

**Fire Risk Assessment  
in Healthcare Premises**

**presented by  
Gary Hepburn**

Version: 06/15

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**Introduction**

- Safety Information
- Domestic arrangements (toilets, refreshments)
- Personal Introductions
- Personal objectives or issues to discuss
- Teaching method

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**Programme**

- History of Fire Safety
- Fire Safety Legislation
- How Fires Start and Spread
- Fire Precautions
- Procedures and Evacuation in event of Fire
- Guidance and reference material
- Fire Risk Assessment Process
- Practical Exercise
- Written assessment

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## History of Fire Safety

When do you think Fire Safety Laws were introduced to the UK?

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## History of Fire Safety

- In the 11th century William the Conqueror introduced legislation stating that people had to douse all fires and lights at nightfall
- Despite that in 1666 the great fire of London resulted in the loss of 87 churches and 13,200 houses. However only six people were definitely known to have died
- This was the result of a fire within the work place due to poor training, no risk assessments and the baker being asleep

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## The Great Fire of London 2 September 1666

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## Fire Safety Legislation

### Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

- Became law 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006
- Replaces almost all fire safety legislation
- Places responsibility for fire safety on employers/business or building owners
- Must appoint a Responsible Person
- Must undertake a fire risk assessment

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## Purpose of fire safety legislation

The purpose of fire safety legislation is to  
preserve life and to prevent injury in the  
event of fire

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## Fire safety laws

- Current legislation
  - continues the trend which sees a move from a prescriptive approach to a risk assessed approach to fire safety
  - places the duty for fire safety on the employer
  - requires a fire risk assessment to be undertaken which informs the general fire precautions required for the premises

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## Responsibilities

Under fire and health and safety legislation all staff have a responsibility to...

- identify different kinds of fire equipment and use them effectively;
- take the right course of action if a fire starts;
- take steps to prevent fires from happening; and
- be aware of potential fire risks in the workplace.

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## Fire facts and figures

Great Britain fire statistics

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## 'It will never happen to me!'

On average in Great Britain:

- the fire and rescue service attends over 600,000 fires or false alarms;
- 500+ people are killed by fire each year and 13,000 seriously injured;
- losses in England alone exceed £8 billion;
- our rivers and air are damaged by pollution;
- businesses fail; and
- our heritage is destroyed.

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## Great Britain hospital fire statistics

The following represents average yearly figures

Details	No of Fires
Total healthcare fires	1,400
Deliberate healthcare fires	400
Fatal casualties	5
Non-fatal casualties	110

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## Fires in healthcare premises

- Royal Marsden Hospital, January 2008
- University College London Hospitals, July 2008
- Great Ormond Street, September 2008
- Chase Farm, October 2008
- Northwick Park Hospital, February 2009
- Adan House Surgery, in Spennymoor, County Durham March 2010
- Royal Hampshire County Hospital, December 2011
- Canford Heath Practice, Poole, June 2012
- Birkby Surgery, West Yorkshire, April 2015

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## Fires in healthcare premises



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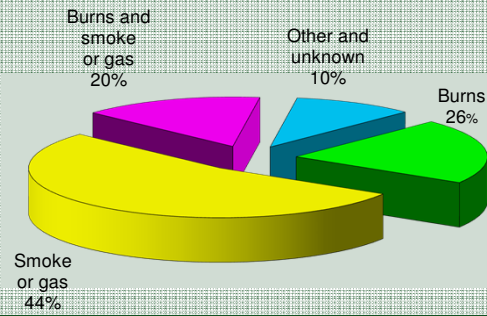
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## Causes of fire deaths



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## How Fires Start and Spread

