

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFETY POLICY & ARRANGEMENTS



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Subject: Workplace Fire Precautions

Introduction

This document forms part of the National Ice Centre's organisational written safety policy arrangements.

Departments, services or teams may consider it appropriate to develop additional guidance and systems of work on specific work related activities.

Where proposals, additional guidance or changes to systems of work will have an impact on health, safety and welfare, this will be discussed and agreed at the Health & Safety Committee.

If you have any questions or require further information or support on the contents of this document, please contact the NIC Health & Safety Advisor or Corporate Safety Advice.

Overview Of Management & Colleague Responsibilities

Manager Responsibilities

Below is an overview of the responsibilities which is intended to support managers in identifying their key duties that need to be taken to comply with the requirements of this document and the safety management systems of the National Ice Centre.

- Managers must ensure that fire precautions are in place to maintain the fire safety of colleagues and citizens including service users, visitors and contractors.
- Managers must ensure that the fire risk assessment is in place and completed by a competent person for any locations that they manage and where their colleagues are based.
- Managers must ensure suitable and adequate fire fighting equipment is in place to assist persons to enable evacuation to a place of safety in the event of an emergency.
- Premises managers need to have considered the routes to emergency exits and those fire exits are kept clear, not secured or locked and lead to a place of safety. (certain premises may be required to secure exits to protect children or other vulnerable persons but this must be backed up by identified procedure and fire risk assessment)
- Managers need to ensure that any evacuation that does not take people outside but to another location within the premises (horizontal / lateral evacuation), a minimum 30-minute fire door and compartmentalisation zones must be clearly identified and all colleagues **must** be trained and made aware of the location of these fire zones within the premises.
- Managers must ensure that all colleagues are given training on their first day which must include the specific fire procedures of the premises, methods of evacuation, locations of fire exits, raising the alarm, the location of the evacuation point and any other relevant fire information which could affect them in the event of an emergency.
- Managers need to ensure that all colleagues have received appropriate suitable training regime on a regular basis to ensure that all colleagues are aware of the fire prevention measures within the premises and their roles and duties during an emergency. The complexity of this training needs to be identified within the fire risk assessment and may include a mix of formal training sessions, discussion of fire safety within team meetings or other fire information. This will be supplemented by fire drills.

- Managers need to consider the need for fire wardens within your premises as part of the fire risk assessment.
- Managers need to provide information to colleagues on Fire Fighting Equipment (FFE). This should clarify that it is only to be used to aid evacuation unless supported by specific training identified through assessment which will give more specific training on the practical operation on the use of FFE so it could be used to fight fires.
- Managers need to provide the employer of any person who may visit from an outside organisation with information on risk in relation to fire safety and in addition, provide these persons with all necessary fire instructions (contractor management).

Employee Responsibilities

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 section 7 requires all employees to consider their own health & safety and the safety of others.

As an employee of the National Ice Centre, if you have concerns in relation to health & safety that is likely to cause you or someone else, injury or ill health then you must ensure that the concern is communicated to your manager immediately.

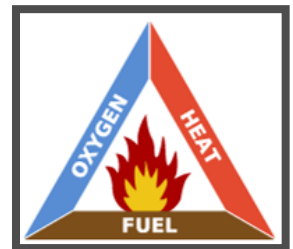
You are also required to co-operate with the management of the National Ice Centre to ensure compliance with the health & safety arrangements, policies and procedures and work to the requirements identified within this document.

What Causes Fire

In order for the combustion process to take place, 3 elements are required which are fuel, heat and oxygen and this is often referred to as the fire triangle.

With these 3 elements in place, all that is then required is an ignition source and you have a fire.

Managers should understand that within the NIC, the most common cause of fire incidents that occur are caused by faulty electrical equipment.



Vigilance and monitoring by all colleagues can reduce the potential for this type of fire incident to occur supported by simple measures such as good housekeeping and reducing or removing combustible materials are storing items correctly will reduce the potential for malicious fires to take occur.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

This legislation requires all employers to manage their own fire safety arrangements and includes a statutory requirement for the completion of a fire assessment for each premises under their control.

This legislation also requires employers to identify any responsible persons who will manage fire safety and undertake a risk assessment.

