

# The Hidden Dangers of Hoarding: 16,000 Homes in England Deemed Fire Risks Due to Clutter

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LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, April 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A recent

survey conducted under the Freedom of Information Act revealed that over 16,000 homes in England are at a high risk of catching fire due to hoarding. Shockingly, this number could be even higher, as 14 fire brigades did not respond with data. The true number of hoarder homes could be as high as 20,000.

Sanitary products, newspapers, and gas cylinders are just a few examples of items that clutter these hoarder homes. The problem is widespread, with 6,333 such homes in Merseyside and 1,675 in Greater London alone.

Hoarder homes pose a significant danger not just to the occupants but also to the community at large. Between 25 to 30 percent of fire deaths in the UK are related to hoarding, according to the charity [HoardingUK](#).

One fire chief suggested pre-emptively fitting sprinklers into hoarder homes to save lives. While this is a feasible solution, it is essential to address the root cause of hoarding.

Hoarding is a complex mental health disorder that requires a delicate approach. It is crucial to understand that hoarders cannot help themselves and that hoarding goes beyond collecting items. It is a disorder that affects their everyday life and can lead to isolation, financial ruin, and in some cases, even death.

It is necessary to provide hoarders with the support they need to overcome their disorder. HoardingUK provides support and advice to individuals struggling with hoarding and their families. They also offer training to professionals who want to help hoarders.

The MailOnline conducted a Freedom of Information survey of all 45 fire brigades in England.

However, only 31 of them responded to the survey, which means that the actual number of hoarder houses flagged as potential fire risks could be much higher, possibly reaching 20,000.

According to Mark Andrews, Assistant Chief Fire Officer at East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, domestic sprinkler systems could be fitted into houses with excess hoarding to significantly reduce the risks to both occupants and firefighters. In a video published by the Chief Fire Officers Association, he highlighted that domestic sprinklers can reduce the risks posed by difficult firefighting circumstances.

It is essential that fire brigades and partner agencies work collaboratively to identify and support hoarders, reduce the risk of fire in their homes, and ensure the safety of the wider community. The fitting of domestic sprinkler systems is one potential solution that could be implemented to help reduce the risk of fire in hoarder homes.

The consequences of excessive hoarding can be tragic, as demonstrated in the [case of Robert and Clare Cain](#) from Merseyside. The couple died in a fire at their home in October 2016 due to the excessive hoarding that had trapped them inside the property.

Despite living in terrible conditions on Mather Avenue, Allerton, Robert and Clare were unable to escape when the blaze broke out. The fire also left their next-door neighbours homeless. The couple had been seen returning to their house with bags and bags of items for over 10 years, according to their neighbour Edna Sexton, who described the hoarding as getting out of control.

At an inquest into the couple's death, it was revealed that it took 26 fire engines, nine specialist vehicles, three aerial appliances, an urban search and rescue appliance, and two fire and rescue dogs, and one police dog to excavate the home which was later demolished. The bodies of the couple were found two days later in the front room of their home where they lived.

Konstantin Tsubarenko, managing director of Abacus House Clearance, who operates a company that specialises in [hoarder clearances](#) throughout the UK said: This tragedy highlights the dangers of hoarding and the importance of addressing the issue before it becomes a threat to the safety of those living in the property and the wider community. It is crucial that hoarders receive the support they need to address their hoarding tendencies and reduce the risk of fire in their homes.”

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