

A basic guide to...

Fire Safety for Scout Premises





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This Guide has been designed and produced by Chubb Fire to assist persons responsible for fire safety within a Scout premises.

The guide provides basic information on what a fire risk assessment is and how you might go about it. It also provides further guidance on fire precautions to help reduce the risk of a fire starting and also to persons should a fire occur within the Scout meeting place. It has been provided by Chubb Fire Limited as part of the sponsorship of the Scouts' Fire Safety Badge. It is intended as a guide on how to complete a basic fire risk assessment and does not constitute a full fire risk assessment.

Regulations in the UK

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006

*England and Wales
Scotland*

Legislation update

New Fire Regulations came in to effect on 1st of October 2006 across the UK, repealing all previous fire safety legislation and seeing the end of the issuing of Fire Certificates. Whether you are north or south of the border, both pieces of legislation requires managers of any non-domestic premises to carry out fire risk assessment that moves and reduces the risk of fire.

The risk assessment should consider:

- User, visitor and contractor fire safety
- Protection of property from fire
- Fire fighter safety, should fire fighters have to enter a property
- Environmental impact of fire

If Scout Groups require any help or further advice on fire precautions, or is interested in a full fire risk assessment provided by our Chubb Fire Risk Assessment Consultancy service, the group could contact their local Chubb Branch on 0800 32 1666.

More information is available in "Your guide to Fire Legislation", and in fact sheet FS320007 "Managing Fire Safety" available on www.scouts.org.uk/safety. A detailed guide to Fire Safety for Small and Medium Places of Assembly is available to download for free from www.firesafetyguides.communities.gov.uk.



At the end of this Guide is an annual routine fire inspection check list for a typical Scout premises. The responsible person should conduct a Fire Risk Assessment to determine the levels of present fire safety precautionary measures.

More resources...

Additional resources to assist you with this are also available at scouts.org.uk/safety in the section on safe premises and campsites

A Fire Safety Risk Assessment – A Basic Guide

A fire risk assessment is a systematic look at potential sources of fire, the danger that fire poses to those using your Scout meeting place and how risk can be minimised.

The five key steps of a Fire Risk Assessment:

1

Identify the Hazards

Identify sources of ignition – i.e. how a fire could start - such as naked flames, heaters matches, gas. You should also consider the threat of arson.
Identify sources of fuel – i.e. what could burn - such as a wood, paper, hardboard and polystyrene, including waste packaging, rubbish and furniture, display materials as well as petrol and paint.

2

Identify people at risk

Identify who in your premises will be at risk, making special note of anyone who are especially vulnerable such as children, elderly or people with disabilities.

3

Evaluate, remove or reduce, and protect from risk

Evaluate the risk of the likelihood of a fire starting
Remove or reduce fire hazards
Protect people by providing fire precautions
Separate flammable materials from sources of ignition and consider appropriate storage for them

4

Record, plan and train

Record any major findings and actions you have taken
Discuss and work with other responsible people, especially if you share your Scout premises
Prepare an emergency plan
Inform and instruct relevant people
Provide training

5

Review and revise

Review your fire risk assessment regularly, especially if you have had a change of use of your premises or a near miss. Make changes where necessary.

The Assessment Should Include:

Means of escape

- Does the premises have one or more final exit doors?
- Are protected routes to safety, maintained with closed doors?

Fire warning

- Does the premises have a suitable and adequate method of alerting all persons to fire?
- Is there a fire alarm, gong, hand bell or air horn etc?

Emergency lighting

- Does the premises have an emergency lighting system?
- Are torches, lanterns or similar light sources available to assist everyone to use the escape routes to safety in the event of a power failure?

Signage

- Are suitable information, instruction and warning signs provided within the premises?

Portable fire fighting equipment

- Are suitable portable extinguishers provided within the premises?
- Are there designated persons trained in the safe use of portable fire fighting equipment?

