

Edinburgh Firefighters tackle 128 deliberate fires in two month period



Firefighters were called to tackle more than 1,800 deliberate fires across Scotland in the space of just two months, latest figures reveal.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service data shows how emergency service crews dealt with a shocking 1,824 needless blazes between March and April 2018.

The deliberate fire calls included 319 in the city of Glasgow, 128 in Edinburgh – and hundreds more in respective counties across the country.

This “unacceptable” behaviour is placing lives at risk and will not tolerated, warned SFRS Deputy Chief Officer David McGown.

DCO McGown said: “Make no mistake – fire can cause injury and death, it can be devastating to properties, businesses and the environment.

“The fact that our firefighters are called to thousands of deliberately set fires each year is completely unacceptable.

“Firefighters exist to protect their communities – yet they are still being put at risk by a small minority of people who continue to deliberately set fires.

“Deliberate fires are not only reckless and dangerous, but can also divert SFRS resources away from genuine emergencies where people require our help.”

DCO McGown spoke out ahead of the #StampItOut Spring safety

campaign to warn how the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will do everything in its power to help Police Scotland trace those risking the safety of communities. He added: "Let me be very clear – we operate a strict zero tolerance approach to deliberate fire raising. "This reckless and selfish behavior will not be tolerated, and we will continue to work very closely with our police and local authority partners to provide evidence that will ensure those responsible are identified and held to account."

The 1,800+ deliberate fires involved building and vehicle fires, and also incidents involving outdoor areas such as fields, refuse, and countryside.

This is a reduction of 34 per cent on the 2,782 deliberate fire calls that SFRS crews were mobilised to between the same period in 2017.

DCO McGown added: "It absolutely goes without saying that we prefer to prevent fires – not fight fires.

"As a result, our firefighters work extremely hard to engage with the public and promote safety messages, and parents and carers can also help by making sure that children and young people are aware of the risks.

"It's pleasing to note this reduction – but we will not be complacent, and will always look at how we can continue to drive down deliberate fires."

He added: "I would also urge the public to continue to support their firefighters by reporting any fire related anti-social behaviour because there are always people out there in need of our assistance at genuine emergencies – and every second counts."

The free and confidential Crimestoppers helpline can also be contacted on 0800 555 111 or through their website at www.crimestoppers-uk.org