FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

▸ Follow the 5 key steps ▸ Fill in the checklist ▸ Assess your fire risk and plan fire safety

1 Fire hazards

Fire starts when heat (source of ignition) comes into contact with fuel (anything that burns), and oxygen (air).

You need to keep sources of ignition and fuel **apart**.

How could a fire start?
Think about heaters, lighting, naked flames, electrical equipment, hot processes such as welding or grinding, cigarettes, matches and anything else that gets very hot or causes sparks.

What could burn?
Packaging, rubbish and furniture could all burn, just like the more obvious fuels such as petrol, paint, varnish and white spirit. Also think about wood, paper, plastic, rubber and foam. Do the walls or ceilings have hardboard, chipboard, or polystyrene? Check outside, too.

- ☐ Have you found anything that could start a fire?
  Make a note of it.
  _____
- ☐ Have you found anything that could burn?
  Make a note of it.
  _____

2 People at risk

People at risk
Everyone is at risk if there is a fire. Think whether the risk is greater for some because of when or where they work, such as night staff, or because they're not familiar with the premises, such as visitors or customers. Children, the elderly or disabled people are especially vulnerable.

Have you identified?
- ☐ Who could be at risk?
- ☐ Who could be especially at risk?

Make a note of what you have found.
_____

3 Evaluate, and act

Evaluate
First, think about what you have found in steps 1 and 2: what are the risks of a fire starting, and what are the risks to people in the building and nearby?

Remove and reduce risk
How can you avoid accidental fires? Could a source of heat or sparks fall, be knocked or pushed into something that would burn? Could that happen the other way round?

Protect
Take action to protect your premises and people from fire.

- ☐ Have you assessed the risks of fire in your workplace?
- ☐ Have you assessed the risk to staff and visitors?
- ☐ Have you kept any source of fuel and heat/sparks apart?
  If someone wanted to start a fire deliberately, is there anything around they could use?
- ☐ Have you removed or secured any fuel an arsonist could use?
- ☐ Have you protected your premises from accidental fire or arson?

How can you make sure everyone is safe in case of fire?
- ☐ Will you know there is a fire?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to warn others?
- ☐ Who will make sure everyone gets out?
- ☐ Who will call the fire service?
- ☐ Could you put out a small fire quickly and stop it spreading?

How will everyone escape?
- ☐ Have you planned escape routes?
- ☐ Have you made sure people will be able to safely find their way out, even at night if necessary?
- ☐ Does all your safety equipment work?
- ☐ Will people know what to do and how to use equipment?

Make a note of what you have found.
_____

4 Record, plan and train

Record
Keep a record of any fire hazards and what you have done to reduce or remove them. If your premises are small, a record is a good idea. If you have five or more staff or have a licence then you must keep a record of what you have found and what you have done.

Plan
You must have a clear plan of how to prevent fire and how you will keep people safe in case of fire. If you share a building with others, you need to coordinate your plan with them.

Train
You need to make sure your staff know what to do in case of fire, and if necessary, are trained for their roles.

- ☐ Have you made a record of what you have found, and action you have taken?
- ☐ Have you planned what everyone will do if there is a fire?
- ☐ Have you discussed the plan with all staff?

Have you?
- ☐ Informed and trained people (practised a fire drill and recorded how it went)?
- ☐ Nominated staff to put in place your fire prevention measures, and trained them?
- ☐ Made sure everyone can fulfil their role?
- ☐ Informed temporary staff?
- ☐ Consulted others who share a building with you, and included them in your plan?

5 Review

Keep your risk assessment under regular review. Over time, the risks may change.

If you identify significant changes in risk or make any significant changes to your plan, you must tell others who share the premises and where appropriate re-train staff.

Have you?
- ☐ Made any changes to the building inside or out?
- ☐ Had a fire or near miss?
- ☐ Changed work practices?
- ☐ Begun to store chemicals or dangerous substances?
- ☐ Significantly changed your stock, or stock levels?
- ☐ Have you planned your next fire drill?

Completed the checklist? Do you need more information?

The checklist above can help you with the Fire Risk Assessment **but** you may need additional information especially if you have large or complex premises.

We have produced a series of guides for different business sectors. These guides will give you more information about how to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment, with specific advice for your type of premises. These guides are free to download at www.communities.gov.uk/fire

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