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Amazon removes balcony barbecues from sale over fire risk fears

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Retail giant Amazon has removed a number of barbecues specifically designed for use on balconies from sale over serious safety concerns highlighted by London Fire Brigade.

The Brigade's Deputy Commissioner Richard Mills wrote to the firm and other companies that stock or manufacture the products last month, stating that they are a serious concern with regards to public safety. He said: "We welcome the prompt and crucial action taken by both Menkind and Amazon in response to the concerns we raised. We advise that people never barbecue on their balconies as balcony fires can be devastating.

"Products designed specifically for people to barbecue on their balconies are incredibly irresponsible, and we are now asking customers to take action immediately and not to ignore the warning. The fact these companies took such swift action to take these products off the shelves shows what a very real risk they are. However, we remain deeply concerned that other companies did not respond to my letter and that these products may still be available for sale and customers are unaware of the dangers of using them."

An Amazon spokesperson said: "Safety is extremely important to Amazon. As soon as the London Fire Brigade raised concerns and new evidence about these particular products we took quick action, removed them from sale and contacted customers. We value the expertise of the London Fire Brigade and are committed to working closely with them and other relevant authorities on these matters. If customers ever have a concern about an item they've purchased, we encourage them to contact our Customer Service team directly so we can investigate and take appropriate action."

Firefighters have attended more than 600 balcony fires in London in the last three years, including one at a block of flats in Deptford in May 2020 which was caused by a barbecue being disposed of in a plastic bag.

Dozens of residents were evacuated from the building and a number of people were permanently displaced.

Dom Maree, Director