Training

- Are all users provided with induction training and on going training in the procedures to be adopted in the event of fire or necessary evacuation?

Fire evacuation plan

- Has a Fire evacuation Plan been designed and produced for the premises?

Record keeping

- Is a Fire Log Book provided and maintained with up to date records of all the above sections?
- Are test, service and training records all made and maintained within the Fire Log book?

Disabled persons

- Have suitable arrangements been made to assist any disabled person within the premises to escape from fire or the alarm of fire?

Risk areas

- Have arrangements been made to have all portable electrical equipment subjected to appropriate regular testing (PAT)?
- Has the main electrical installation been inspected within a reasonable timescale?
- Have boilers, cooking ranges (fixed) and similar been serviced and maintained?
- Are LPG (Propane etc) cylinders stored in a safe place?
- Are paints and thinners etc stored in a safe and secure manner?

The following pages give further detail on many of these sections to help you complete your Fire Risk Assessment Report for a Scout premises.



Means of Escape

The means of escape provision is the most important Fire Safety requirement and should be maintained and protected at all times.

Final exit doors

Roller shutter doors are not acceptable as a means of escape because of the risk of electrical failure and/or the chain snagging in an emergency.

Availability of fire exits

All fire exits should be kept unlocked and immediately available at all times that the premises are occupied.

Doors that are required for means of escape must be easily and immediately open-able from within, at all times that the premises are occupied in order to prevent persons being impeded/trapped in the event of fire.

It is permissible for exit doors to open inward if they are serving less than 50 persons and are not immediately at the bottom of a staircase.

Sliding or revolving doors are not normally considered suitable for use on escape routes unless there are likely to be no more than five persons who may need to use them.

Items which pose a potential fire hazard or those which could cause an obstruction should not be located in corridors or stairways which are intended for use as a means of escape in an emergency. In particular the following items should never be located in protected routes, or in a corridor or stairwell, which serves as the sole means of escape from the workplace, or part of it:

- Electrical equipment, such as photocopiers,
- Portable heaters of any type,
- Heaters which have unprotected naked flames or radiant bars,
- Fixed heaters using a gas supply cylinder, where the cylinder is within the escape route,
- Oil-fuelled heaters or boilers,
- Cooking appliances,
- Upholstered furniture,
- Coat racks,
- Temporarily stored items including items in transit, eg furniture, beds, laundry,
- Waste bins,
- Lighting using naked flames,
- Gas boilers, pipes, meters or other fittings (except those permitted in the standards supporting the building regulations and installed in accordance with the 'gas safety regulations),
- Gaming and/or vending machines,
- Electrical equipment (other than normal lighting, emergency escape lighting, fire alarm systems, or equipment associated with a security system) eg photocopiers.

All fire doors must be effectively self closing at a safe and controlled speed and be held firmly in the closed position without the aid of a catch. They should not be held open by irregular means.



Fire Warning

All occupants of the premises are at risk if they cannot hear a warning or give a warning of fire.

As a general principle a person who has become aware of fire should not be able to exit any storey in the building or the building itself without passing at least one fire alarm call point, where he or she is able to actuate the fire alarm or warn other occupiers of the danger from fire.

Domestic smoke alarms should be tested on a weekly basis and their batteries changed each year. All tests and battery changes should be recorded.

Where the meeting place is small and all persons are within the one area, a hand gong, bell or air horn could be considered as a suitable method of alerting all to a fire.

Where there are a number of rooms a more suitable fire warning system may be required.

Emergency Lighting

The purpose of emergency lighting is to provide sufficient illumination in the event of a failure of the normal electric lighting, so that a building can be evacuated quickly and safely.

Where it is apparent that the lack of lighting would endanger persons attempting to leave the premises in the event of a fire, consideration should be given to installing a simple emergency lighting system.

Where portable lamps or torches are provided instead of emergency lighting it is important to ensure that they are appropriate and suitable for the purpose.