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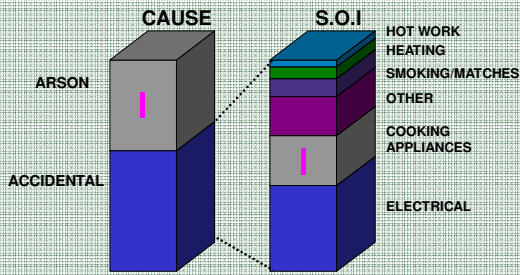
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## Cause and source of ignition for fire in all buildings



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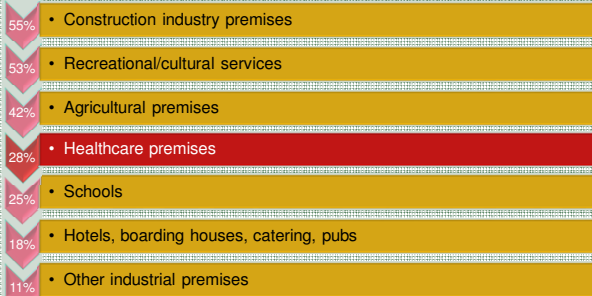
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## Fires due to arson



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## What is fire?

Some aspects of fire science

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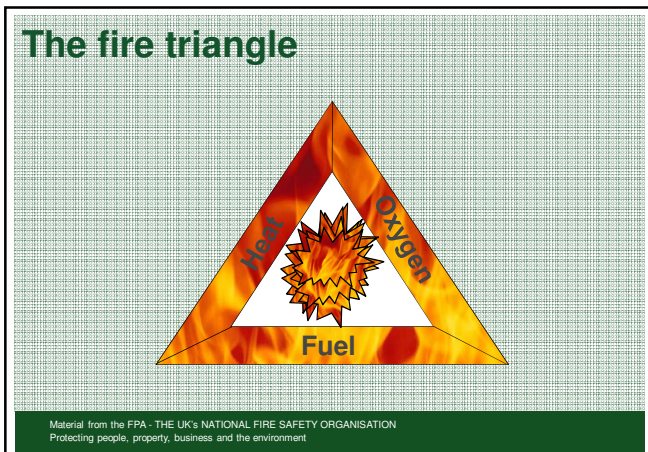
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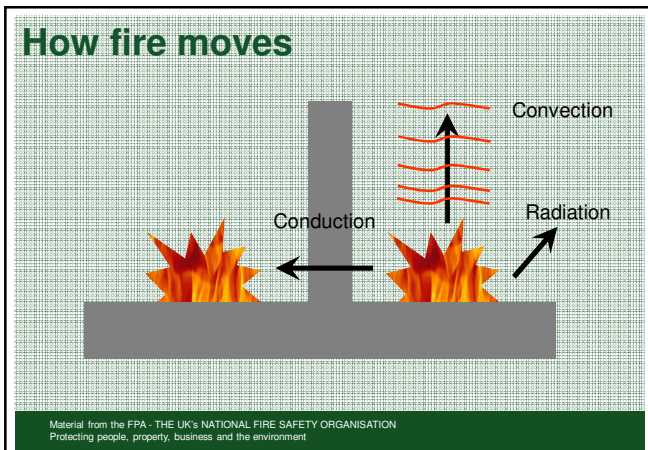
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## Speed of fire



10 seconds



1 minute



2 minutes



3 minutes

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Images courtesy of BHE Global

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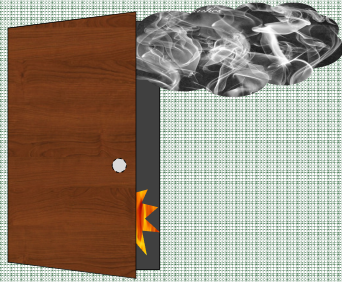
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## What is the first thing we see?



Smoke is the 'silent killer'

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## Bradford City Fire Saturday, 11 May 1985

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## Hazard spotting

Many fires start through small, minor hazards.  
Our aim is to create greater awareness of hazards likely to lead to fire or breach of safety.

