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**METROPOLITAN
FIRE
SERVICE**
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

MIS-USE OF MICROWAVE OVENS

Recent information promoting the use of microwave ovens to sterilise kitchen sponges has prompted a warning from the SA Metropolitan Fire Service about the mis-use of microwave ovens.

“Domestic microwave ovens are not designed to be used as sterilising units,” said District Officer Allan Foster from the SA Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS). “With kitchen sponges there are too many variables in the equation – how wet the sponge is, the microwave oven power and how long the sponge is in the oven – so the risk of starting a fire or badly burning yourself extracting the sponge is very high.”

The manufacturers of domestic microwave ovens specifically warn against using them for anything other than their intended use - heating and cooking food.

“The MFS attends house fires started by microwave ovens regularly. We don’t want to see that number increase,” said District Officer Foster.

“When you weigh up the costs of cleaning kitchen sponges by other methods compared to the cost of a house fire, or a severe burn injury, then it’s just not worth running the risk of using the microwave for this purpose,” he said.

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