

Fire Safety Risk Assessment

Fire risk assessment

Businesses in the UK are required as per law to complete statutory fire risk assessment, once the fire risk assessment is completed only then are businesses given the go ahead to carry out new constructions, or to operate without any objections. However the problem many small businesses face is that they are not completely aware of the various rules and regulations that are applicable, and are hence left wanting when there are fire inspections, or other similar audits.

The objective of a fire risk assessment is to

- Identify fire hazards
- To reduce the risk of the fire hazards to as minimum as possible
- To decide what physical precautions, and preventive measures need to be taken in the case of a fire, so as to protect employees and valuable office equipment.

A fire risk assessment is mandatory by law, and only once a business can show written proof that a fire risk assessment has been carried out can the business actually operate, risk assessments is mandatory for not just office complexes or offices. But fire risk assessments are mandatory for store houses, shopping complexes and even schools. In fact the most important pre-requisite of fire and safety regulations is that a fire risk assessment has been carried out.

A fire risk assessment is carried out in 5 major steps, and has to be in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the government.

Step 1: Identifying fire hazards

The objective is to isolate anything from an overheating radiator, to improperly disposed cigarette butts, basically anything that if left uncontrolled can lead to a fire. The fire hazards are greater in workshops and other businesses that deal with inflammable materials or heavy duty machinery, in either case all possible fire hazards have to be taken into account.

Step 2: Identifying people at risk

This objective is to isolate people who are at risk, or are likely to be injured if a fire breaks out.

Step 3: Evaluate

This step is designed to assess the probability of a fire occurring, a majority of UK business are low risk category, especially office building etc. However it is important to evaluate whether or not a business is at risk from fire.

Step 4: Information and training

Once all the required equipment has been purchased to cope with a fire, the staff has to be trained about the hazards of a fire, and how to conduct themselves in the eventuality of a fire. As per UK law training of staff for managing fire is mandatory and is usually an integral part of any induction program.

Step 5: Periodic review

Once all the procedures and plans are in place, from time to time businesses are required to reassess their fire and safety situation, to make sure that any new developments or any new possible fire threats are catered for. Periodic fire assessments are important for all businesses no matter how low risk a category they belong to.

Non-compliance with any of the 5 steps above, can result in fine or temporary closure of offices, it is therefore essential that a comprehensive fire risk assessment is carried out from time to time.

About the Author

Antony gardner is the author of this article on [fire precautions](#). Find more information about [fire safety](#) here.

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