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## Kitchens and cooking equipment

- Deep fat fryers
- Cooking food left unattended
- Faulty electrical appliances
- Toasters/microwaves left unattended or poorly sited
- Combustible materials left too close to sources of ignition



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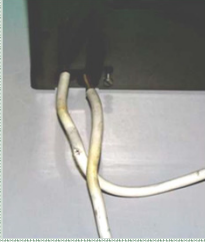
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## Wiring hazards



All electrical work should be done by a properly trained person.

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## Lighting

- Light bulbs of all types have the potential to reach extremely high temperatures.
- Ensure that stored combustible materials are kept clear of all lighting units.
- Particular attention should be paid in locations like store rooms where lights may be left on unnoticed for periods of time.



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## Smoking hazards



The tip of a cigarette reaches very high temperatures

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## Laundry rooms



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## External security



- An arsonist will take any opportunity to start a fire
- Windows to rooms that are not in use should be kept shut
- All windows should be closed when the building is unoccupied
- Keep all combustible materials clear of building and site perimeter

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## Fire extinguishers



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## Fire doors



- Self-closing doors prevent the spread of smoke and flames around a building



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## Self-closing fire doors



- Fire doors must not be wedged open
- Doors may be fitted with hold open devices which release to allow the door to close on sounding of the alarm

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## Blocked escape routes



- A blocked escape route could mean people turning back towards fire
- Partially blocked routes will cause delays and accidents
- Escape routes should be kept clear at all times.

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## Rubbish disposal

- Accumulated waste can be a major source of fuel for a fire
  - Put waste in the appropriate container (see local guidance)
  - Dispose of empty flammable containers properly (see local guidance)
  - Stop rubbish from building up, especially where it might block escape routes, exits or fire equipment



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## External waste storage



- Builders' skips and rubbish bins are attractive to arsonists
- If sited close to a building, fire may spread from bin to building
- Place skips and bins a suitable distance from buildings
- A steel bin with a lockable lid may deter an arsonist, or at least contain the fire

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## Unsuitable external escape routes



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## Portable and fixed heaters



- Placing combustibles too close
- Covering air vents on top of heaters
- Fixed appliances sited incorrectly
- Portable heaters left running without supervision
- May run on electricity, LPG or diesel

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## Hidden signage



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## Fire detection and alarm systems



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## Flammable materials



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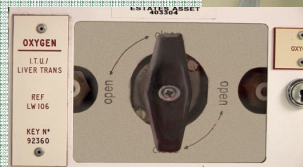
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## Medical oxygen

- Many healthcare premises will have cylinder or piped supplies of oxygen to patient areas.
- Oxygen rich atmospheres will strongly support combustion.
- Local routines will be in place to ensure that supplies can be discontinued in the event of an emergency - **as directed by clinical staff**



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## Hot work



- Special attention should be given to areas in which hot work is being carried out
- The area should be clear of all combustible materials and suitable extinguishers provided nearby
- A thorough check must be made of the area an hour after the work is completed

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## Fire Precautions

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## How do we protect against fire?

- Staff training/fire wardens
- Means of escape
- Fire safety signs
- Fire detection and alarm system
- Firefighting equipment
- Fire doors/compartments
- Emergency lighting
- Emergency procedures



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## Staff training

- Induction
- All staff
  - Evacuation procedure
  - Escape routes
  - Extinguishers
  - Fire alarm call-points
  - Machinery
  - Persons needing assistance
  - Hazards
- Fire Wardens
- Those working in areas of high risk
- Fire drills



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## Means of escape

- Alternative routes
- Way finding
- Doors
- Lifts



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## The Station Night Club, Rhode Island 20 February 2003

