfulness, being too busy or just 'can't be bothered'.

If you don't own a working smoke alarm you are twice as likely to die in a fire.² However, the good news is that by following these simple tips, you can help to prevent a fire in the home and keep yourself and your family safe:

- **Step 1 – Fit a smoke alarm** on every level of your home. When a fire starts, you only have a few minutes to escape so an early warning system is vital.
- **Step 2 – Test it weekly.** Replace the batteries every year. Better still, install a 10-year battery smoke alarm.

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¹ Survey conducted via TNS Omnibus on behalf of the Fire Kills campaign amongst a nationally representative sample (1747) of adults aged 16+ in England, from 2-6 November 2007

² Source: Communities and Local Government Fire Statistics 1996-2006

- **Step 3 – Plan your escape route.** Make sure you and your family know the quickest way out in the event of a fire. Think about an alternative route in case your usual one is blocked.
- **Step 4 - Take care in the kitchen** as this is where most house fires start. Never leave cooking unattended.

Jane Weller, Community Safety Officer, said: “The message of the new campaign is simple: We know that smoke alarms save lives - but only if they work! We’re urging all Berkshire residents to pull their fingers out and test their smoke alarms weekly. It only takes a few seconds to test your smoke alarm but it could end up saving your life.”

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