



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR

LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

Fire Safety Policy

Fire Safety Policy

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Policy

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (the ETB) is committed to ensuring that all staff are provided with a safe place of work, safe plant and machinery and safe systems of work in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- a positive, safe working environment will be in place across the ETB
- that all staff are conscious of fire safety
- the promotion of best practice in relation to the prevention of fire
- each employee and user of the ETB facilities recognise their responsibility to ensure the safety of oneself and others

Scope

This procedure is applicable to all staff (including work experience staff). It is the responsibility of every employee to read and understand this Policy. If you do not understand any of the content please seek clarification from your line manager.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy and associated procedures has been completed with the object of bringing together, into one document, the many aspects of fire safety, which apply to all programmes and services within the ETB.
- 1.2 The contents do not replace the statements of law contained in relevant legislation. However, they can provide much detail for implementing and strengthening the effect of such statutory provisions and, if adhered to, will permit the development of safe procedures and practices that are required of all ETB employees, learners/students and users of building.

2.0 Role of the Centre Manager

- 2.1 It is the duty of each Centre Manager to bring the requirements of this policy to the attention of all staff under his/her control and to ensure that the day-to-day precautions outlined in subsequent sections are implemented as part of normal working procedures.

3.0 Legal Duties and Internal Organisation

3.1 Since the enactment of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, the obligations and duties of the Fire Services Act, 1981 have been extended to cover all buildings owned or occupied by the ETB.

3.2 The main purpose of the Fire Services Act, 1981, is to assign responsibility for fire safety to those persons who own, occupy, manage or work in premises.

3.3 Duties of Centre Managers

Section 18 (2) places a duty on the owner, occupier or manager to *“take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises and to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire”*.

While every manager is required to exercise a duty of care to all employees, learners/students and users of building in respect of health and safety risks, the fire safety management of each premise is designated as the responsibility of the Fire Safety Manager on the premises or any individual manager specifically nominated for the purpose.

Each manager shall ensure that any new employees, learners/students and users of a building are briefed on fire safety arrangements.

3.4 Duties of Employees

Section 18 (3) of the Act imposes a duty on every person using a premises whether working or visiting to *“conduct himself/herself in such a way as to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, any person on the premises is not exposed to danger from fire as a consequence of any act or omission of his/hers”*.

The obligations included in this section require all employees to work safely and to co-operate fully with procedures and practices laid down by the ETB to fulfil its responsibilities under the Act.

Employees/learners/students shall be familiar with the day-to-day fire prevention measures outlined in this document. Employees/learners/students must not deliberately misuse or abuse any equipment, appliance or means of escape or arrangements provided to ensure the safety of all occupants of a building. It is an offence to do so.

3.5 Duties of the Fire Safety Manager

- appoint a Chief Fire Warden for each building
- ensure that sufficient Fire Wardens are appointed in their respective areas
- ensure that Deputies are available to assume the role during the absence of the Chief Fire Warden or Fire Warden
- ensure that the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens/Deputies are trained in their roles
- be present or have an authorised Deputy present when the public are on the premises.

3.6 Duties of the Chief Fire Warden

- ensure that certificates of maintenance of equipment are attached to the Fire Register
- ensure that any fire incident/dangerous occurrence is reported to the Health & Safety Officer
- ensure that a fire emergency evacuation drill is carried out **twice yearly** and that all persons on the premises co-operate with this drill
- keep a full record of all drills carried out
- arrange for the removal of all fire hazards
- ensure that a plan of the premises is displayed permanently inside the main entrance(s)
- ensure that escape routes are kept clear and that doors, gates etc. on these routes and exits can be easily opened by persons using the premises
- ensure that access routes are kept clear for use by fire appliances
- ensure that gates and barriers that are likely to obstruct fire-fighting operations are unlocked or removed when the alarm is raised
- meet the officer in charge of the fire brigade and provide information on:
 - (a) the number and location of persons still on the premises.
 - (b) the location of the fire.
 - (c) any special hazards e.g. Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) tanks and cylinders etc.
 - (d) entry points to the building.
 - (e) available water supplies.
- make a copy of the plan of the premises available to the officer in charge of the fire brigade.
- ensure that oil pipelines and gas mains should be shut off when the alarm is raised. Electricity should be shut off if requested by the officer in charge of the fire brigade.
- ensure that the quarterly and annual inspection and test procedures for emergency lighting as outlined in I.S. 3218 are carried out.
- inspect Fire Hydrants on a monthly basis to ensure that there are no obstructions impeding access and that hydrant indicator plates are in position.
- keep a Fire Safety Register. This register must be kept in Reception at all times and should be available for inspection by any authorised officer of the fire authority.