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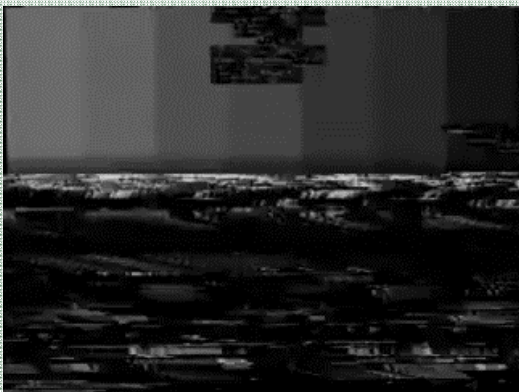
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## Fire safety signs and notices



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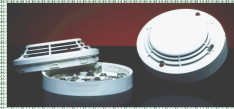
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## Fire alarm and detection systems

- Types
  - Conventional
  - Analogue
  - Addressable
- Detection
  - Smoke
  - Heat
  - Multi-sensors



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## Compartmentation

- Fire doors
- Glazing
- Sandwich panels
- Sealing around services
- Voids
- Ductwork



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## Do fire doors work?



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## Emergency escape lighting



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## Firefighting equipment

- Extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Sprinklers
- Automatic suppression systems



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## Portable firefighting equipment

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## Most materials burn

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Paper</li><li>Wood</li><li>Textiles</li><li>Plastic</li></ul> <b>SOLIDS</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Petrol</li><li>Solvents</li><li>Alcohol</li><li>Cleaning products</li></ul> <b>LIQUIDS</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Propane</li><li>Butane</li><li>Acetylene</li></ul> <b>GASES</b> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Magnesium</li><li>Sodium</li></ul> <b>METALS</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fat fryers</li><li>Chip pans</li></ul> <b>COOKING OILS</b> 	

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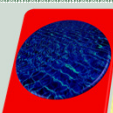

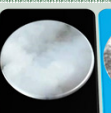

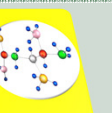
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## Colour coding

 <b>Water</b>	 <b>Foam</b>	 <b>Carbon Dioxide</b>	 <b>Dry Powder</b>	 <b>Wet Chemical</b>
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## Class A Fires involving solids



- Extinguish the fires by removing heat
- Water from an extinguisher or hose reel is the most effective extinguishant

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## Class B Fires involving liquids



- Burning liquids are extinguished by removing the oxygen supply. The fire may be extinguished using:
  - foam;
  - dry powder; or
  - carbon dioxide
- Under no circumstances should water be used

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## Class C Fires involving gas



- If the flames are extinguished without turning off the supply, an explosion may result
- When escaping gas ignites, remove the fuel by turning off the valve
- Do not approach cylinders involved in fires (such as LPG or oxygen etc)



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## Fires involving electrical equipment



- Fires in electrical equipment may be extinguished with:
  - carbon dioxide; or
  - dry powder
- Water and foam should not be used because of the risk of electric shock (some spray foams pass 35kV test)
- Whenever possible, turn off the current before tackling the fire



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## Class F Fires involving cooking oils



- Fires involving cooking oils or fats can be extinguished using:
  - a wet chemical extinguisher;
  - a fire blanket; or
  - a suppression system
- Wherever possible, turn off the power or gas before fighting the fire



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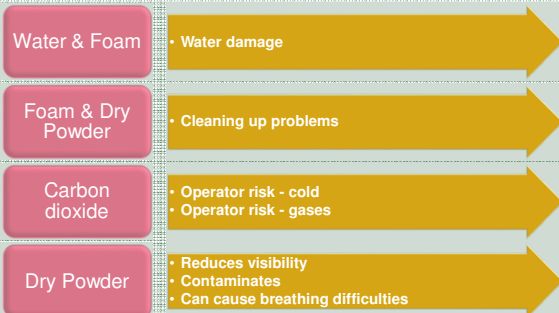
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## Problems in use



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## The fire blanket



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## Siting of extinguishers

### Conspicuous

- Stairways
- Final exits
- Corridors
- Lobbies
- Landings
- Room exits

### Spacing

- 30m maximum travel distance

### Special risks

- Where appropriate

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## Procedures and Evacuation

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## Your responsibilities

### Should you:



Fight the fire?



