

Dear colleagues

Following the tragic house fire in Sheffield where 5 people lost their lives, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue in conjunction with the Health & Safety Executive are reporting the dangers of using illegal chargers (please see links below).

<http://www.syfire.gov.uk/3452.asp>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-27515446>

<http://www.syfire.gov.uk/3399.asp>

The use of illegal or incompatible chargers within the home or at work can cause serious fires and endanger life. Cheap and unbranded chargers are not constructed to the required standards and testing has proved that when used, they can frequently overheat or explode.

Staff must ensure that all charging units and associated cables for use with University equipment are purchased via the University's approved suppliers following departmental procedures.

Students purchasing a charging unit should make sure that they are compatible to the device they are using and comply with current standards.

As the purchase of such unsuitable items is on the increase vigilance by staff throughout the University will reduce the increased fire risk through inappropriate use of these items.

Please could you ensure that this information is communicated throughout your department.

Below are tips to prevent fires from charging units which include: -

- charge the device on a flat, solid and stable surface, such as a kitchen worktop
- keep the device away from flammable or combustible materials when charging
- never leave the device on a bed or close to soft furnishings, or in a cluttered space
- don't exceed the recommended charging time, or leave unattended for any significant length of time - eg overnight while you're asleep, or if you go out.
- don't buy cheap, unbranded chargers and always follow the manufacturer's instructions

Kind regards

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Health & Safety