3.7 Duties of Fire Wardens/Deputy Fire Wardens

- familiarise him/herself with the area assigned, and monitor it on an on-going basis reporting any fire hazards to the Chief Fire Warden.
- keep a list of all disabled staff/learners/students and make provision for their safe evacuation in the event of a fire.
- liaise with Centre Managers / Employees in their assigned area.

4.0 Fire Wardens

4.1 A sufficient number of Fire Wardens shall be appointed. One Fire Warden shall be Deputy Chief Fire Warden.

4.2 A Fire Warden should be selected on his/her suitability to carry out the duties as outlined above. The Fire Warden(s) for any particular area should, where possible, be appointed from the area in which they normally work.

4.3 In all cases, a separate Fire Warden is required for each floor of a building.

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4.4 A Fire Warden should not be required to assist evacuation on both sides of an escape lobby / stairway. If there is accommodation on more than one side of an escape lobby / stairway, a separate Fire Warden should be appointed for each such area.

4.5 A Deputy Fire Warden should be appointed in each Fire Warden Area.

5.0 Fire or Other Emergency

The following outlines the procedures to be followed by a Fire Warden/Deputy Fire Warden in the event of fire or other emergency requiring the evacuation of his/her particular area:

- ensure that the alarm is raised and that Reception staff call the fire brigade
- notify the Chief Fire Warden /Deputy of the nature of the emergency
- ensure that everyone except those with defined duties evacuate to pre-determined assembly areas by way of the nearest available exit
- check that all rooms, including toilets, on the floor or section are vacated when the fire alarm is sounded
- ensure that all windows and doors are closed to minimise the danger of the fire spreading. Normally the occupants of the room should close the windows, switch off equipment and leave lights on
- ensure that all lifts are vacated and are not subsequently used during the evacuation
- check that all occupants of his /her floor or section of the building are present at the assembly point
- inform the Chief Fire Warden of anyone who is injured or trapped
- be aware of any person in their particular area who is handicapped or with impaired hearing requiring assistance to a safe place
- check that the alarm is heard throughout their floor/section during fire drills, noting any deficiencies in toilets, inner offices etc.
- assist with the orderly and safe movement of personnel through the corridors, down the stairs and out of the building.

Under no circumstances should Fire Wardens put themselves at risk during fire evacuation operations. In any situation where doubt exists or where they fear for their own safety they should leave the building and assemble with other vacated employees, learners/students and users of building.

6.0 Fire Authority - Powers of Inspection

A fire authority inspector has power to enter and carry out inspections on premises under the Fire Services Act, 1981. The inspector can examine the premises for fire evacuation notices and appropriate and adequately maintained fire-fighting equipment.

- It is an offence to hinder an inspector in the discharge of his/her duty

The following guidelines apply should an inspector visit the premises:

- seek identification
- inform a senior manager of the inspector's presence
- do not obstruct or impede him/her from doing their duty

- do not give false or misleading information.

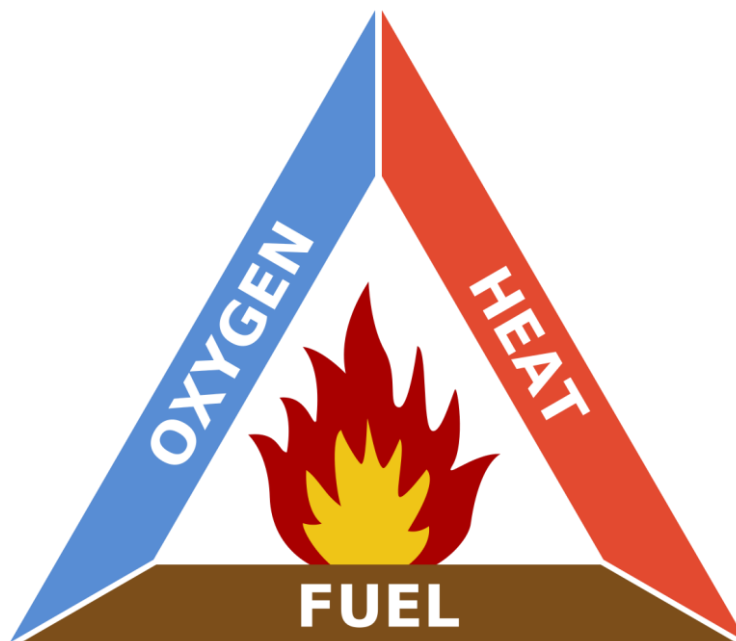
7.0 Fire Prevention

7.1 Fire Hazards can be prevented by:

- keeping fire doors closed at all times
- not allowing combustible materials (waste paper, furniture, textiles, new stationery) to accumulate in buildings, particularly on or under stairways, on landings, under workbenches, in hallways, back entrances to ground floors, in basement stores, in boiler houses or plant rooms
- ensuring that all emergency exits/escape routes which can be used in the event of an evacuation are adequately signposted and free from blockages
- ensuring that notices prohibiting the use of lifts in the event of fire are posted and the reason for the instruction generally understood (smoke would travel rapidly via the lift shaft)
- ensuring that fire extinguishers are not used to prop open doors.