When considering fire management and the risk assessment, the following areas should be considered:

- fire safety arrangements for the premises;
- elimination and reduction of fire risks;
- fire-fighting equipment and methods of detection;
- emergency routes and exits;
- information and training to employees;
- co-operation and co-ordination of shared workplaces.

To assist responsible persons in their duty to manage fire safety, Nottingham City Council has produced a number of documents within the safety manual including this policy, the fire logbook and the Management of Fire Risk Assessment template.

Additional information is also available on the safety manual which has been provided by central government to give support to employers and employees to understand the fire safety principles.

These documents consider a variety of workplaces and give more specific information on how to comply with the legislative requirements.

These fire guides currently provide information on the following working environments:

- Entry Level Guide - A Short Guide to Making your Premises Safe from Fire;
- Guide 1 - Offices and Shops;
- Guide 2 - Factories and Warehouses;
- Guide 3 - Sleeping Accommodation;
- Guide 4 - Residential Care Premises;
- Guide 5 - Educational Premises;
- Guide 6 - Small and Medium Places of Assembly;
- Guide 7 - Large Places of assembly;
- Guide 8 - Theatres and cinemas;
- Guide 9 - Outdoor events;
- Guide 10 - Healthcare premises;
- Guide 11 - Transport premises and facilities;
- Guide 12 – Animal Premises and Stables.

A supplemental guide that considers means of escape for disabled people has also been developed.

- Supplemental Guide – Means of Escape for Disabled Persons.

Each of these documents is available to download from within the Corporate Safety Manual.

If managers need additional information on the contents or implementation of the information contained within these guides, please contact Corporate Safety Advice.

Responsible Persons – Legal Definition

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 identifies that the responsible person is defined as the employer / manager, if the workplace is to any extent under their control.

In addition to this definition, the responsible person is also considered as the owner / landlord of premises where the occupiers do not have direct control e.g. common areas of a multi-occupancy premises.

Where this type of multi-occupancy premises arises, each tenant is required to identify a responsible person for their own work environment and the landlord would be considered the responsible person for the rest of the premises.

For the National Ice Centre, this definition means that identified Managers / Facilities Managers / Property Managers can all be considered to be responsible persons under the definition of the legislation.

Fire Safety Information, Instruction & Training

New employees and agency colleagues **must** be told about emergency procedures and shown the means of escape on their first day of employment.

This is identified within the National Ice Centres' induction programme and must be done in the location the person will work or be based from.

All employees should receive appropriate fire precautions training / information at least once a year. This training / information may include, as appropriate:

- Action to take when a fire is discovered, including how to raise the alarm;
- What to do if you hear the alarm;
- Procedures for alerting and evacuating members of the public;
- Arrangements for calling the fire brigade;
- Location of fire escape routes and the identified fire assembly point;
- Importance of keeping fire doors closed (to prevent the spread of fire, heat and smoke);

- The location and, where appropriate, the use of firefighting equipment;
- How to stop machines and isolate power;
- The reason for not using lifts;
- The importance of general fire safety and good housekeeping.

This training can be delivered by the manager of the site and may be delivered as part of a team meeting or following a fire drill.

Any information that may also affect contractor's safety regarding fire management must be raised with them.

It is also important that if you have contractors on site who are going to impact your fire safety arrangements that this is discussed prior to work commencing

Fire Warden Training

It is recommended that all premises consider trained Fire Wardens as an effective means of managing fire safety.

As part of the fire risk assessment, a consideration of the need to have trained Fire Wardens must be given.

If you require advice or information on the role and training of Fire Wardens, contact The NIC Health & Safety Advisor or Corporate Safety Advice.

Fire Risk Assessment

Managers need to ensure that each of the premises which has their colleagues in it has a completed fire risk assessment.

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 a fire risk assessment **shall** be completed in all workplaces by a competent person.

To be deemed a competent person, you must be able to demonstrate training in the risk assessment principals and have experience of and knowledge of fire risks and protection systems in place within the environment being assessed. The assessment must include:

- The means of detecting a fire and giving warning in the event of a fire.
- Provision of suitable fire fighting/safety equipment.
- Maintenance of fire fighting/safety equipment.
- The means of escape from the building.
- Provision of fire safety training and evacuation drills.
- Analysis of ignition sources.
- Analysis of combustible materials.

