Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is urging smokers to ‘put it out, right out’ to avoid having a fire in the home. The warning comes as part of a month-long campaign advising Berkshire residents to be extra careful when smoking – especially when tired.

Smoking is the single biggest killer in accidental fires in the home. A third of all deaths in fires in the home are caused by cigarettes¹, often due to careless behaviour such as smoking in bed or not taking care after drinking. Furthermore, when smokers fall asleep with a lit cigarette, their proximity to the resulting fire seriously lowers their chance of being able to escape safely.

If you or someone you live with smokes, following these simple steps can help prevent a smoking-related fire in the home:

- **Put it out, right out!** Make sure your cigarette is properly extinguished
- **Don’t smoke when you’re tired, have been drinking or taking medication.** If a fire starts, you could be less able to escape
- **Never smoke in bed.** If you need to lie down, don’t light up – you could fall asleep and never wake up
- **Never leave lit cigarettes, cigars or pipes unattended.** They can easily overbalance as they burn down
- **Use a proper, heavy ashtray** that can’t tip over easily and is made of a material that won’t burn
- **If you use electronic cigarettes, only use the approved charger**
- **Fit smoke alarms to every level of your home and test the batteries weekly**

Iain Harrison, Group Manager for Prevention at RBFRS, said: “It’s a shocking statistic but every six days someone dies from a fire caused by cigarettes or other smoking materials. If you’re a smoker, don’t let it happen to you or your loved ones. Always ‘put it out, right out’, especially before you go to bed or if you’ve been drinking - and never smoke in bed.

“You can also protect yourself and your family by fitting working smoke alarms to every level of your home and testing the batteries every week.”

ENDS.

¹ Fire Kills