Raise the alarm?



Save the boss?



Look after number one?



Evacuate patients?



Run away?



Close windows and doors?

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## Raise the alarm

- This is the most important thing to do
- Alarm call-points by every final exit or stairway entrance
- Activated by break-glass panel



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## You must know...

- Procedure to be followed in the event of fire
- Location of portable extinguishers, fire blankets and call-points
- Which type of extinguisher to use and how to use it
- Location of the assembly point(s)
- The specific actions required to assist all occupants of the ward or department to a place of safety

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## Check...

- Means of escape routes, including stairways and corridors are clear
- Self-closing fire doors not wedged open
- Fire safety signs are present and visible
- Electrical flexes and plugs are undamaged

Weekly

- All electrical equipment is turned off when not in use
- All waste in rubbish bins etc is removed
- Cooking equipment is turned off when not in use
- No additional hazards created by electrical or other items brought in by patients and visitors

Daily

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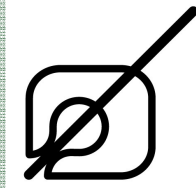
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## Report

- Events/accidents with fire potential
- Unaccounted for packages
- Presence of patients or visitors in areas where they would not normally be encountered
- Suspicious behaviour
- Signs of forced entry to rooms, desks etc
- Any faulty fire protection equipment or blocked escape routes



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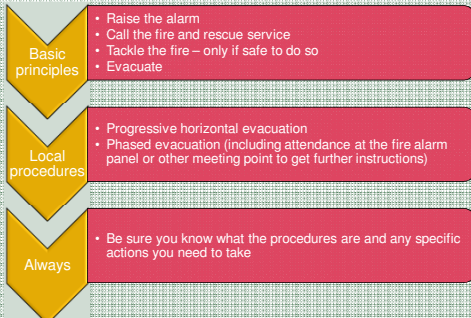
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## On discovering a fire



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## Evacuation procedures

- Follow the evacuation procedures for your area, premises or building
- Check all areas and rooms as you evacuate
  - Being able to inform the fire and rescue service that certain areas of the premises are clear of occupants may save them valuable time
- Close windows and doors where possible to limit the spread of fire and smoke
- Do not use lifts unless designated fire evacuation lifts
- If evacuating to an external area, ensure residents are safe and don't wander off
- Do not allow anyone to re-enter the building

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## Evacuation procedures

- Procedure on discovering a fire
- Procedure upon hearing the fire alarm
- Assembly points
- Management
  - Fire wardens/marshals
    - Floor sweeps
    - Assistance for disabled persons
    - Firefighting duties



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## Fire warden/first responder Roles in the event of a fire



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## Look after people

Check floors/zones/wards for people

Help vulnerable people – “buddy”

Help vulnerable groups

Assist visitors and members of the public



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## Action

- Investigate the alarm
- Call the fire and rescue service
- Switch off gas, piped oxygen and electricity supplies
- Secure building
- Close windows and doors



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## Once outside the building

- Take the role call
- Meet the fire and rescue service
- Assist vulnerable people/groups
- Help members of the public



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## Evacuation techniques

This section looks at how to identify and address individuals' needs in a fire situation.



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## People at risk

- Mobility impairment, frailty
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Learning difficulties
- Mental health, dementia
- Children
- Mixture of the above
- People unfamiliar with the building
- ICU Patients



Refuge Point

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## Levels of care

- Independent
- Dependent
- Very High Dependency



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## How to help people at risk

### Safety policies

- PEEPs
- GEEPs
- Stay-put policies for people at particular risk
- Staff training
- Buddy systems
- Progressive horizontal evacuation
- Good housekeeping



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## How to help people at risk



### Physical measures

- Refuges
- Compartmentation
- Strobes and beacons
- Vibrating alarms
- Braille and large font signs
- Evacuation lifts
- Accessible exits
- Handrails
- Evacuation chairs
- Step edge marking

