

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service



**Information about
Hoarding**

Three Step Fire Escape Plan

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service offer free home fire safety visits. We can offer you advice about reducing the risk of fire.

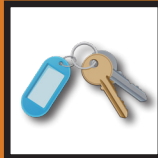
1

If you hear the smoke alarm or see fire



2

Go outside



3

Call 999 ask for the fire Service do not go back in



For your FREE visit please contact:
0345 223 4221

Email: csenquiries@ddf.fire.gov.uk

Please leave your post code and contact number including area code.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Guidance

Hoarding is a condition where a person has difficulty discarding personal possessions. These possessions fill the home and prevent the use of space.

Living space becomes cluttered and unusable. Hoarding often brings emotional distress and impacts upon general health and wellbeing.

Some signs of hoarding behaviours could be...

- Difficulty moving around your home
- Can't reach exit doors without tripping



Why hoarding increases Fire Risks and other dangers...

- Cooking is unsafe if flammable items are close to the oven or hob
- Open flames from smoking materials or candles with excess clutter around them are very dangerous
- Blocked walkways and exit routes may hinder an escape from a fire
- Increased risk of tripping hazards
- Heating sources may be too close to material which could ignite and burn
- Clutter may prevent access to areas to carry out repairs
- Clutter may increase the weight upon electrical items causing wires to become worn
- Do not store gas cylinders in your home. If you have a medical need for gas cylinders, for example you require oxygen, they should be kept upright and outdoors where possible.



How Hoarding Impacts upon Emergency Services...

- Puts the emergency responders at risk
- Responders cannot move quickly through a home filled with clutter
- Responders may become trapped in a home when the exits are blocked



**Test your
smoke alarm
weekly**

- Responders may suffer injuries due to falling objects
- Clutter makes the search and rescue of people and pets more difficult
- The weight of stored items, especially if water is added, can lead to building collapse



For more advice and information please visit:

HoardingUK

email: info@hoardinguk.org

tel: 020 3239 1600

MIND

www.mind.org.uk

Help for Hoarders

www.helpforhoarders.co.uk

HOARDING Disorders UK

<https://hoardingdisordersuk.org>

Children of Hoarders

www.childrenofhoarders.com

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service