

Arson prevention for your business



Bedfordshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Prevent Arson Attacks

Every year there are over 3,000 arson attacks on shops, restaurants and other businesses. Four out of five companies never survive a serious emergency like this and go out of business. Most arsonists strike outside buildings, setting light to rubbish bins, old packaging or storage. Inside premises someone can easily start a fire if they gain access to staff areas.

You are responsible for your businesses' fire safety. Carry out a fire risk assessment to protect your business. Where are you vulnerable to an arson attack? Do you let rubbish and waste build up making you a target? How easy would it be to push burning material through your letterbox or windows?

Follow these tips to ensure your business does not suffer an arson attack and ensure your staff are aware of them too.

Your Waste:

- Don't let waste or rubbish build up on your premises it makes you an easy target;
- Move waste regularly to a safe storage place;
- Keep skips and bins away from buildings, lock them up to prevent them being moved;
- Store waste securely inside metal bins with closed lids with locks on;
- Have waste collected regularly by your local council or waste contractor.



Your Security:

- Fit a security alarm to deter and detect trespassers, fit CCTV in vulnerable areas;
- Limit the number of entrances to your buildings in constant use – but don't block or lock fire exits;
- Ensure any perimeter fences are maintained and secure;
- Businesses should ensure their staff are always vigilant to strangers on your site or nearby;
- Large businesses should consider having a security guard at main entrances;
- Businesses in malls or on retail or industrial parks should ensure they know who provides security for the whole site and report security issues to them;
- Contact your local crime prevention team for security advice.

Your buildings:

- Make sure you have an adequate fire detection and alarm system;
- Ensure doors and windows are in good condition;
- Safeguard your property with secure and working locks;
- Gaps under external doors should be as small as possible (to stop lighted paper being pushed underneath);
- Use metal fireproof letterboxes to prevent attacks;
- Keep a list of key holders at the premises, keep a log of who has keys;
- Prevent access to your buildings via drainpipes, yards, flat roofs, across rooftops;
- Limit entry to storage and warehouse areas to authorised employees only;
- Create a system for leaving lights on at night to deter intruders.

Your locality:

- Has there been vandalism to your property or those around you? It's a sign of insecure properties and intruders in your area;
- Tell your local council about any fly-tipping in your area and ask them to clear it up quickly;
- Have you heard about small fires in your area, it could be a sign of more to come;
- Ensure all your staff know what to do if they see anyone looking or acting suspicious.

Your checks:

- Check your fire extinguishers are ready for use if you need them;
- Unlock fire exits and ensure they are not blocked or wedged open;
- Keep customers out of staff only areas;
- Don't let combustible material build up inside your premises or in your waste bins;
- Check your security system and CCTV are working.

Before locking up at night:

- Check all unauthorised people have left the building;
- Ensure there is not combustible material near your premises or left lying around inside;
- Check all doors and windows are securely fastened;
- Switch on alarms and security lighting.

Checklist:

- Waste or rubbish build up on premises;
- Move waste regularly to a safe storage place;
- Skips and bins too close to buildings;
- Skips and bins insecure;
- Waste or rubbish not collected regularly;
- No security alarm;
- No CCTV;
- Too many open access routes;
- Blocked or locked fire exits;
- Poorly maintained or insecure perimeter fences;
- No security guards on entrances;
- No overnight security guards;
- No knowledge of site security;
- No adequate fire detection and alarm system;
- Doors and windows in poor condition;
- Locks insecure;
- Gaps under external doors too wide;
- No arson proof letterbox fitted;
- No key holders list or log;
- Insecure access via drainpipes, yards, flat roofs, across rooftops;
- Unauthorised entry to storage and warehouse areas possible;
- No night-time lighting system;
- Local vandalism;
- Local fly-tipping;
- Small fires in the area;
- Suspicious people in area.

Your assistance:

For further fire advice contact Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service on 01234 845000 or visit www.bedsfire.com

Follow us on Twitter [@bedsfire](https://twitter.com/bedsfire) and find us on www.facebook.com/bedsfire

If you see anything suspicious or have information about a crime call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 or report on the non-emergency Police number 101.

In case of fire call 999 immediately.