

Valentine's day message from firefighters



Firefighters have urged the public to make sure they don't risk tragedy if they plan to turn up the heat on Valentine's Day.

With people throughout Scotland set to enjoy a romantic evening with someone special, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is reminding everyone how they can prevent distraction leading to disaster.

Assistant Chief Officer Lewis Ramsay, the SFRS director of prevention and protection, said: "Many people will be marking Valentine's Day with a romantic meal at home so it's important that they aren't leaving themselves and their loved ones at needless risk from fire.

"Kitchens are the most common starting point of house fires and someone getting distracted while they're cooking is a very common cause.

"It only takes a moment for a fire to start and if you're not concentrating then cooking even the simplest meal can lead to a serious incident.

"The chance of a fire happening dramatically increases if a person tries to cook while they're under the influence of alcohol – we all need to accept these things just don't mix."

People should never walk away from a cooker while the grill or hob is on.

As householders look to set a romantic atmosphere SFRS is also making clear that even the small flame from a candle can lead to a home, or lives, being lost to fire.

ACO Ramsay added: "Candles are very popular decorations but they're also a significant fire risk and anyone using them needs to make sure they do so safely.

"It's vital lit candles aren't left unattended or placed where they could be accidentally knocked over or set fire to things like furniture, curtains or clothing.

"The fact is fires tend to start when our attention stops. Understanding the hazards and choosing to take a few very easy steps to address them really does save lives."

Where fires do start, early warning is crucial if people are to get to safety, with working smoke alarms known to save lives, prevent injuries and minimize damage to property.

Householders can also install heat alarms in kitchens as these devices will detect a fire early without being activated by smoke produced from cooking.