

Health and Safety Briefing Note



HSBN Number 0069: Management of fire within the workplace

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Distribution: All Thames Water Controllers of Premises

Introduction:

The tragic circumstances and loss of life at the Grenfell Tower Fire, serve as a reminder to us all of the importance of having robust fire arrangements in place across our estate. This briefing note has been prepared to act as a prompt for us all to review the fire arrangements currently in place within the workplace.

What causes a fire?



The fire triangle is used to show the three elements that when present together can cause a fire to start. These three ingredients are fuel, heat and oxygen, under all circumstances they should be kept apart to avoid a fire starting. When fuel or flammable materials are heated, the energy stored inside starts to react with oxygen in the air, giving off heat. This creates a vicious cycle, which causes the fire to spread. To stop the spread of a fire you have to remove one of these elements to break the triangle.

Thames Water Procedure **HSP23–Management of fire risk assessment** provides further guidance on what needs to be done in managing the risk associated with fire and is available from the Health Safety and Wellbeing section of the Portal.

What needs to be in place?

Fire Risk Assessment

- Ensure that fire risk assessments have been undertaken and they are being maintained in line with the Thames Water Procedure **HSP42–Management of fire risk assessment**. available from the Health Safety and Wellbeing section of the Portal
- Ensure that any actions identified as part of the risk assessment have been fully implemented.

Appointing Fire Marshals / Wardens

- Ensure that there are a sufficient number of Fire Wardens/Marshals who are trained and appointed to take charge of a fire evacuation in a particular part of a building or site.
- Ensure that there is a list of appointed fire wardens /marshals posted on suitable notice boards throughout the premises.

Providing clear instruction and briefing the teams

- Ensure that if a fire is discovered staff know how to call the fire brigade and what to say. Staff must also know what to do if they hear the alarm and where to evacuate. This can be done through basic information and instruction and by posting fire action notices next to fire alarm call points.
- Ensure that all staff within the workplace have been briefed with the appropriate risk assessment guidance **RAG001-Fire general, RAG002-Fire prevention electrical and other plant, RAG003-Fire prevention during hot works** available from the Health Safety and Wellbeing section of the Portal.

Fire Prevention within the workplace location

- Ensure that the **Work Safety Survey Checklist SHE1** is being maintained in order to identify and control all of the hazards associated with fire in the workplace.
- Ensure that the **Fire Alarm** is being tested on a weekly basis at a set time and recorded within the fire log book.



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- Ensure that **Fire Drills** are planned and carried out every 6 months, de briefing of which must be conducted with any learning points captured and recorded within the fire log book.
- Ensure that each location is provided with suitable and sufficient **Fire Extinguishers** checked monthly to ensure they are fully charged and have not been tampered with. Inspected and maintained annually. Records of which must be retained within the fire log book.
- Ensure that **Fire Alarm Systems are being maintained** with any faults reported immediately. Records of which must be retained within the fire log book
- Ensure that **Means of Escape** (self-closing doors, stairways, corridors and essential structural features) are being maintained and kept clear at all times.
- Ensure that all **Electrical Systems** are regularly inspected at least every 5 years, taking any remedial actions resulting from the report and maintaining records.
- Ensure that all **Portable Appliances** are regularly inspected at lease every 2 years. The appliance should be tagged to indicate that it has been inspected with records maintained.
- Ensure that **Emergency Lighting** is functionally tested monthly and inspected and maintained 6 monthly.
- Ensure that **Flammable Liquids and Gases** stored in the workplace location are controlled in accordance with risk assessment guidance **RAG101- Working with flammable liquids, RAG102- Working with flammable gases** available from the Health Safety and Wellbeing section of the Portal.
- Ensure that **Temporary Heating Appliances** are positioned where they cannot be overturned or damaged ensuring that a clear space is left around all heaters in order that combustible materials such as long blinds, paper clothing etc. cannot be ignited.
- Ensure that **Regular Inspections** of the fire arrangements within the workplace are carried out using the SHE series monitoring checklists.
- Ensure that each location maintains suitable information that will assist the **Fire Brigade** in the event of a fire.
- Ensure that all **Contractors and Visitors** to the workplace fully understand the actions that they should take in the event of a fire.

For any further assistance/support please contact your local Health Safety and Wellbeing Advisor or email us direct @ safetyhealthandwellbeing@thameswater.co.uk