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## Evacuation strategy

### Single stage

Alarm sounds and everyone exits the building

### Two stage

(Phased or horizontal evacuation)

Alarm sounds and only the people in the proximity of the fire evacuate



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## Progressive horizontal evacuation



- Alarm sounds
- Patients close to the fire are moved away from the affected area to an adjoining area
- Horizontal evacuation continued until the fire is put out, or the need to further evacuate is determined

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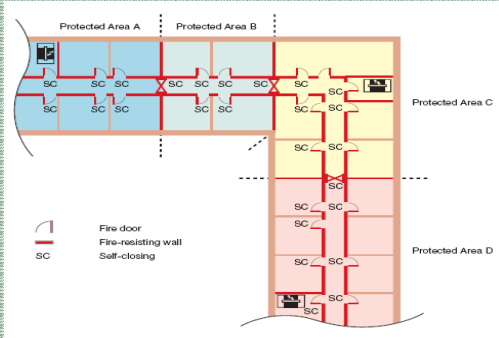
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## Places of safety



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## Delayed evacuation

- Fire alarm sounds
- Specific people prepare to evacuate
- Await further instructions



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## Aftercare

- Stay calm and carry out our duties according to the fire procedure.
- Ensure that patients and visitors are safe and as comfortable as possible.
- Do NOT try to re-enter the building to get medical equipment.
- Once visitors, staff and patients have been moved to safety, it is important that their care continues.

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## False fire alarms

- Cause significant disruption
- Causes and solutions
  - Deliberate – in order to cause disruption – be vigilant
  - Hot work – such as cutting or grinding in the vicinity which may cause heat, smoke or dust – isolate detectors nearby
  - Aerosols – do not spray near or toward detectors
  - Surreptitious smoking – again, be vigilant
  - Cooking – ensure it is not left unattended and ensure all cooking is undertaken in specific kitchen areas
  - Electrical faults in wiring or interference from other equipment – routing and regular maintenance required

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## Guidance & Reference Material

- <https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities/who-is-responsible>
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/fire.htm>
- <https://www.firesafe.org.uk/>
- <http://www.fia.uk.com/fire-safety-advice.html>
- [www.SiriusBusinessServices.co.uk/fire](http://www.SiriusBusinessServices.co.uk/fire)

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## Fire Risk Assessment Process

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### Initial fire risk assessment

- Step 1 • Identify fire hazards including: combustible materials, sources of ignition, work processes
- Step 2 • Identify people at significant risk
- Step 3 • Evaluate the risks  
• *Carry out any improvements needed*
- Step 4 • Record findings and actions taken  
• Prepare a fire management plan
- Step 5 • Keep risk assessments under review  
• Revise as and when necessary

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### 1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

#### 1 - HEAT

- **Electrical Equipment**



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**1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

**1 - HEAT**

- Electrical Equipment
- Smoking



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**1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

**1 - HEAT**

- Electrical Equipment
- Smoking
- Naked Flames



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**1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

**1 - HEAT**

- Electrical Equipment
- Smoking
- Naked Flames
- Mechanically Generated Heat



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## 1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

### 1 - HEAT



- Electrical Equipment
- Smoking
- Naked Flames
- Mechanically Generated Heat
- Heaters

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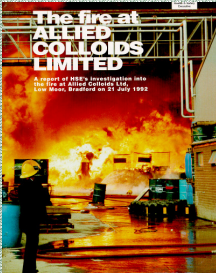
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## 1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

### 2 - FUEL



- Flammable Chemicals, Liquids, Solvents and Solvent Based Products

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## 1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

### 2 - FUEL



- Flammable Chemicals, Liquids, Solvents and Solvent Based Products
- Rubbish

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**1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

**2 - FUEL**



- Flammable Chemicals, Liquids, Solvents and Solvent Based Products
- Rubbish
- Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings

