



# IWYS

## Alternative Provision

## Fire Safety Policy

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## Introduction & Aims

It is the overall aim of IWYS Alternative Provision to minimise the risks to staff and pupils, which may arise from fire. This will be achieved by ensuring precautions are taken to avoid fires occurring and by ensuring that procedures for minimising the effects of an outbreak of fire and evacuating the premises are in place.

## Fire Safety Management

Main duties are:

- To minimise risk from fire through risk assessments
- To ensure adequate staff/ fire manager training has taken place
- To produce an emergency plan and put up fire notices
- To conduct fire drills
- To check adequacy of fire fighting apparatus and its maintenance
- To implement recommendations from the Fire Risk Assessment
- To consult with the Fire Risk Assessment officer on matters of fire safety
- To conduct regular fire safety inspections and record the findings
- To make frequent informal checks
- To ensure fire escape routes and fire exit doors are unobstructed and operate correctly.
- To check fire detection and protection systems are maintained and tested and records kept
- To ensure Fire Safety Log Book is kept up to date and accessible

## Training for Staff

Whenever a fire occurs, the main consideration is to get everybody out safely. Protection of property is secondary. Whoever first discovers the fire should raise the alarm and the evacuation procedure for the premises should be followed. Staff should only attempt to fight the fire if it is safe to do so. There is a need to take care because much of the danger from fire is not from the actual flames but from smoke or poisonous gases, heat and lack of oxygen. If the nature of the fire requires the premises to be evacuated, no one should re-enter until told it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade.

The importance of staff training cannot be over-emphasised. Staff should receive instruction on how to raise the alarm if they should discover a fire, on action they should take on being alerted to a fire and in the practical use on portable firefighting extinguishers provided.

In larger premises and those where members of the public will be present, training should be given at intervals so as to ensure that everybody who works in the premises receives periodic instruction. It is particularly important that all newly appointed staff are told about the means of escape and fire procedures immediately they start work. Managers should ensure that shift workers and others who work in the premises outside normal hours, such as cleaners, are included. If staff are employed whose knowledge of English is limited, training should be given in a manner which they understand. Non-English speakers and staff who have a poor understanding of written English should be considered when written instructions are being prepared.

The following subjects should be covered in each training session, with practical exercises where possible: -

- General fire precautions
- The action to be taken upon discovering a fire
- The method of raising the alarm including the location of alarm call points and alarm indicator panels
- The action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm
- The correct method of calling the fire brigade
- The location and use of firefighting equipment
- Knowledge of escape routes, assembly points and roll call procedures
- Stopping machines and processes and isolating power supplies where appropriate
- The evacuation procedure for the building, including not using lifts unless specifically designed for physically disabled and sensory-impaired staff. Where members of the public are present this will include checking the public areas, informing, and reassuring the public and directing or escorting them to exits.

Training may be supplemented by additional written instruction. Details of the training and instruction given should be recorded in a logbook kept for that purpose.

## Practice Fire Drills in Premises with a Fire Alarm

The responsibility for carrying out fire drills rests with the owner/occupier of the premises. A fire drill is intended to ensure by means of training and rehearsal, that in the event of a fire: -

The people who may be in danger act in a calm and orderly manner. Where necessary, those designated carry out their allotted duties to ensure the safety of all concerned.

The means of escape is used in accordance with a pre-determined and practised plan. c)

If evacuation of the building becomes necessary, it is speedy and orderly.

A practice fire drill should be carried out, at least once a year. Where there are alternative means of escape, drills should assume that one or more of the escape routes cannot be used because of fire. During these drills a member of staff who is told of the supposed outbreak should operate the fire alarm and thereafter the fire routine should be rehearsed as fully as circumstances allow. This may raise some difficulties where members of the public are present, but such a procedure is desirable. In such a case, if times are chosen when relatively few people are present and advance notice of the drill is given, many of the difficulties will be overcome.

In many organisations it is the practice to appoint a small number of people, usually safety representatives and managers, to observe fire drills, informing them beforehand that the drill is about to take place, where the supposed fire outbreak is and which fire escape route is obstructed. Afterwards the observers, who have by then consulted their colleagues, meet with senior management to discuss the fire drill and any failings. This practice is to be commended.

## Staff Involvement

When fire precautions are drawn up for the workplace, it is important that all staff are considered, including any disabled employees and those who may be less fit than others. It is also advisable to involve trade union and safety representatives. Staff should be told to alert management to any personal problems (even if temporary) which could affect their ease of escape from the workplace. Experience shows that employees naturally look to their supervisors for direction if an emergency occurs, so it is important that all managers know the procedure to follow if there is an alarm of fire and the role, they play in such an emergency. Firm guidance may be necessary as members of the public and the untrained members of staff cannot be relied upon to react rationally in the event of fire.

## Less able-bodied staff

Supervisors should know which members of staff require special consideration and help if evacuation is necessary and of their special needs in any emergency. The British Standard (BS 9999: Part 8, Codes of Practice for means of escape for disabled people), which explains about means of escape and evacuation procedures for the disabled and in appropriate cases this should be used in determining the means of escape from the premises.

## Wheelchair users and those whose mobility is impaired

Wheelchair users and staff with impaired mobility should be asked how they can best be helped as in some circumstances, e.g., where stairs must be negotiated, it may be necessary for the staff to be carried. If this situation is likely to arise, managers should consider training able-bodied members of staff in the correct methods of doing so. Advice on lifting and carrying disabled people may be obtained from the Fire Brigade, the Ambulance Service, the British Red Cross Society, or the St. John Ambulance brigade. Lifts must not be used in the event of a fire, except where lifts are specifically designed for the evacuation of the disabled as specified in the British Standard 5588 Part 8.

