

Circular number	48/2007	Date issued	19 October 2007
This circular is	For information	No Response Required	
This circular is	Not relevant to the National Framework		
Status			

Community Fire Safety Toolbox - Updated and Revised

Issued by:

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Addressed to:

The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority
The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer

Please forward to:

Summary

The Community Fire Safety "Toolbox" of resources, guidance, good practice and links to relevant wider disciplines was produced and issued to all fire and rescue services in 2000. This fire service circular announces that the "Toolbox" has been updated and revised; the material is available now electronically to users on a new re-designed and re-structured Communities & Local Government website.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 With the move towards prevention comes the requirement for an effective knowledge network and resource bank for community fire safety work. The Community Fire Safety Toolbox produced in 2000 has fulfilled this function, providing a practical resource designed to support the Fire and Rescue Service in its planning and delivery of effective fire prevention strategies.
- 1.2 The Toolbox functions as a key means of disseminating community fire safety messages to fire and rescue services, from Chief Fire Officer to firefighter, and including non-uniformed staff such as community advocates and support workers. The content is also of relevance to other partnership agencies. The Toolbox was designed as a practical guide to the broad range of communications and community-based activities needed by the Fire and Rescue Authority as it works to reduce fire and other safety risks. With the increasing emphasis on prevention as a result of fire legislation, the National Framework and local Integrated Risk Management Plans, it is essential that there is a body of consistent and authoritative advice and programmes which can be used and adapted in order to take forward local fire risk strategies.
- 1.3 The original hard copy version of the Toolbox was produced in order to ensure maximum coverage and availability of the material for all levels of the Fire and Rescue Authority from headquarters to individual watches and fire stations where online access was limited or not possible. In 2001, an online version of the CFS Toolbox was produced, available from the NCFSC website.
- 1.4 This circular announces that Communities & Local Government, in consultation with fire and rescue service community fire safety practitioners, CFOA, and other Government Departments, has reviewed and updated the Toolbox to reflect recent policy and good practice developments. As part of the review, we looked at examples of what works at a local level in preventing fire-related deaths and injuries in the home and reducing the risk and incidence of fire. The revised and updated Toolbox is now available to users on the newly re-designed and re-structured Communities & Local Government website: www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firesafety/prevention/firesafetytoolbox/
- 1.5 The overall aim of the new Toolbox is to be easy to use and informative, providing enough detail to give a good understanding of the background issues. It will enable Fire and Rescue Authorities to engage more effectively with local communities and to develop appropriate fire prevention communication strategies. It is a practical guide to communications for the Fire and Rescue Authorities offering tips and case study scenarios. It is not prescriptive as current practice varies greatly from area to area.
- 1.6 Communities & Local Government is responsible only for fire and fire safety issues. However, there are many other safety issues which Fire and Rescue Authorities have an interest in. Safety issues such as road safety (DfT), water safety awareness (DeFRA), fireworks safety (Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) or Home Office if being used as a weapon or ASB), carbon monoxide (HSE), consumer safety (BERR), slips, trips and falls (DH) are the responsibility of the identified Government departments. The CFS Toolbox therefore focuses on fire safety advice and guidance. It does however signpost the reader to where they can get further information on non-fire safety matters within Government.