A named individual should be nominated as responsible for the equipment, and there should be a system in place to check that the equipment is available, in place and operates correctly. This check should be carried out at the beginning of each meeting. There should also be a fault-recording and repair system. Adequate numbers of spare lamps or torches, to replace any which are defective, should be available.



Signage

All routes and doors affording means of escape must be conspicuously signed in accordance with the standards set out in the Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 to ensure that persons are not at risk of delay in making their escape in the event of fire.

All portable fire fighting equipment should have the “Type & Use” clearly identified by signage.

Printed FIRE ACTION notices should be displayed at conspicuous positions in the premises. They should state in concise terms the essentials of the action to be taken upon discovering a fire and on hearing the fire alarm. The notices should be permanently fixed in position and suitably protected to prevent loss or defacement, located in prominent positions, such as notice boards and at exit doors.

Portable Fire Fighting Equipment

It is important that premises are provided with adequate numbers of portable fire extinguishers of the appropriate types.

Portable fire extinguishers enable suitable trained people to tackle a fire in its early stages, if they can do so without putting themselves in danger.

Hand held extinguishers should be provided at a ratio of approximately 1 Water Extinguisher for every 200 square metres of floor space, in addition to each storey exit, with a minimum of one per floor. Additionally, it is recommended that each Water type extinguisher is supplemented by a CO₂ type extinguisher to cover the risk generated by electrical apparatus within the floor area.

Training

All persons should be instructed and trained to ensure that they understand the precautions in the premises and the action to be taken in the event of fire.

Training should be based on written instructions but it is important that they are specific to these premises and the current occupier. Reliance upon a standard instruction of a type used by many large organisations may not be satisfactory without modification to suit your individual needs.

Fire Evacuation Plan

It is advisable to develop a plan for the event of fire, not only to ensure that all persons escape from a fire without injury, but also to ensure that damage to the property is minimised so that the premises may re-open with the minimum of down time.



Record Keeping

The log book records remind persons to complete regular training, tests and checks. Failure to carry out tests, training etc could result in increased risk due to failure of the fire precautionary arrangements in an emergency.

It is recommended that a dedicated fire log book is provided, in which all fire related records should be maintained.

Maintain comprehensive records in the fire log book of all

- Fire alarm actuations, servicing and tests,
- Emergency light tests, servicing and checks,
- Fire training,
- Fire evacuation drills,
- Fire extinguisher checks and tests,
- Means of escape checks,
- Portable electrical appliance tests,
- Checks of any portable lamps or torches.

Disabled Persons

Any disabled person in the premises could be at risk unless suitable disability procedures are devised, which are understood by all appropriate persons.

The difficulties of people with a wide range of physical or mental disabilities must be taken account of.

Therefore, in order to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, consideration may be necessary for the provision of visual or physical signals to augment the audible fire alarm warning as appropriate and additional physical measures may be necessary.

You should ensure that your emergency plan includes a record of where disabled people may be located in the building and the plan of action to assist them in the event of fire. It may be appropriate to devise a Personal Evacuation Plan for particular individuals, including those with any temporary reduced ability such as pregnant women.

Risk Areas

It is recommended by the 'Electricity at Work Regulations' that the electrical safety testing (PAT) of all electrically powered appliances and associated equipment continues at appropriate intervals (you may refer to HSE guidance, 'maintaining portable electrical equipment in offices and other low risk environments').

In accordance with IEE Regulations, a competent electrical engineer should test the electrical system periodically and the results of these tests should be recorded.

General electrical circuits should be tested and checked by a competent contractor at regular intervals.

It is recommended that at the end of each session, that all electrical appliances that are not required to be in use are switched off and that plugs have been removed from the electrical outlets.



Gas boilers and other appliances, which are powered by natural gas, should be subject to periodic servicing by a suitably registered person in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations. Records of this work should be maintained in the log book.