Buildings occupied by more than one department / service or team:

In buildings occupied by more than one department there must be close co-operation and liaison to ensure that all issues and areas of the building are assessed, responsibilities identified and to ensure that any remedial actions identified are actioned and referred to the correct persons.

Enforcement & Regulating Fire Precautions

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is the enforcement body for ensuring compliance with all fire related legislation.

Local fire authorities no longer offer general advice on fire safety for premises.

If you require advice or assistance on fire safety matters, contact the NIC Health & Safety Advisor or Corporate Safety.

Fire Brigade Attendance To An Incident

The Fire Service may **not automatically** attend a site during normal building operating times until there has been confirmation that their attendance is required.

However, their attendance outside normal working hours is unchanged.

As the responsible person, when the building is occupied and the fire alarm is activated, if a fire is suspected or there are signs of fire, a 999 call must be made by the nominated person to ensure and confirm attendance.

Extinguishing Fires

When considering fire evacuation and fire-fighting arrangements, it must always be remembered that people are always more important than property.

Training in the use of extinguishers should be considered carefully and identified within the fire risk assessment process, so that personnel are not put at unnecessary risk.

The use of extinguishers may be necessary to assist in the evacuation of colleagues and others and all employees must receive adequate training on the use of extinguishers so they understand this.

There must also be clear systems to follow if they are expected to tackle fires as part of their role and this must be supported by regular practical training on the use of fire-fighting equipment which will need to be identified within a specific risk assessment on this issue.

Any person who has not received this practical training must be made aware that only the trained and identified colleagues should use fire extinguishers to tackle a fire.

Fire Classification & Extinguishers

Fires are classed according to the material that is burning.

To help managers, this is covered within the fire safety training sessions and a separate Fire Classification guide has been created to provide information on the classes of fire and the required extinguishers to deal with them.

Fire Signage

Fire Action Notices

The fire action notice contains generic information on the procedures that colleagues should take in the event of discovering a fire or the alarm being activated.

Managers need to ensure that the blank sections are completed by each site to identify their own specific fire management arrangements including the fire assembly point or the location of the nearest fire exit.

Until this information is filled in, this sign is not considered as valid



Fire Exit Signage – ‘Safe Condition’ Signs

Fire exit signs, final fire exit signs and directional fire exit signs must be indicated with a pictogram/graphic symbol (see below for examples).

Exit signs must have a green background, with white text.

The use of additional text on the signs is optional, but gives extra clarification and helps to avoid misinterpretation.

Text only exit signs are no longer acceptable and must be replaced



Examples of suitable exit signs (pictogram only signs are acceptable)



Both styles of pictogram signage are acceptable, however a mix of design standards in the same building must be avoided.

Fire Fighting Equipment Signs

Example of typical signage for fire fighting equipment.

This type of sign, including directional arrows must have a red background with a white pictogram / text.



Fire Door Signage – ‘Mandatory’ Signs

Example of typical signage for a fire door.

This type of sign must have a blue background with a white pictogram/text.



Evacuation Arrangements (PEEP's)

As part of the Management of Fire Risk assessment, consideration must be made for the safe evacuation of all persons on your site.

Where any colleagues work in the building, it is important that their needs are properly identified and adequate written arrangements are completed using the PEEP process.

These arrangements may include the creation of ‘Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans’ (PEEP) that identify the needs of specific individuals and details of other colleagues who would assist them in the event of an emergency.

Suitable evacuation plans may also need to be in place for visitors to certain buildings.

For example, procedures adopted with regard to colleague with mobility issues employed within the building may well be different from those for a person visiting the building with similar needs due to the lack of familiarity with the layout of the building.

Any manager with responsibility to oversee the evacuation process of premises is required to ensure that any person involved in the evacuation of colleagues who is covered by a PEEP is kept informed of the specific needs of those colleagues.

For multi occupancy premises, it is recommended that all PEEPs are maintained in such a location that it is available to all appropriate colleagues (fire wardens / marshals etc)

Evacuation Arrangements

Horizontal Evacuation to a Place of Safety

This system can be used in buildings with a phased alarm system and involves people passing from one ‘fire compartment’ to a place of safety within another which was not part of the initial evacuation zone.

