



Tasmania Fire Service

Home Fire Safety

FACT SHEET

Wheat filled heat pack

Wheat filled heat packs (wheat bags or wheat packs) can help pain, but they also have the potential to cause burns and fire if improperly used. Tasmania Fire Service Firefighters have responded to numerous house fires that have occurred due to wheat bags overheating in microwave ovens or wheat bags being used to warm bedding materials.



What you need to know

- Ensure the wheat bag you purchase comes with instructions and follow them carefully, especially when heating. Ensure the timer on the microwave oven is correctly set when heating your wheat bag. Accidentally setting 30 minutes instead of 3 minutes is easy to do and has caused fatal fires.
- Only use wheat bags for direct application to body aches and pains. Wheat bags can ignite, and are not designed for warming beds.
- Regularly check your wheat bag for signs of wear and tear or scorching. With age the wheat dries out and can catch fire.
- If your wheat bag begins to smoulder or catches fire ring Triple Zero immediately.
- Fragrant oils added to the wheat bag may increase the fire risk.

Remember

- **Don't** overheat a wheat bag by placing in the microwave longer than specified by the manufacturer.
- **Don't** leave the wheat bag unsupervised in the microwave.
- **Don't** let anyone, particularly children or the elderly sleep with a wheat bag.
- **Don't** use the wheat bag to warm your bed up, as it may spontaneously ignite.
- **Don't** reheat the wheat bag before it has properly cooled.
- **A wheat bag should be cooled down on a non-combustible surface before storing**

