

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Rare house fire trend sparks coil warning

Thursday, 14 January 2021

An unusual house fire trend has prompted the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) to warn the public to be cautious when using mosquito coils at home this summer.

In November, MFS firefighters battled two house fires at Colonel Light Gardens and Valley View involving mosquito coils in use on timber decking that left a combined \$1 million damage bill.

MFS Community Engagement Officer, Phil Evans said it's a rare house fire trend that MFS Fire Cause Investigators don't recall seeing in the past decade.

"We were surprised to find two fires of this nature occurring within a week. Both incidents involved people having to suddenly evacuate their homes in the middle of the night.

"With summer holidays in full swing and families socialising outdoors, the MFS is giving a timely reminder about the safe use of mosquito coils," MFS Community Engagement Officer Evans said.

The MFS said there are several safety tips to follow when using mosquito coils, with proper extinguishment - before vacating an area - being very important.

"Never leave mosquito coils burning unattended, and always place them in a sturdy metal or ceramic dish with a mesh cover while in use. Be mindful that strong breezes can blow embers away or coils over."

"Extinguish coils by carefully breaking the smouldering end off the coil and immersing it in water, storing it away from the home to completely cool," MFS Community Engagement Officer Evans said.

The MFS reminds the public:

- Mosquito coils should only ever be used by adults
- Make sure mosquito coils are placed in a sturdy metal or ceramic dish with a mesh cover that doesn't allow embers to drop or blow onto flammable items or surfaces
- Never leave mosquito coils burning unattended and extinguish them before going to sleep
- Keep the immediate area around a mosquito coil clear of all flammable items such as cushions, table-cloths, furniture, surfaces or decking
- Keep burning mosquito coils away from flammable liquids
- Do not use mosquito coils where they can be knocked over by children or pets, or where strong breezes can blow coils over or spread embers
- **Extinguish** mosquito coils by carefully breaking the smouldering end off, immersing it in water and storing it away from the home to completely cool.

The MFS urges householders to combine the above safety tips with interconnected [smoke alarms](#) that are less than 10 years old and a [Home Fire Escape Plan](#).

For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

Members of the public should call the MFS Community Education Department on (08) 8204 3611 during business hours for further information. Country callers 1300 737 637.

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