

LONDON BURNS NIGHT AND DAY

London is on fire practically all the time; the N.F.S. was called to 10,406 fires last year - 28 a day, more than one an hour.

This is shown in a survey compiled for the Campaign against Fire Wastage; it takes no account of the many thousands of small outbreaks never reported to the N.F.S.

None of these fires was caused by enemy action; most were due to carelessness and negligence. The causes of 9,507 of them are known; 7,651 - about 80 per cent - were avoidable, and carelessness was definitely responsible for at least 45 per cent.

Thoughtlessly dropped cigarette ends and matches and similar carelessness caused more fires than anything else in 1943. The total was nearly 3,000.

But careless smoking was on the decrease in London by the end of the year. During the first quarter the figure was 620; during the second and third, the totals rose to 811 and 1,167; in the last three months the figure came right down to 373.

Of fires attended by the N.F.S. during the year, industrial outbreaks totalled 4,182 and domestic fires 6,224.

Defective flues caused 1,747 and children playing with fire were blamed for starting 630 fires. Other causes were sparks from railway engines, 629; electrical defects, 624; overheating of boilers and stoves, 336; embers from burning rubbish, 177; and spontaneous ignition, 145.