## Staff with impaired sight/hearing

The type and location of the fire safety signs may be specified in a fire certificate, but in all cases the signs should be sited so that they are easily seen and readily distinguishable. Staff with impaired vision may nevertheless experience difficulties in identifying fire safety signs and should therefore be encouraged to familiarise themselves with escape routes, especially those that are not in general daily use.

It is often useful for a member of staff with impaired vision to work to work near a normally sighted person who can then warn their colleague in the event of a fire and accompany him or her along the escape route. The sighted person should normally lead, inviting the other person to grasp his or her elbow or shoulder lightly, to gain information about doors and steps etc. Assistance should also be offered to guide dog owners and in these cases, it is recommended that the helper hold the leash and not the dog's harness.

Supervisors should ensure that after leaving the building, staff with impaired vision are not abandoned but led to the assembly point for roll call purposes where colleagues should remain with them until the emergency is over.

Staff who have impaired hearing may have difficulty in hearing the fire alarm, but they may not be insensitive to sound. Many people with severe impairment have sufficiently clear perception of some types of conventional audible alarm signals to require no special provision. Where it is not the case, there will in most situations be colleagues about, who can alert them to the need for evacuation and it will be reasonable to rely on those other staff to provide the necessary warning. In

certain work situations, such as premises where there are a significant number of profoundly deaf staff, alternative types of alarm may be necessary. Technical advice on the selection of suitable devices may be obtained from the Royal National Institute for the Deaf. [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk)

All premises must take all reasonably practicable steps to conform to the Equality Act 2010. Details of this Act can be found at the HMSO website or from all registered bookshops. [www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk).

## Note on Test Procedures and Frequencies

### Hose Reels (for further information see BS EN 671-3:2000)

Monthly checks by a responsible person to ensure reels are unobstructed and show no obvious signs of leaks or corrosion.

Annual inspection and maintenance must be carried out.

### Fire Extinguishers (for further information see BS 5306-8:2009 and BS EN3)

Monthly inspection to ensure that they are in the proper position and have not been discharged, or lost pressure (those fitted with pressure indicators) or suffered obvious damage.

Annual inspection. Carried out by a competent following the manufacturer's recommended procedures and using the tools etc, specified therein.

At intervals not exceeding those below, test by discharging the extinguishers.

- **Water/Foam (All Types); Powder (Gas Cartridge and Stored Pressure and other primary sealed types) every 5 years.**
- Carbon Dioxide, Powder (Stored Pressure Primary Sealed) – Every 10 years (20yrs when the annual inspection has been followed) and subsequently after a further 10yrs and thereafter at 5yrs intervals.

### Fire Alarms (for further information see BS 5839)

**It is important that the operation of testing do not result in an unwanted alarm signal to a receiving centre.** Any such centre should be contacted immediately before and after all tests. Daily inspect the panel for normal operation of the system. Where provided check that the connection to the remote receiving centre is functioning correctly.

Every week a manual call point should be operated during normal working hours. A different call point should be used for each subsequent test.

Monthly examination of batteries and connections including electrolyte levels.

Six monthly and annual inspection and test. No guidance is given as the installer should do these, or by an employee who has received special training by the installer.

If similar faults are occurring regularly then consult a maintenance engineer.

### Fire Detectors (for further information see BS 5839)

Regular visual inspection of detectors for damage, unusual accumulations of dirt, heavy coats of paint and other conditions likely to interfere with the correct operation of the detector.

Annual test of at least 2% of installed heat detectors by application of a heat source as a check of reliability. Detectors other than heat should be checked for correct operation and sensitivity in accordance with the manufacturer's instruction.

### Automatic Door Releases Connected to Fire Alarm System

Weekly, in conjunction with the fire alarm test, check that all doors are being released and closing fully onto the door rebates.

Dorguard devices (or similar) should be maintained as per manufacturer's instructions.

### Emergency Lighting (for further information see BS 5266)

**Because of possible failure all tests should be undertaken at times of at least risk.**

Regularly inspect the system for cleanliness, particularly luminaries. Battery banks and generators should be checked following the manufacturer's instruction. Daily test – check that any previous faults have been rectified, that every lamp in a maintained unit is lit, that the control panel indicates normal. Ensure any fault found is recorded in the logbook and acted upon.

Monthly test of self-contained luminaries, by simulation of a failure of a normal lighting supply, for sufficient time to allow all luminaries to be checked for proper function, to be carried out by a competent person.

Annually Test, Full Discharge test for either 1 hour or a 3-hour system, to be carried out by a qualified electrician. For self-contained luminaries with sealed batteries, tests should be carried out annually.

## **Sprinkler Systems (for further information see BS 5306-2:1990 and BS EN 12854:2003**

A competent person should do all tests in accordance with the frequencies specified in the standards.

### **Door maintenance**

Fire Doors – Monthly inspection to ensure all fire doors are closing fully against their rebates and that the doors and frames are in good condition (including glazing). Ensure all fire doors are suitably indicated by the appropriate signage.

Fire Exit Doors – Monthly inspection to ensure all exit doors are easily opened fully. Ensure appropriate signs suitably indicate all exit doors.

**Note:** for full information on test procedures consult Approved Document B, Appendix B.

You may wish to fill in the results of all your tests electronically. This is permissible providing it is always available for inspection by the sign in desk.