7.2 The term “fire” is used to describe a chemical reaction or process that results from the interaction of combustible fuels with a source of ignition. It can be best described by the simple model of the fire triangle in which three elements oxygen, fuel and heat combine to initiate a burning process. The removal of any one side of the triangle results in its collapse and the prevention or discontinuation of the burning process. The concept of fire prevention aims to remove either the fuel or heat sides of the triangle to such an extent that ignition does not occur.

The Triangle of Fire



7.3 Combustible fuels can be subdivided into three main categories:

a) Solids

A combustible solid is a material that once heated will release vapours, which following interaction with oxygen will ignite and continue burning until either the oxygen, fuel or heat are exhausted or removed. Examples of solid combustible materials are paper, wood, plastics, and fabrics etc. all of which are readily available in the ETB.

b) Liquids

The degree of fire risk associated with liquids is dependent on the liquid's flashpoint. The "flashpoint" of a liquid is the lowest temperature at which the liquid produces flammable vapours that will ignite following interaction with heat and oxygen. A highly flammable liquid is one, which has a flashpoint below 32 degrees C. In other words, a liquid that produces flammable vapours at normal ambient temperature e.g. petrol (flashpoint -47 degrees C.)

Other liquids such as diesel or oils are also combustible. However, as their flashpoints are in excess of ambient temperatures they require pre-heating to permit vapour release and subsequent ignition. It follows therefore that the hazards associated with low flashpoint liquids are far greater than those of high flashpoint liquids and subsequently containers marked "Highly Flammable" should be treated with extreme caution.

c) Gases

Of all the three categories of fuels these are the most hazardous as they are already in the gaseous state and only require an ignition source for fire or explosion to occur. Common combustible gases in use in the Institute include Propane, Butane, Oxy/Acetylene and like highly flammable liquids require extreme caution in storage and use

7.4 Control of Fuels

Solids

Out of necessity large quantities of paper, furnishings and fittings are available in all buildings and uncontrolled use may result in the initial ignition. The control of fuels of this nature should form part of the normal day – to – day management of buildings and a common sense approach to storage and use can effectively reduce or eliminate the risk of fire occurring.

Managers must ensure that:

- stocks of paper, files, drawings etc. are stored in presses or cabinets located away from sources of ignition.
- paper or other combustible solids are not stored on floors of offices or rooms, on corridors or along escape routes.
- unwanted stocks of paper, obsolete or damaged furnishings should be removed from buildings and disposed of safely or stored in approved locations.
- paper does not accumulate in laboratories, computer rooms, plant rooms, workshops etc.

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- regular cleaning is carried out in all areas and that rubbish is removed from buildings prior to safe disposal.

Liquids

The ability of flammable liquids to ignite at ambient temperature requires strict control regarding storage and use.

Managers must ensure that:

- liquids labelled Highly Flammable are kept to the minimum quantity necessary and stored in suitable metal presses when not in use
- petrol or its by products are only transported in approved metal containers
- petrol is stored in approved metal containers (maximum capacity 2 x 9 litres) in an approved location.

Gases

Fire or explosion involving storage or use may result from the ignition of leaking gas or following the heating of cylinders under fire conditions.

Managers must ensure that:

- cylinders of gas are not stored in operational buildings overnight
- cylinders are securely stored, upright, in compounds when not in use and moved in accordance with proper manual handling techniques
- cylinders containing oxygen or air are stored separately from combustible gases such as propane or butane
- damaged or defective cylinders are returned to the supplier.

Staff using gases should ensure that:

- hoses and connections are in good condition
- only approved connections are used in conjunction with cylinders
- cylinders are kept upright at all times during transportation, storage and use
- cylinders are stored in approved locations only.

