Preventing workplace fires

Protect yourself and your co-workers by keeping an eye out for the main risks and hazards.

Accidental fires

Most fires are accidental and could be prevented with routine checks and risk assessments.

Electrical risks

Offices are at particular risk of electrical fires due to the high concentration of computer equipment. Look out for:

- Damaged cables
- Cracked or discoloured power plugs
- Tangled cables or unwound extension leads
- Furniture on cables
- Overloaded adaptor.

Smoking risks

Smouldering cigarettes are very dangerous and still one of the biggest causes of fatal fires in the UK. You can:

- Install no-smoking signs at hazardous locations.
- Make sure smoking areas are away from flammable materials
- Arrange for safe disposal of cigarettes and matches.

Cooking risks

Your kitchen area at work is naturally a fire risk but there are simple steps you can take to control it:

- Keep surfaces clean and tidy
- Routinely remove oil and grease from appliances
- Never leave cooking unattended
- Check equipment for damage.

Natural fires

Sometimes fires can occur as a result of natural phenomena such as lightning, flooding, hurricanes and earthquakes. While these situations may seem unlikely, it's important that employers prepare by having:

- Clear escape routes
- Fire-resistant doors and walls
- Fire extinguishing equipment
- Fire alarms
- Emergency lighting
- Regular risk assessments
- Staff training.

Deliberate fires

Unfortunately, some fires are started deliberately. There are steps employers can take to minimise the opportunity for deliberate fires occurring:

- Store flammable waste appropriately
- Secure windows and doors at end of day
- Install security system
- Report suspicious people on property.
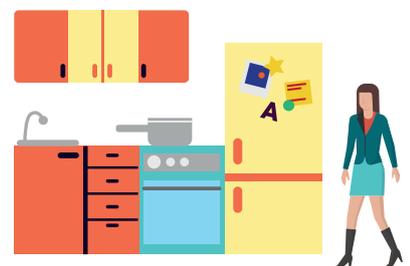
Good housekeeping will minimise the amount of combustible material stored in an office environment.

Need further help?

Fire safety awareness training   **Fire risk assessment**   **Online fire safety training**