LPG powered heaters and appliances should be subject to periodic servicing in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

General Storage

It is recommended that care is taken to ensure that combustible storage or refuse is kept away from all ignition sources and that any refuse is disposed of frequently to the open air.

Combustible materials are not just those generally regarded as highly combustible, such as polystyrene, but all materials, which will readily catch fire.



Cylinders and Flammable Gases

All gas cylinders, both full and empty, should ideally be stored inside an external cylinder cage. The cage should be secure, be away (at least 1.5 metres) from the perimeter fence and be clearly indicated by signage.

Where LPG in cylinders or cartridges are present (including aerosol canisters) inside a building, you should take particular care to minimise the possibility of its involvement in a fire. The total stock of LPG should be kept to the minimum necessary to meet your needs. In no circumstances should it exceed 15kg unless the cylinders are stored in a compartment that provides at least 60 minutes of fire resistance.

LPG cylinders and cartridges, which are stored internally should be kept in a safe place, where they cannot be interfered with, and away from stairways, exit doors and places where they might obstruct the means of escape.

Further guidance on the safe storage of LPG is available from your supplier or the Liquefied Petroleum Gas Associations code of practice (storage of full and empty LPG cylinders and cartridges).

Making fire safety simple - when deciding on a fire safety strategy you should consider how to:



Prevent Fire



Detect Fire



Contain Fire



Escape Fire

Annual Fire Inspection Check List

Name of scout premises	
Premises address	
Name of person in charge	
Date of inspection	
Name of person conducting the inspection	



To ensure this Scout premises operates in a safe and efficient manner, inspections are carried out to ensure proper fire safety systems are in place.

The items listed should be checked, and the appropriate “yes”/“no” ticked or “n/a” inserted. Where asked, dates and details should be inserted.

Defects noted should be recorded in the “comments” section. Details of remedial actions should also be recorded.

This Check List has been provided by Chubb as part of the sponsorship of the Scouts’ Fire Safety Badge. It is intended as a guide to some of the things you should consider as part of your basic fire risk assessment and does not constitute a full risk assessment. Should you require any help or further advice, or a full risk assessment, you can should contact your local Chubb Branch on 0800 32 1666.

Additional resources to assist you with this are also available at scouts.org.uk/safety in the section on safe premises and campsites.

Previous fire risk assessment	Yes	No	Comments
Is there a previous fire risk assessment?			
Date of last assessment			
Copy available?			
Comments/faults noted with details of the actions taken or arranged to remove/ reduce/ minimise the risk			
Action taken			

Means of escape	Yes	No	Comments
Are the fire exit routes clear?			
Are the fire exit doors clear of obstructions, both outside and inside?			
Are all the exits clearly indicated with fire exit signs?			
Are fire doors kept shut with the words "FIRE DOOR KEEP CLOSED" clearly visible?			
Are final exit doors easily opened?			
If self-closing devices are fitted, are they effective. i.e. fully closing the door?			
If a fire was to block the largest fire exit, would there be a sufficient number of alternative exits to provide satisfactory evacuation?			
Are the fire doors suitable for people in wheelchairs?			
Comments/faults noted with details of the actions taken or arranged to remove/ reduce/ minimise the risk			
Action taken			

Fire Detection and Alarm Systems	Yes	No	Comments
Will the means of raising the fire alarm be audible throughout your meeting place?			
Is the method of raising the alarm i.e. break glass, gong or hand bell sited in conspicuous positions and where the operator will not be exposed to harm?			
If automatic detection is not provided, will a fire be discovered in time to permit a safe evacuation?			
If not, is it necessary to provide automatic fire detection?			
If an electrical fire alarm system is installed, does it comply with the relevant provisions of BS 5839?			
Are all leaders aware of how to raise the alarm?			
Is the fire alarm system tested and maintained in accordance with the guidance given in BS 5839 by a competent contractor? (insert name of who and when last tested)			
Are manually operated alarms tested weekly to ensure that they are audible throughout the and checked annually?			
Are electrical fire detection and alarm systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested weekly? • Inspected and tested at least annually by a competent person 			
If an automatic fire detection system:			
Indicate type			
Manual call point(s)?			
Automatic fire detection?			
Battery operated detectors/sounders?			
Is the fire brigade called automatically via an alarm receiving centre? (RedCARE)			

System information			
• Insert date of last service			
• Recorded in fire log book?			
• Spare keys provided?			
• Spare glasses provided?			
• Test key provided?			
Weekly test?			
in fire log book?			