People can then be evacuated from the building by fire-fighting lifts in the second ‘fire compartment’. A ‘fire compartment’ is a part of a premises separated from other parts of the same building by fire-resisting walls, doors, ceilings and floors and provides a place of fire safety for a minimum of 30 minutes .

Evacuation by lift

Evacuation by lift is only possible where lifts have a secondary power supply / battery backup and a structurally fire protected lobby shaft and is specifically identified as an evacuation lift.

Fire fighting lifts will automatically go to the ground floor upon activation and must only be used by the fire brigade in the event of a fire. In all other circumstances, lifts must not be used when the fire alarm has been activated.

Evacuation by stairs

This system can be used on evacuation stairways (see also refuges below).

When this involves going down stairs or steps (Evac chairs do not go up stairs) 'Evac-Chairs' must only be used by trained personnel only who have received training in the correct use of this equipment.

NIC can offer both advice and deliver the practical training on the use of 'evac-chairs'.



Use of a Fire Refuge

A fire refuge is defined as: 'A relatively safe waiting areas for short periods.

They are **not** areas where it is acceptable for disabled people to be left alone indefinitely until rescued by the fire brigade, or until the fire is extinguished.

In this situation a refuge is an area that is both separated from the fire by a fire-resisting construction and which has access via a safe route to a fire exit.

It provides a temporary space for people to wait for others who will then help them evacuate.

Where people reach the safety of a refuge prior to vertical movement, it will be necessary to ensure that there is adequate space in the refuge so that others are not obstructed.

The use of refuges should always be viewed within the context that buildings should have considered and identified adequate measures in place to enable the evacuation of all persons.

Consultation with NIC Health & Safety Advisor / Corporate Safety Advice and Facilities Management is always required before implementing a fire refuge point.



Checking Fire Safety

Regular checks to monitor fire safety must be made at all workplaces.

These checks should be co-ordinated by the responsible person.

Some checks can be made on a daily basis, such as visually checking that fire exits are not blocked. Other checks should be more formal and recorded in the fire logbook, e.g. emergency lighting tests.

Matters that should be checked if in place within your premises are included in the Fire Risk Assessment Form and the fire log book.

Reporting Fires

All fire incidents that occur within the premises however minor, must be reported using the correct Fire Incident Report Form which is located within the fire log book.

Instructions on what to do with the completed Fire Incident Report are detailed on the form.

In addition, where a fire results in any injury to colleagues or third parties (public, service users, pupils, etc.), it must be reported using the on line accident reporting system.

Where a fire incident occurs that will result in service interruption that is likely to last for a period of more than 24 hours, contact must be made with the NIC Health & Safety Advisor & Corporate Safety Advice.

Hot Working and Hot Working Permit to Work

When any 'hot work' is carried out within a premises, such as gas welding and cutting and the use of bitumen burners in re-roofing etc, it is the responsibility of both the contractor who is in charge of the work to be undertaken and the responsible person on site to maintain fire safety arrangements.

A hot work permit to work form **must** be completed prior to any 'hot work' commencing.

This document must identify the work to be carried out and the relevant safety precautions in place during the duration of the work.

The permit and warning notice **must** be displayed at the point of action.

The Hot Work Permit is available from the Safety Manual.

Work on Fire Alarm Systems or other Fire Protection Systems within the premises

Managers must ensure that when any work is to be done to the fire protection within a premises, the responsibilities of the contractor and responsible person are in place and that they work together to ensure that fire safety arrangements are maintained.

This must include, where applicable informing other managers, fire wardens and all affected colleagues of the amended actions required during the period that the fire alarm system is deactivated and / or changes to the evacuation routes as necessary to maintain a safe means of egress in the event of an emergency.

It is also important that safety representatives are kept informed of this information.

Managers must ensure that when a fire alarm is to be de-activated for any period of time, contact must be made with the building management so suitable cover arrangements can be put into action.

References and Further Information

The following information and reference material is in place to assist managers to understand their responsibilities and duties.

NIC Documentation

- Fire Risk Assessment Template
- Hot Work Permit

External References

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (HSE)
- INDG 370 – ‘Controlling Fire & Explosion Risks in the Workplace’ (HSE)
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment guides