

## What fire detection and control measures can I take to protect my business?

### Checklist – Precautions you can take to protect your business from arson.

Check how your business rates at present and what you can do to improve fire control measures.

- Is the 'housekeeping' in and around your business of a high standard?  
*Many arsonists will not carry materials with them, but will take advantage of any easy ignitable materials found on your premises.*
- Have you removed firelighting equipment?  
*Burglars may take the opportunity to commit the act of arson to conceal their crime even if arson was not initially contemplated by using matches or cigarette lighters available from your premises.*
- Are your employees trained and competent in fire prevention measures and the procedures in case of a fire during business hours?  
*The vigilance and co-operation of employees can prevent arson attacks from occurring.*
- Do you have a fully functional automatic fire detection system?  
*The only sure way of detecting a fire in its early stage, both during office hours and after hours, is having a fully functional automatic fire detection system. This will assist in the early attendance of the fire services.*
- Have you installed fire suppression equipment such as sprinkler systems and/or fixed portable firefighting equipment?  
*Such systems can detect a fire and help control it until the fire service arrives. Ensure portable firefighting equipment is serviced to Australian Standards.*
- Does your business premises have adequate structural 'compartments' and fire-resistant doors between sections of the buildings and floors?  
*VOIDS in ceiling, walls, floors and areas without adequate barriers can contribute to the spread of fire. Ensure that fire doors are not obstructed or held open.*

- Have you ensured that waste material or rubbish bins such as dumpsters and wheelie bins are not stored within the premises or outside in close proximity to the external walls of the building?

*These items should be secured in areas away from the main premises. Temporary structures built out of combustible materials should be sited away permanent buildings for the same reasons.*

- Are all flammable liquids, gases and chemicals kept in locked and secured places when not in use?  
*Whenever possible flammable liquids, gas supplies and chemicals should be isolated and secured in appropriate areas, preferably away from the main premises.*

In most cases the effect of an arson attack on your business will result in a far greater loss than that of a simple burglary. The risk of an arson attack can be considerably reduced if you and your employees are aware of the risks and take the necessary precautions to protect your business and investments.

#### Need more information?

Contact DFES Fire Investigation Analysis Unit  
Email: [fiio@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:fiio@dfes.wa.gov.au)  
Telephone: (08) 9395 9300

To report suspicious persons  
or deliberate firelighting call  
Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000

Government of Western Australia  
Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Telephone: (08) 9395 9300  
Facsimile: (08) 9395 9534  
Email: [dfes@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:dfes@dfes.wa.gov.au)  
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Government of Western Australia  
Department of Fire & Emergency Services



# ARSON

Is your business at risk?

The risk of an arson attack can be considerably reduced if you and your employees are aware of the risks and take the necessary precautions to protect your business and investments.

**DFES**  
Department of Fire &  
Emergency Services



## **i** THE FACTS ABOUT ARSON

- Every year the cost of arson to Australian business and associated infrastructure amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Irresponsible behaviour towards fire by adults and children is one of the most serious public safety issues confronting governments and communities throughout Australia and overseas.
- Arson is wilful, unlawful intent associated with deliberate fire lighting, which inflicts extensive social, economic, environmental, psychological and material damage on all sectors of the community.

## **How can arson affect my business?**

The consequences of an arson attack on your business can be more far reaching than you might at first think and some can not be easily measured.

- Your competitors may gain greater market share while your business is not trading.
- You may lose regular customers and business.
- You may lose business due to your inability to trade or to fill contracts.
- Your insurance premiums may increase as insurance companies consider your level of risk to have increased.
- Your employees may suffer due to loss of employment.



## **What motivates the arsonist?**

The reasons people deliberately light fires are many and varied but a few reasons can be:

- Spite and/or revenge against you or your business.
- General vandalism or mischief to your property.
- Concealing the crime from a break and enter to your business.
- An employee acting from a grievance.
- An employee wishing to gain attention and praise for discovering and extinguishing a fire.



Store waste in a secured area where arsonists can not access it.



Store chemicals and gas cylinders behind security gates.



Unsecured bins close to the premises are an invitation to arsonists.



Lockable dumpster bin in a secured enclosure away from the premises is good housekeeping.

## **How do I prevent my business from becoming a victim of an arson attack?**

Preventing an arson attack on your business is largely a matter of security. If access to your business cannot be gained it is difficult for the arsonist to be successful.

Some security measures include:

- Using lighting in yard areas and remote entrances to your business to discourage trespassers from entering.
- Installing monitored security and fire alarm systems which allow the detection of trespassers or fire. This can enable an earlier notification and response from emergency services.
- Making sure industrial rubbish dumpsters and plastic wheelie bins are locked and secured in areas where arsonists can not access them.
- Ensuring that all windows and doors are locked and secured after hours and on weekends.
- Reporting any unusual activities happening in the workplace or suspicious person/s in the area to the appropriate authorities.