

EC SAFETY SOLUTIONS NEWSLETTER



Topic of the Month – Fire Safety and the Role of the Fire Warden

October 2024

Welcome

At EC Safety Solutions, we are dedicated to ensuring your workplace is safe and compliant with the latest regulations and updates. This month we focus on **fire and life safety** and in particular the role of the **Fire Warden** who are a vital part of your company's fire safety management system. They help ensure the safety of everyone in the building during fire emergencies and play a proactive role in preventing fire hazards.

Introduction:

Who's responsible for fire safety in the workplace:

The employer, the owner, the landlord, or anyone else with control of the premises, for example a facilities manager, building manager, managing agent etc. You're known as the '**responsible person**'. If there's more than one responsible person, you have to work together to meet your responsibilities.

What is a fire warden?

It is a legal requirement, as stated by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), in articles 13, 15 and 18, for the responsible person (the person responsible for fire safety) to appoint one or more competent persons to assist them in undertaking preventative and protective measures to minimise the risk of fire. A fire warden or fire marshal is a competent person who has been appointed to undertake these measures. It is important to appoint fire wardens or fire marshals to help meet the companies health and safety obligations.



Monthly checks for fire wardens and marshals

- Confirming that the emergency lighting has been flick tested
- Checking that all portable and fixed firefighting equipment is serviced and within the next test date
- Ensuring that portable electrical equipment used is PAT tested and in date
- Organising and ensuring that a fire drill has been completed over the last 12 months
- Reporting any concerns immediately for resolution

Day to day and weekly checks for fire wardens and marshals

There are several duties under the responsible person's remit to ensure that the premises are compliant with UK fire legislation. There are some duties that can be designated to the fire warden and fire marshal including:

- Ensuring that the fire alarm is tested and that the alarm can be heard across all areas
- Preventing fire by ensuring that housekeeping in their area is satisfactory, and there is no build up of combustible materials
- Regularly check that portable and fixed firefighting equipment is in position and free from obstructions
- Ensuring that fire doors are not wedged open and are in working order
- Check that the fire escape routes have no combustible or flammable materials stored in them, and flammable materials are not within 3 metres of the escape route
- Ensuring that the fire signage is visible, clear and not damaged and that the fire assembly point is clear of obstructions

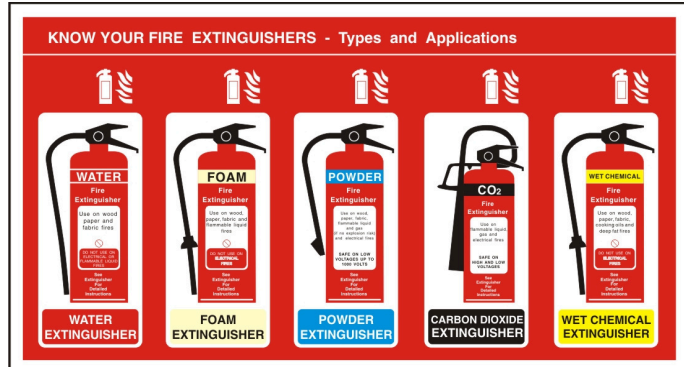
How does a fire warden or fire marshal sweep a building?

Fire wardens and fire marshals sweep a building in the direction of travel of the premises escape routes and final fire exits. Wardens and marshals sweep their areas first then visually sweep any adjacent rooms, cupboards, stores or toilets en route to the final fire exit and assembly point.

How does a fire warden or fire marshal respond when they hear the fire alarm?

- Advise people the alarm is to inform them there is a fire situation in the building, and that they **must evacuate** the building
- Implement any **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)**
- Advise people **NOT** to delay their evacuation by finishing a task or collecting their belongings
- Make a visual sweep of the area for people and additional fire or smoke hazards.
- If you find people that do not want to evacuate the building, be polite and request these people leave; if they refuse **you must** leave the area and continue your duties, report to the person in charge of any person(s) remaining inside and their location(s)
- If you discover a fire whilst sweeping the area, you must **activate** the nearest **manual call point** (even if there is an evacuation alarm going on), and if trained, consider tackling fires (see article 13 of the FSO)
- Close windows and doors as you leave the area and sweep adjacent rooms as you leave the building
- At the assembly point, advise the person in charge of the people in refuge points and whether the area is clear or not of people, fire, and smoke
- once at the assembly point ensure people stay there until further instructions are received

If your company requires you to complete a roll call, now is the time to complete it and then advise the person in charge as to whether everyone is accounted for or missing.



Types of Fire Extinguishers and Their Uses:

1. **Water (Red Label):** Use on fires involving wood, paper, textiles, and other organic materials. Do not use on electrical fires.
2. **Foam (Cream Label):** Effective for both Class A (organic materials) and Class B (flammable liquids) fires. Do not use on electrical fires.
3. **CO2 (Black Label):** Designed for electrical fires and Class B (flammable liquids) fires. It works by displacing oxygen to smother the fire.
4. **Dry Powder (Blue Label):** Can be used on most fire types, including electrical, flammable liquids, and gases, but can cause visibility issues due to the powder dispersion.
5. **Wet Chemical (Yellow Label):** Designed for use on Class F fires, typically those involving cooking oils and fats. It works by forming a soapy layer on the surface of burning oil to cool and smother the flames. Do not use on electrical fires.

You should only tackle a fire if: it is smaller than the size of a waste bin, and you have been trained and are competent in the safe use of a fire extinguisher. **You should only tackle a fire if:**

- The alarm has been raised
- Everyone has been evacuated from the area and fire and rescue services have been called.
- You have a safe escape route, and the fire is not between you and this route and you have the correct type of fire extinguishers for the fire type

How to Use a Fire Extinguisher – The PASS Method:

- Pull the pin.
- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire.
- Squeeze the handle.
- Sweep the nozzle from side to side until the fire is out. www.ecsafetysolutions.com

In the News

- [Dagenham Fire: HSE to potentially investigate Principal Accountable Person duties](#)
- [SHP 5 top articles](#)
- [Company fined after 'loving' grandad dies from fall](#)
- [Tyre firm fined after worker dragged into machine](#)

Useful Resources:

- [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005 \(FSO\)](#)
- [HSE - Introduction to fire safety](#)
- [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022](#)
- [ECSS - Example -Fire Drill Observers Report](#)
- [ECSS - Example - Fire Warden Safety Brief](#)

Do you need your with your fire and life safety responsibilities?

EC Safety Solutions, offer comprehensive Fire Warden training both **face to face** and via **eLearning** we can also organise for Fire Risk Assessments of your premises. Contact us for more details on: 08001930246