Emergency Lighting	Yes	No	Comments
In the event of power failure:			
Will all exit routes be adequately illuminated at all times the premises are occupied?			
Will all exit signs be visible?			
Is emergency lighting installed?			
Maintenance carried out by competent contractor (insert name)			
• Insert date of last service			
• Monthly test?			
• Recorded in fire log book?			

Fire Fighting Equipment	Yes	No	Comments
Are sufficient numbers of extinguishers provided and properly located?			
Are fire extinguishers easily accessible?			
Are extinguishers wall mounted, strapped or on stands?			
Are fire extinguishers indicated by a suitable sign?			
Are safety pins/seals fitted to show that extinguishers have been operated or tampered with?			
Indicate types provided			
• Water			
• Foam			
• CO ₂			
• Powder			
• Fire blanket			
• Other portable (list details)			
• Hose reels			
Serviced and maintained by qualified contractor(s) in the last 12 months?			
• Service provider(s) name(s)			
• Date of last service?			
• Recorded in fire log book?			

Fire Evacuation Procedures	Yes	No	Comments
Are fire assembly points large enough to accommodate all evacuees and located in the most appropriate area?, e.g.:			
• Clear of the building and attending fire appliances			
• Allowing quick transfer of evacuees to another area in the event of the spread of fire and smoke			
Are persons nominated to call the fire brigade aware of their responsibilities and what to do?			
Are persons nominated to meet the fire and rescue service and provide them with information on the fire location and any missing persons, aware of their responsibilities?			

Are fire action notices displayed and satisfactory?			
Are written instructions issued?			
Fire instruction/training carried out as required?			
Drills carried out last 12 months?			
Fire log book maintained/up to date?			

Housekeeping	Yes	No	Comments
Waste bins supplied & adequate?			
Refuse disposal arrangements satisfactory?			
Furniture & fittings good condition?			
Storage space adequate?			
Assembly areas tidy?			
Highly flammable liquids (LPG etc) safely stored?			
Heating/cooking/lighting satisfactory?			

Arson Prevention	Yes	No	Comments
Where provided, are the following regularly checked and maintained to ensure effectiveness?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary security fences 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security lighting 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security cctv and recording systems 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intruder alarms 			
Is all combustible material regularly removed from the vicinity of boundary and fences			

Disabled Persons	Yes	No	Comments
Do you have satisfactory arrangements in place to provide for the safe evacuation of disabled persons? e.g.			
Visual alarms for deaf persons			
Training of nominated persons provide assistance			
Familiarising persons with impaired vision with escape routes			
Provision of assistance for persons with learning difficulties or mental illness			

Electrical Equipment	Yes	No	Comments
Cupboard clear of any materials?			
Visible circuit wiring in good order?			
Portable appliances tested in last 12 months?			
Temporary wiring in good order?			

Gas Equipment	Yes	No	Comments
Provided?			
Meter /storage compound clear of flammable materials?			
Visible pipe work good order/free from abrasions?			
Control valves properly indicated?			
Gas cooker cut off valve fitted and signed properly indicated?			

General	Yes	No	Comments
Are procedures in place to assist any disabled persons or visitors should fire or the alarm of fire be present?			

REPORT OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Has a full fire risk assessment been done? _____

Report held by: _____

Location of FRA (in case of Brigade Inspection) _____

