



## Freedom of Information Request FOI 22 71

### Emollients, serious injuries and fatalities

#### Query and response:

1. How many fire deaths or serious incidents have you reported since 2015 that have involved/been linked with emollient products? *I.e. skin care products, lotions, creams, ointments, gels, sprays, non-paraffin (wheatgerm, nut oil or lanolin based) and paraffin based.*

**Two fire deaths since 2015 have been linked to emollient products.**

2. Please give details you can on earlier records from 2000/2001 to 2014/2015 and any further information.

**One fire death in 2012 was linked to emollient products.**

3. What was the age range of the victim/s in each year recorded in Q1 (and others included in the response to Q2 if possible) as: Under 1, 1-5, 6-10, 11-16, 17-24, 25-39, 40-54, 55-64, 65-79, 80 and over or unspecified. *I.e. 2017/2018: 2 fatalities - 55-64 and 65-79*

**The age ranges for the two individuals referred to in the first question were 65-79 and >80.**

**This information is not held for the victim of the fire death in 2012.**

4. For each fatality/serious incident recorded in each year describe:
  - a. the type of dwelling (private home or care home etc.)
  - b. source of ignition
  - c. Item first ignited
  - d. location of start of fire

**Both incidents occurred in private homes, with the source of ignition being smoking materials and the item first ignited being clothing on person.**

5. For each fatality/serious incident recorded in each year please describe more background

*i.e. did the victim have a care package, noted as vulnerable, lived alone, a smoker or previously had a safety visit from FRS*

**Both individuals lived alone and were receiving live-in care. Both were smokers. Neither had had a home safety visit, although one individual had been offered but had refused a visit.**

6. For each fatality/serious incident recorded in each year how many were entered onto the MHRA Yellow Card Scheme? *Please provide a figure for each year*

**This information is not held.**

7. What evidence do you use to establish if an emollient product has contributed/linked to the development of a fire leading to a serious incident or fatal fire



**The Fire Investigation process operates on a tiered approach with a Tier 2 trained investigating officer assigned where there is any concern for serious injury or fatality as a result of a fire.**

**The Fire Investigation process is based upon the “Scientific Method” to establish possible causes of a fire and then to interpret all available evidence in order to discount those which are less likely, whereby a most likely cause can be determined. The presence of “accelerants” or other substances which may have contributed to fire growth rate or size e.g. emollient creams, would be identified where possible from physical evidence on scene, or from other sources of information which may lead the investigator to conclude that they may have been present (e.g. medical notes, witness testimony from relatives or carers or the casualty themselves, where available). The potential effect from emollient creams is documented in the relevant literature. The exact contribution of emollient cream or other such product to the fire growth, or their impact on the severity of fire injury, are generally outside the scope of the fire investigator but may form part of the evidence provided to the HM Coroner as part of the medical or post-mortem information.**

**Information/Detail accurate on the date provided: 30, August 2022**