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**1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

**3 - OXYGEN**



- Oxidising Chemicals and Oxygen Supplies

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**1 - POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

**3 - OXYGEN**



- Oxidising Chemicals and Oxygen Supplies
- Doors and Windows

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People
- Visitors

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People
- Visitors
- Lone Workers

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People
- Visitors
- Lone Workers
- All Other Staff

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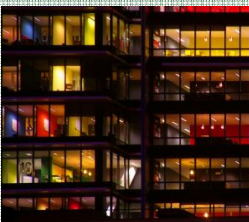
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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People
- Visitors
- Lone Workers
- All Other Staff
- Shift Workers

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People
- Visitors
- Lone Workers
- All Other Staff
- Shift Workers
- **Employees Working in Hazardous Areas**

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## 2 - WHO IS AT RISK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE?



- Physically Disabled
- Blind People
- Visitors
- Lone Workers
- All Other Staff
- Shift Workers
- Employees Working in Hazardous Areas
- **Anyone Working in the Vicinity of the premises - including**

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## 3 - ARE EXISTING FIRE PRECAUTIONS ADEQUATE?



- **Unnecessary Sources of Heat**

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### 3 - ARE EXISTING FIRE PRECAUTIONS ADEQUATE?



- Unnecessary Sources of Heat
- Ducts, Flues & Filters

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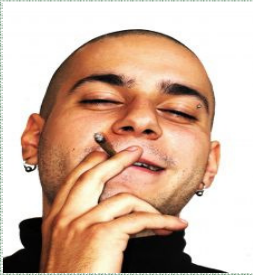
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### 3 - ARE EXISTING FIRE PRECAUTIONS ADEQUATE?



- Unnecessary Sources of Heat
- Ducts, Flues & Filters
- Smoking Rules

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### 3 - ARE EXISTING FIRE PRECAUTIONS ADEQUATE?



- Unnecessary Sources of Heat
- Ducts, Flues & Filters
- Smoking Rules
- Storage of Flammable Substances

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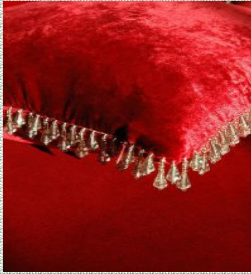
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### 3 - ARE EXISTING FIRE PRECAUTIONS ADEQUATE?



- Unnecessary Sources of Heat
- Ducts, Flues & Filters
- Smoking Rules
- Storage of Flammable Substances
- Less Flammable Alternatives

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### 3 - ARE EXISTING FIRE PRECAUTIONS ADEQUATE?



- Unnecessary Sources of Heat
- Ducts, Flues & Filters
- Smoking Rules
- Storage of Flammable Substances
- Less Flammable Alternatives
- The Threat of Arson

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### 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE

- Emergency Routes and Exits



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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire

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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire
- Are Staff Trained

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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire
- Are Staff Trained
- Fire Drills

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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire
- Are Staff Trained
- Fire Drills
- Are Emergency Exits Clear?

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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire
- Are Staff Trained
- Fire Drills
- Are Emergency Exits Clear?
- Emergency Lighting

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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire
- Are Staff Trained
- Fire Drills
- Are Emergency Exits Clear?
- Emergency Lighting
- Fire Extinguishers

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## 4 - MAXIMISING THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE



- Emergency Routes and Exits
- What To Do in the Event of a Fire
- Are Staff Trained
- Fire Drills
- Are Emergency Exits Clear?
- Emergency Lighting
- Fire Extinguishers
- Fire Alarms

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## 5 - ACTIONS FOLLOWING A FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT



- Five or More Employees?
- Record Your Findings and Actions
- Train Your Staff
- Review and Revise Your Fire Risk Assessment when ...

