

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 London Commissioner
The Chief Fire Officer**

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Title: [Failure of cable fixing in fires](#)

This bulletin has been issued by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser to bring to the attention of all Chief Fire Officers the potential hazard caused by the failure of cable fixings in a fire which may expose firefighters to significant risk during firefighting operations.

This hazard may also affect the means of escape of occupants especially through common corridors of residential flats during the early stage of a fire.

Failure of cable fixing in fires

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser has been made aware of the potential hazard caused by the failure of cable fixings in a fire which may expose firefighters to significant risk during firefighting operations.
- 1.2 This hazard may also affect the means of escape of occupants especially through common corridors of residential flats during the early stage of a fire.
- 1.3 This bulletin has been issued by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser to bring to the attention of all Chief Fire Officers information on this risk.

2. Background

- 2.1 Cables such as those used for power, telecommunications and security devices are often retrospectively fitted to buildings. This is particularly common in shared areas such as stairwells and corridors of purpose built residential flats.
- 2.2 These cables are often installed in surface-mounted plastic trunking. The findings from a number of fire investigations has identified that this type of trunking can become deformed at relatively low temperatures, which commonly occur in fire gasses flowing into common corridors during the early stages of a fire, leaving cables unsecured.
- 2.3 The unsecured cables may drop from the trunking and hang down creating a potential hazard to means of escape and the risk of entrapment and electrocution for occupants and firefighters.

3. Advice

- 3.1 Fire and Rescue Services are advised to bring this hazard to the attention of all operational and fire protection staff and include it in their operational risk management arrangements. This should also include identification such hazards when operational crews carry out 7(2)(d) operational risk visits or fire protection activity.
- 3.2 The risks associated with this hazard will be incorporated into the Generic Risk Assessment for Buildings and in future operational guidance on Fires in the Built Environment which is currently in development and is planned to be published later this year.
- 3.3 The Fire and Rescue Service may wish to be aware Local Government Improvement and Development are leading the sector in the development of fire safety guidance for the landlords, risk assessors and enforcing authorities in purpose built blocks of flats, and this is expected to be available in the summer.

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