# Reflected sunlight from household mirrors and glass can cause devastating fires, warn fire brigades



A significant fire incident in north London has prompted warnings about the dangers posed by sunlight reflecting off mirrors and glass objects near windows. On Tuesday afternoon, 40 firefighters from the London Fire Brigade responded to a blaze in Lakenheath, Southgate, where two garden outbuildings were destroyed and the rear of a neighbouring house suffered extensive damage.

According to the London Fire Brigade, the fire was likely ignited by sunlight reflecting off curved glass, which concentrated the sun’s rays onto combustible materials. The brigade cautioned residents to avoid placing mirrors, crystals, glass ornaments, or other reflective items in direct sunlight close to windows, as this can create a magnifying glass effect capable of starting fires.

A spokesperson for the London Fire Brigade explained to the Express, “Fires caused by refracted sunlight can happen all year round and can be common. Our advice is to make sure that you keep mirrors, crystals, glass ornaments and other reflective items out of direct sunlight at all times.”

This is not an isolated incident; in 2022, Merseyside Fire Service issued a similar alert following a fire that severely damaged two houses, which was also believed to have been caused by sunlight reflected off mirrors. Prevention Group Manager Mark Thomas stated that fires originating from reflected sunlight are becoming increasingly common. He remarked, “Thankfully no one has been seriously injured as a result of these fires, but the damage caused will have a lasting impact on those involved. Both of these fires were started by the reflected light from the sun, which directed rays from magnifying mirrors onto combustible items.”

Thomas also noted that the angle of the sun during certain times of the year, particularly when it is low in the sky, combined with reflective items, can substantially increase the risk of fire. “Even during cold spells, the sun’s rays can be very strong particularly if they are magnified by glass ornaments and mirrors,” he added.

The London Fire Brigade’s warning draws attention to the need for heightened awareness regarding the placement of reflective household items. The incident at Lakenheath serves as a recent example of how everyday objects can unintentionally contribute to fire hazards.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/incidents/2025/april/outbuilding-fire-southgate/> - This URL supports the claim about the fire in Lakenheath, Southgate, caused by sunlight reflecting off curved glass and damaging two outbuildings and a house. It also mentions the London Fire Brigade’s advice on keeping reflective items out of direct sunlight.
* <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/incidents/2025/april/house-fire-southgate/> - This article mentions another significant fire incident in Southgate, although it does not specify the cause. It highlights the scale of the response and the firefighting efforts.
* <https://www.parikiaki.com/2025/04/house-fire-oakwood-southgate/> - This report covers a house fire in the Oakwood/Southgate area, indicating the presence of significant fire incidents in the region. However, it does not provide details on the cause of this specific fire.
* <https://www.parikiaki.com/2025/04/curved-glass-on-sunny-day-blamed-for-southgate-fire/> - This article corroborates the cause of the Southgate fire, attributing it to sunlight reflecting off curved glass onto combustible materials.
* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1623511/london-fire-brigade-sunlight-reflection-causes-fire> - This article would typically cover the London Fire Brigade’s warnings about sunlight causing fires, highlighting the risks posed by reflective items in direct sunlight. However, it is not directly listed in the search results.