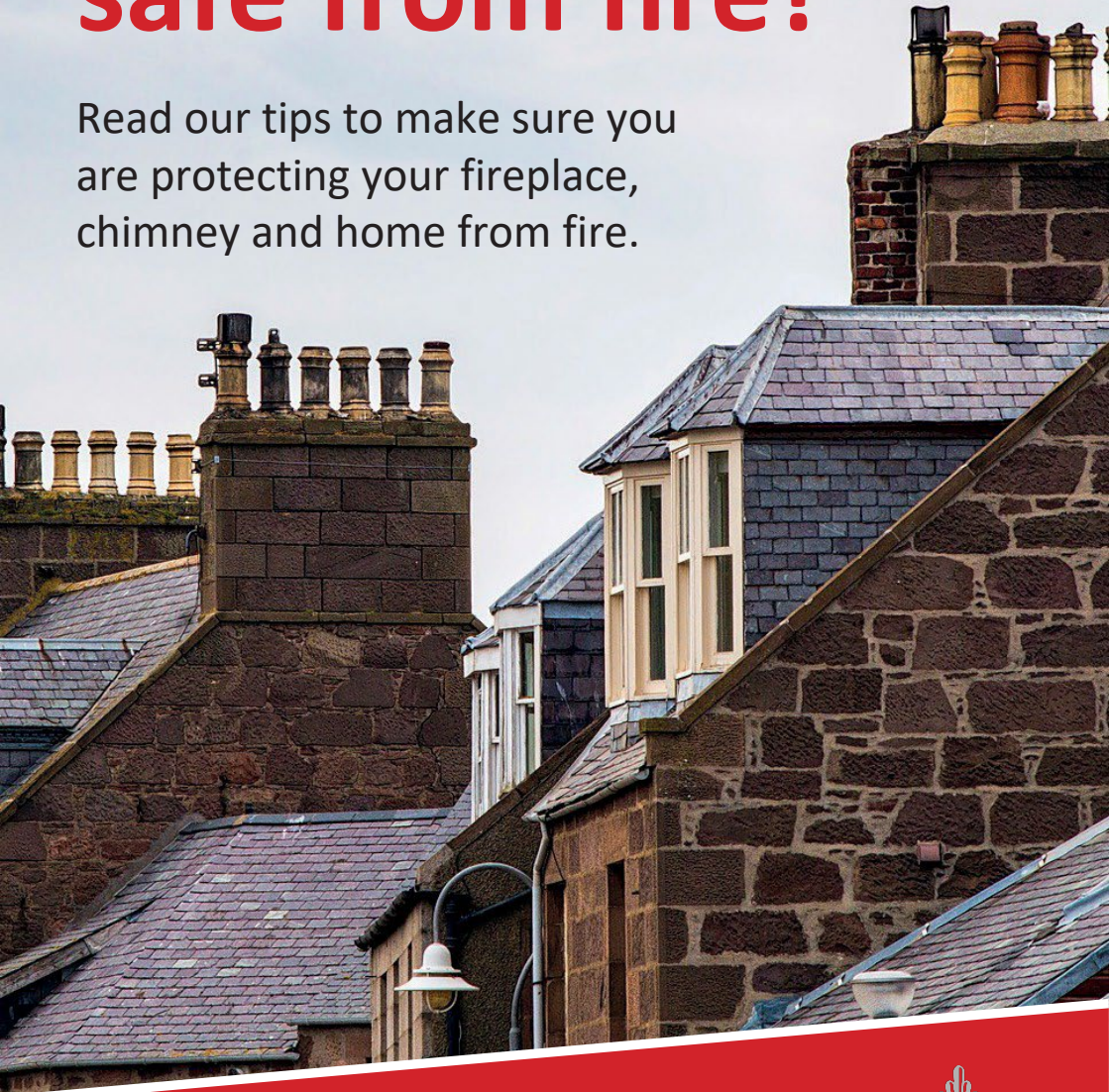


# Is your chimney safe from fire?

Read our tips to make sure you are protecting your fireplace, chimney and home from fire.



[www.northantsfire.gov.uk](http://www.northantsfire.gov.uk)



## How do you know if your chimney has caught fire?

- Loud roaring noise, caused by large amounts of air being drawn through the opening of the burner or fireplace
- Sparks and flames may be seen coming from the top of the chimney
- Smoke or a burning smell may be noticed in adjoining rooms or the loft space
- Chimney breast or flue heating up in the same room, or other rooms they pass through
- Flames may be seen through any tiny cracks where an outlet or connector attaches a flue to a stove
- The outlet or connector could vibrate, shimmer or glow



## What should you do if there is a fire in your chimney?

- Chimney fires should not be underestimated and can result in devastating house fires. Ring 999. Get out and stay out
- If you have the opportunity and it is safe to do so, shut all air vents and flue dampers to reduce the fire's oxygen supply
- Move flammable materials like furniture away from the fireplace and hot areas of the chimney breast in other areas of the house
- If you have a stove, don't pour water on it

# Top tips for avoiding chimney fires:

- Keep chimneys, flues and appliances clean and well maintained
- Make sure you always use a fire guard to protect against flying sparks from hot embers in open fires
- Ensure the fire is extinguished before going to bed or leaving the house
- Never interrupt the air supply by blocking air vents or air bricks
- Avoid slumbering an appliance (unless it has been tested as safe to do so). Slumber mode is when an appliance is purposely set at a low or minimum output
- Use the appropriate fuel for your appliance, check your appliance instructions
- Make sure there are smoke alarms installed on every level of your home. Test them monthly



## How often should you have your chimney swept?

Chimneys should be swept according to the type of fuel being used:

### Smokeless Fuels

at least **once**  
per year

### Bituminous coal

at least **twice**  
per year

### Wood

**quarterly**  
when in use

### Oil

**once**  
per year

### Gas

**once**  
per year\*

For more details and information on sourcing a chimney sweep, see: [www.hetas.co.uk](http://www.hetas.co.uk)

*\* remember to check the Gas Safe register*

## A warning about carbon monoxide:

- Carbon monoxide (CO) gas is poisonous and can kill. Heating or cooking appliances which use coal, smokeless fuels, oil and gas can result in CO poisoning if they aren't installed or maintained properly, or if they are not used correctly
- Symptoms include tiredness, drowsiness, dizziness, chest pains, nausea and flu like symptoms
- Make sure your appliance is properly installed by competent engineers
- Make sure chimneys are swept and flues inspected
- Fit carbon monoxide detectors
- Make sure ventilation is good

If you experience any of these symptoms and could have been exposed to carbon monoxide, seek medical advice immediately.



Headaches



Nausea



Breathlessness



Dizziness



Collapse



Loss of  
consciousness

## Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

✉ [enquiries@northantsfire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northantsfire.gov.uk)

💻 [www.northantsfire.gov.uk](http://www.northantsfire.gov.uk)

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