

**Tyne and Wear Fire
and Rescue Service**

Creating the Safest Community



COVID-19

PROTECTION

Advice to Businesses when Returning to Work

Now that your business is starting to operate again there are some key Fire Safety matters for you to consider. This leaflet is designed to provide some helpful assistance.

www.twfire.gov.uk

Fire Risk Assessments

On your return to work it may be necessary to review your Fire Risk Assessment to ensure that it is current and reflects the way your business now operates. Consider changes such as working practices, stock levels, alterations made to the premises and staff numbers. It is essential that assessments are undertaken and reviewed where there are significant changes in ways of working, processes or building layout. This may include the holding open of fire doors with unsuitable devices, this is not permitted.

Means of Escape

Ensure that your escape routes remain available and open correctly - remember, they may have seized up whilst not in use. If you share an escape route remember that those other businesses may not be open. This should be supported with adequate escape signage and lighting to identify the escape routes to be used in event of fire.

Arson

Due to the potential increased stock and the period of closure, the amount of rubbish you generate may increase. Care should be taken when dealing with this rubbish as accumulated rubbish outside of the building provides a potential target for arson which could damage your business.

Training

Where staff numbers have changed, businesses must ensure that they continue to provide appropriate staff training. If you haven't undertaken staff training for some time, on your return ensure that all staff know what to do in a fire situation. If those people with specific tasks have not returned to work, ensure that other suitably trained staff are available. You must consider the needs of lone workers and their fire safety.

Maintaining Fire Safety Measures

Whilst you have been closed have you maintained your premises fire safety features, i.e. fire alarm, fire extinguisher and emergency lighting? Timely maintenance is vital for the safety of your business and those that use the premises.

Should you have any further queries then visit the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service website at www.twfire.gov.uk and look for Business Safety.

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