

Fact Sheet No. 8

Fire training in your workplace

Current fire safety legislation requires all employers to ensure their staff have some form of fire safety training. It does not though say exactly what form that training should take, and this has led to some confusion as to what's required. Broadly speaking, the level of training should be related to the risks posed in the workplace. If the risk is very low, like in a small office, the training can be very basic; a car maintenance workshop naturally suggests a higher risk of fire, and therefore more training would be required.

The first step is to complete a fire risk assessment. It's a legal requirement and it will help you to decide on what training is right for you.

Everyone regularly employed in the workplace should be aware of the risks of fire. They specifically need to know what action should be taken in case of fire, including:

- how to raise the alarm,
- the location of escape routes,
- assisting visitors or members of the public,
- the location of the fire assembly point,
- the use of the fire equipment provided, and
- how to summon the fire service.

An example of basic fire training

For small, low risk workplaces, the training could consist of a walk around the premises and short discussion with the staff, covering all the points required in the regulations, e.g. where the fire escape routes are, how to raise the alarm and how to use the fire extinguishers. It's always a good idea to keep a record of what training was given including the dates and who was present.

Specific fire risks

Your workplace may contain a small number of specific fire risks, such as a fork-lift truck or a flammable storage area. Your risk assessment would highlight these and you may decide additional training is necessary for the members of staff who work around these risks, e.g. practical fire extinguisher training giving each person hands-on experience in the use of extinguishers on real fires.

Fire Marshals

On completing your assessment you may decide to appoint a number of fire marshals or fire wardens. Their duties can include:

- carrying out fire risk assessments,
- identifying fire hazards and minimising the risks they pose,

- checking escape routes to be functional and free from obstruction,
- overseeing the checking and maintenance of the fire detection system, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting,
- helping to devise a fire evacuation plan and overseeing regular fire drills,
- ensuring good security is in place to minimise the risk of arson, and
- developing a habit of good housekeeping and fire action awareness amongst all staff with regular training.

Appointing fire marshals helps to identify exactly who is responsible for each aspect of fire safety. Even in a small workplace, just two fire marshals will mean everyone is clear who will:

- take charge in a fire situation,
- perform regular checks to ensure the public have not tampered with extinguishers or signs,
- organise a fire drill,
- liaise with the fire brigade,
- keep track of fire maintenance and training records.

Fire marshals may also give basic fire awareness training to other members of staff in low risk areas. Keeping this kind of training in-house saves money and helps to maintain a high level of fire safety awareness in the workplace.

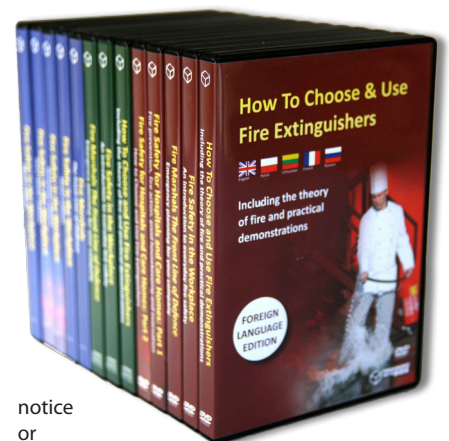
Training solutions available

We have been providing fire training solutions for 1000s of firms all over the UK since 1972. We are happy to customise any session or program to your exact requirements, but there are three broad solutions available:

Training In A Box™ DVD packs

For the majority of firms, most staff will only require a basic level of fire training. You need a solution that's straightforward, flexible, available whenever you need it and cost effective. For these staff, why not choose from our exclusive DVD, CD-ROM or FlipBook training packs?

Accountability and training records are important. It's one thing showing the staff a DVD, but who's to say they have taken any



notice or learned anything? Each one of our packs contains everything you need to run a professional in-house session, including:

- questionnaires relating to the DVD presentation. You can use these completed questionnaires to demonstrate that each member of staff reached the required level,
- certificates to issue to the staff,
- a training record form, to be signed by each person as further proof of attendance,
- fact sheets, detailing everything they need to know.

On-Site Practical Sessions

Sometimes there's nothing to replace hands-on experience. If some of your staff are working in high risk areas you may decide this is the best solution. Practical fire fighting sessions can be tied in with general or fire marshal training lectures so we can create the perfect training session for you.

What Now?

We have more free fire safety fact sheets available to download from our web site. Feel free to print these off and use on your own training sessions. For a fully structured approach our Training In A Box packs are always available on a free 7 day trial, so you can try before you buy. Or for the most comprehensive option, consider hands-on fire fighting training. Just get in touch for more information.