

Fire Policy Practice Guidance Note		
The Use of Small Appliance Cooking Equipment other than in Kitchen Areas V04		
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KEY POINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of fires and unwanted fire signals occur in areas/rooms where cooking or heating of food takes place. • Areas of concern are those that are not dedicated kitchen areas such as staff areas, service user rooms etc. • Appropriate legislation includes the Provision and Use of Equipment at Work regulations 1998, the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. • This practice guidance note is appropriate to all CNTW Group staff

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Fire Practice Guidance Notes form part of the CNTW Group's approach to managing health and safety and it is expected that staff will follow the guidance contained within them unless there is a compelling reason to deviate from it. Such reasons should be documented whenever the circumstance occurs and notified to the Head of Estates so that modifications to future editions can be made if necessary.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Small appliance catering / cooking equipment used within Cumbria Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, (the Trust) should be done so within designated areas using equipment appropriate for the purpose it is being used.
- 1.2 The purpose of this practice guidance note (PGN) is to set out specific guidelines to enable the Trust to be assured that fire safety with regards to this equipment is adhered to. It is also an integral part the Trusts approach to the safety and well being of all employees and other relevant persons.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This PGN together with any associated procedures and guidance notes shall be observed by all employees of the Trust and is applicable to responsible persons and their nominated deputies.

3 Statement

- 3.1 The Trust are committed to effective management and control of fire safety in order to reduce the risks to patients, staff, visitors and members of the public.
- 3.2 The Fire Safety Advisors will actively assist all persons to ensure they are competent in their role with regards to fire safety measures.

4 Equipment Used

- 4.1 Part of the responsible person's role will be ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all staff receive the appropriate instructions in the safe use of this type of equipment. It may seem trivial to address the use of such equipment as they are regarded as every-day items of use, but fire related incidents still occur due to misuse or neglect. Catering equipment in use should be approved items by Facilities and purchased through the organisation, not brought into the premises by staff/service users. The following points cover the main small appliances in use:

Electric Bread Toasters

- There are numerous types of toaster on the market and the quality of them has increased greatly over the last few years
- Toasters should only be used if they have a factory-fitted plug attached. This is a legal requirement today. Any old equipment not conforming to this requirement should be replaced
- The vast majority of incidents involving electric toasters concern unwanted fire signals (false alarms) and the majority of them could be avoided. Most of the time negligence is the reason and apart from unnecessary disruption to wards, villas and other work places it is also a strain on the resources of the fire service who may well be required at a more serious emergency calls whilst attending these incidents.

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Electric Toasters – useful information:

- Use only in dedicated cooking areas such as beverage rooms. Toasters must not be used in offices or sleeping accommodation.
- Close any door to prevent smoke/fumes leaving the room and actuating adjacent fire detectors
- Switch on ventilation fans and open windows
- Check the controls to ensure correct setting prior to use
- Always remain with the toaster while it is in use
- If you need to leave the toaster always turn off the power and remove the bread
- On a daily basis e.g the start of a day or shift, empty the residue tray and ensure the toaster is clean.
- Take care when positioning the toaster. Ensure it is not under cupboards, tables or next to combustible materials.

Electric Kettles

- Electric kettles should also be purchased with a moulded plug attached. Virtually all electric kettles today have cut-off facilities to turn off the power once the water is boiled. If this is not the case then the kettle must not be left unattended during use. Kettles tend to `burn out` as they get older and the internal parts degrade over time. Older kettles, if allowed to boil dry, will often blow the plug fuse and cause overheating at the plug socket. This is very dangerous and could result in a fire situation. Always replace old with new, never attempt to get an old electric kettle repaired.

Microwave Ovens

- As with electric toasters, microwave ovens should only be accepted if they are in good condition, have come from a reputable source or are under manufacturer's warranty
- Microwave ovens are susceptible to faults occurring and will readily overheat if old, faulty or neglected. Due to the nature of their components, fires resulting from microwave ovens have caused serious damage in the past and they need to be monitored all the time
- Microwave Ovens - useful information:
- Use only in dedicated cooking areas such as beverage rooms. If a microwave oven is required to be used in any other area, contact a Fire Safety Advisor first for advice

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- Close room doors to prevent smoke/fumes escaping and actuating fire detectors
- Ventilate the area if possible
- When positioning, ensure there is sufficient air flow around, over and under the unit
- Do not block the ovens air vents or place articles on top of the oven. This may cause the unit to overheat
- Ensure containers used in the oven are suitable. Never attempt to cook in metal containers or foil, only use microwaveable containers. Never use margarine or yoghurt cartons as they will easily melt with the heat
- Ensure the controls are correctly set before use
- Always refer to manufacturer's instructions prior to use.



Damage caused by fires involving electric toasters and microwave ovens

5 Testing

- 5.1 The equipment will need to be regularly tested to ensure that it still functions correctly and is safe to use. This may involve a portable appliance test (PAT) which is carried out by the Estates department annually or at a different frequency if required. This is a legal requirement under the Electricity at Work regulations 1989 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. If you have any doubts as to the safety of any item of electrical equipment in use in your workplace contact the NTW Solutions Estates department or Fire Safety Advisor as soon as possible.

6 Purchasing Equipment

- 6.1 Catering equipment should always be purchased through NTW Solutions Limited. All items must have the relevant British and EU standard of safety and must always

be PAT tested by Estates **before** use even if new and under manufacturer's warranty.

7 Summary

- 7.1 At present 25% of all fire related incidents nationwide, in domestic premises as well as workplaces, are caused by faulty or misused electrical appliances. It is vital that care is taken when using such equipment and the equipment is used only in designated areas by competent persons particularly in mental health areas of the Trust.

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