

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

PRESS RELEASE

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RBFRS AND ROYAL BOROUGH HOST HOME FIRE SAFETY EVENTS

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) has teamed up with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to host a series of free home fire safety events.

The events are being held to support RBFRS' current electrical fire safety campaign and the Council's Warm Homes scheme, and are being funded by a grant from the Department of Health's 'Warm Homes, Healthy People' initiative. Royal Borough residents are invited to bring along their electric blankets to the events, which will be tested to ensure they meet safety standards. Any blankets that fail the testing will be replaced with a brand new electric blanket - completely free of charge.

In addition to the electric blanket testing, members of staff from RBFRS' Risk Reduction team will be on hand at each event to provide general fire safety advice and people will also be given the opportunity to sign up for a free Home Fire Safety Check (subject to eligibility). During a Home Fire Safety Check, firefighters or a member of RBFRS' Prevention team visit people in their homes to identify potential fire risks, give advice on how to reduce or prevent them, and install free ten-year smoke alarms where necessary.

The events will take place from 10.30am–4pm on the following dates:

Friday 27 January	Windsor fire station, St Mark's Road, Windsor
Wednesday 1 February	Ascot fire station, Station Hill, Ascot
Thursday 2 February	Maidenhead fire station, Bridge Road, Maidenhead

Contd/...

MAKING BERKSHIRE SAFER

Issued by Ellie Gray, press and communications officer
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Electric blanket owners who are unable to attend the events are advised to check their blankets themselves for signs of wear and tear. Indications that blankets may be unsafe include:

- Frayed wires
- Blankets that work intermittently
- Extremes of temperature i.e. blankets suddenly getting much hotter than usual
- Singeing of the fabric
- Cables poking through the material

If any of these symptoms of damage are present, people are urged to dispose of them immediately, rather than run the risk of them causing a fire.

RBFRS Group Manager for Prevention, Chris Bunyan, said: "We are really pleased to be working in partnership with the Council to run these home fire safety events, which are open to everyone who lives in the Royal Borough. Faulty electric blankets can cause serious house fires, so it is essential to make sure they are safe and in proper working order.

"Even if you don't own an electric blanket, we will be offering a range of invaluable home fire safety advice and information at each event, so it's well worth a visit. The events are completely free of charge and there's no need to book in advance, so we hope people will come along to whichever one is most convenient for them."

Cllr Phill Bicknell, cabinet member for highways, transport and environment for the Royal Borough, said: "I encourage residents of all ages to take up this excellent offer of free checks on their electric blankets so they can keep safe, warm and well during the winter weather."

ENDS.

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