

# Arson fire risk



About half the fires the UK fire and rescue services attend each year are suspected to have been started deliberately.\*

\*<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-statistics-great-britain>

Premises may get targeted because of certain practices, links with other organisations, or it might just have been an easy target.

Alternatively, the fire could be started by someone closely linked to the business if relationships have soured. Improving security and fire prevention, resistance and control measures can reduce the risk of being targeted, as well as property damage, injuries and fatalities.

### Key actions to prevent and defend against arson

- Make sure that your fire risk assessment has been completed (including looking at the arson risk), and any significant hazards identified have been addressed and controlled.
- Carry out periodic inspections, checking security measures and housekeeping standards, including the perimeter of your site.
- Train employees so they know what to look out for (e.g. question unfamiliar people alone in restricted areas). Keep them updated on police and government advice about what to be aware of.
- Control visitor access to private areas of the premises and review security in areas the public has access to.
- Reduce the chance of fire starting in a letter or parcel receiving box from spreading by installing automatic fire extinguishers.
- Install sprinkler systems where practicable and keep access to the sprinkler system pump house, valve sets and controls secure at all times.
- Review and maintain your security measures, including barriers (fencing, gates, shutters, etc.) and intruder detection and deterrent methods, such as alarms, security lighting and manned patrols.

- Protect vulnerable external glazing and skylights with metal security shutters, bars or grilles and replace flimsy fire exit doors with a steel variety approved by the [Loss Prevention Certificate Board \(LPCB\)](#).
- Ensure, where possible, locks are a patent protected, unique design, to make key copying more difficult. Don't forget to strictly manage who has access codes and keys (not forgetting contractors like cleaners and anyone else who might no longer work there). Padlocks used outside (i.e. on gates and shutters) should conform to BS EN 12320 CEN security grade 5 or LPS 1654 Grade 3+, with chains of a 'Sold Secure Gold' approved type.
- Don't store combustible goods, including waste and crates, outside unless they're in locked steel containers, or containers with lockable lids. Any outside storage should be at least 10 metres away from buildings and other structures.
- Store flammable and explosive substances separately from combustible goods in suitable and secure containers, ideally outside, as far as possible from any buildings and the site perimeter.
- Seal off gaps or voids between or beneath portable buildings with a non-combustible 'skirt'.
- Ensure there is a robust end-of-day (lock-up) routine, including checking all security measures are in place and activated, and that combustible goods are stored safely.