

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service backs No Smoking Day



Smoking is the most common cause of fires where someone is killed and Scotland's firefighters are throwing their weight behind No Smoking Day.

Thirty-one people died in house fires in Scotland during 2014/15 and smoking materials were identified as the cause of more than half of preventable fire deaths.

Around a fifth of adults still smoke and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) wants them to know that quitting would reduce the risk of a house fire claiming their life or the life of someone close to them.

Studies show two-thirds of smokers want to give up and Wednesday 9 March – designated as national No Smoking Day – will see many decide to stop.

Assistant Chief Officer Robert Scott, the SFRS director of prevention and protection, said: "We all know that smoking seriously affects your health and your wealth, but many people are unaware it is the main cause of deaths through fire in the home.

"The simple fact is that deciding to quit smoking will make it less likely you and others in your home will be injured or killed in a fire.

"That's why we're happy to add our voice to those of our partners in the British Heart Foundation and the NHS and inspire anyone who still smokes to quit for good."

Now in its 33rd year, the annual No Smoking Day campaign is supported by health bodies and charities throughout the UK

that share the goal of helping people who want to stop smoking.

Information and support to help smokers quit is available from Scotland's 14 regional NHS boards or from the British Heart Foundation at www.nosmokingday.org.uk.

Where people do smoke SFRS can help them reduce the risk of a fire starting and raise the chance of everyone escaping unhurt if one does happen.

The key advice is never to smoke in bed or even while tired and sitting in a chair, as falling asleep with a cigarette could all-too-easily result in a tragedy.

Firefighters throughout Scotland regularly provide householders with specialist advice and support through free home fire safety visits, but they need the public's help to make sure the popular service reaches vulnerable people.

As part of a visit crews also make sure a home has adequate fire detection in place and will even provide and install free smoke alarms where the life-saving devices are needed.

Free home fire safety visits are available by calling 0800 073 1999, texting 'FIRE' to 80800 or filling in a form at www.firescotland.gov.uk.