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## YOU NEED TO REVIEW AND REVISE YOUR FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT AT LEAST ANNUALLY OR



- When you install New Machinery
- Introduce a New Work Process
- You Have Rapid Staff Turnover
- Sudden Increase in Staffing Levels
- Refurbishment or Expansion

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## REMEMBER - TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW YOU MUST

- Undertake a fire risk assessment on your business premises. The process of risk assessment has not changed as a result of the new law
- Keep a written record of findings if you have 5 or more employees
- Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly as well as in the event of any significant change. In this instance you may need to review your current fire risk assessment to ensure it considers the safety of people in the immediate vicinity of the business premises, in

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## WHAT DO I DO NEXT ??

- You must create a clear plan of how you will keep people safe in case of fire. This includes creating evacuation plans and the use of emergency signage
- Emergency procedures and evacuation plans must be communicated throughout the business and form the basis of any staff induction programme
- Refresher training and drills should occur regularly

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## Fire Risk Assessment Video



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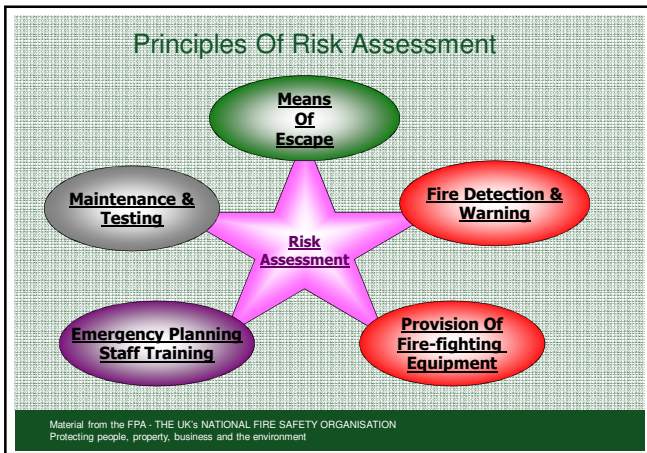
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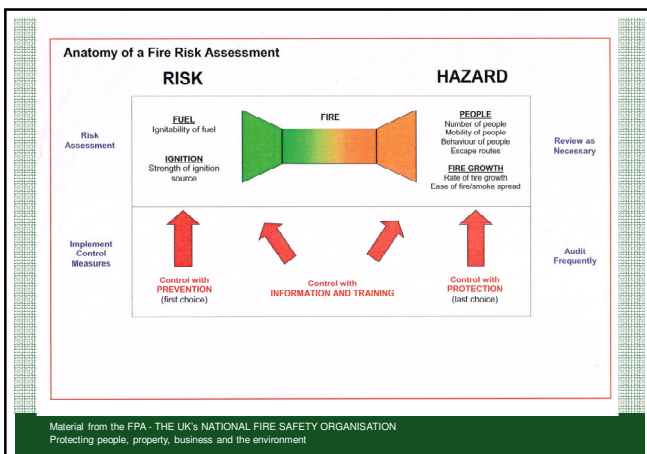
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### Final thoughts

- In case of fire, don't take risks
- Only attempt to fight fire with extinguishers if confident that you can safely extinguish it!
- Try to see every situation with regard to its potential for fire
- At all other times be vigilant!

Material from the FPA - THE UK'S NATIONAL FIRE SAFETY ORGANISATION  
Protecting people, property, business and the environment

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### Practical Exercise

- To undertake a Fire Risk Assessment of a Medical Centre, from:
  - Plans
  - Photos
  - Information folder
  - Asking the practice manager (tutor)
- Output: Completed Fire Risk Assessment Document

Material from the FPA - THE UK'S NATIONAL FIRE SAFETY ORGANISATION  
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### Written Assessment

- Multiple Choice Questionnaire
- Pass 70% ( 7 out of 10 )

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### Handouts and Further Info

[www.SiriusBusinessServices.co.uk/fire](http://www.SiriusBusinessServices.co.uk/fire)

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