8.0 Fire Prevention – Control of Sources of Ignition

8.1 The heat or ignition side of the fire triangle can result from any number of sources, which are readily available in all buildings. The most frequent causes of fire are:

- electrical equipment and wiring
- malicious ignition
- smoking
- gas equipment
- heating equipment
- hot work – cutting & welding equipment

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- rubbish burning

8.2 Electrical equipment and wiring may generally be the cause of fire in one of the following ways:

- arcing due to overload, earth faults or loose connections
- overheating due to overloading of capacity
- accidental ignition from apparatus designed to run hot in normal use e.g. electric heaters, cookers etc.
- accidental overheating of apparatus not designed to run hot in normal use

Control and Prevention

- only a competent electrician shall carry out all work involving the testing, wiring and installation of electrical equipment
- competent qualified personnel should only carry out repair and maintenance of electrical equipment or apparatus
- equipment and apparatus should be protected by correctly rated fuses/circuit breakers and earthed in accordance with relevant standards
- managers must ensure that all unnecessary apparatus and equipment is unplugged at the end of each working day
- cookers and cooking equipment should be constantly supervised when in use and switched off when not in use. Extractor hoods and filters should be cleared of grease/dust regularly
- never overload sockets by the use of adapters
- electrical switch rooms/plant rooms should be kept tidy at all times and never used for the storage of combustible materials, flammable liquids or gas
- use of portable or fixed radiant heaters with exposed heating elements is prohibited e.g. 1 or 2 bar electric heaters.

Do

- check for signs of damage to cables and leads
- report any defective equipment without delay
- switch off unnecessary equipment at the end of each working day

Don't

- overload circuits
- cover or place articles over heating appliances
- leave heat-emitting apparatus unattended
- tamper with electrical apparatus
- attach decorative linings or any combustible materials to light fittings

8.3 Malicious Ignition

Constant vigilance is the only means whereby ignition by intruders can be avoided. The security arrangements pertaining to each building should constantly be reviewed and revised as necessary.

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Do

- secure compounds where gas cylinders are stored
- secure the building against intruders
- report any defects in structural or perimeter security to the Buildings Manager
- ensure that visitors report to reception or to the caretaker on duty

Don't

- leave windows, doors or other entry points open when the building is unattended
- store flammable liquids or gases in a manner that permits their use by intruders

8.4 Smoking is prohibited in all the ETB buildings.

8.5 Gas and LPG

- the use of portable gas heaters in buildings is strictly forbidden
- all gas cylinders should be stored in the approved compound at the end of each working day
- connecting hoses to cylinders and fittings should be checked regularly for signs of leaks

8.6 Natural Gas

Ensure that the gas main supply, entering the premises, is turned off in the event of any outbreak of fire.

8.7 Hot Work - Cutting & Welding Equipment

Many serious fires have occurred as a result of contractors carrying out work on either building or refurbishing premises. Building operations by their very nature increase the risk of fire by the introduction of additional combustible materials and possible sources of ignition. The greatest fire risks associated with these activities are those involving "hot work". This may involve the use of:

- cutting & welding equipment
- blowlamps, blowtorches and hot air paint strippers
- angle grinders, cutting discs and abrasive wheels
- tar boilers

The risk of fire will be increased by the use of such equipment. Risks also arise from faulty or poorly maintained equipment or by transmission of heat through materials being welded or cut.

To reduce this risk "hot work" will be undertaken under a hot work permit system.

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This system will ensure that:

- before work commences the area is cleared of combustible materials. Combustible flooring and other items that cannot be removed are covered/screened by non-combustible material e.g. fire blankets
- fire extinguishers appropriate for the risk together with staff trained in their use are available
- combustible materials are also removed from the opposite side of walls, partitions and other heat conducting materials in the immediate vicinity of the work
- a watch for fire is maintained while the work is in progress
- any gas cylinders in use are secured in a vertical position and are fitted with the correct regulators and flashback arrestors
- tar boilers are only taken on to roofs in exceptional circumstances when a non-combustible heat-insulating base must be provided. The gas cylinders must be at least 3 metres from the burner
- spilled materials must be controlled
- all areas where work has taken place must be thoroughly examined one hour after work has finished

Do

- supervise all welding, cutting operations, use of blowtorches, angle grinders etc.
- remove all combustibles from the area where work is to be carried out or cover fixed combustible items with fire resistant blankets or sheeting
- ensure that all cutting or welding equipment is in a safe condition and operated safely
- store all oxygen and acetylene, propane cylinders in the compounds provided

Don't

- allow contractors or learners/students to perform welding and cutting operations unsupervised
- store welding gases overnight in buildings

8.8 Rubbish Burning

- The intentional burning of rubbish is a major fire risk and can result in severe damage to property and the ETB assets.
- Rubbish should not be burned on any premises owned by the ETB.

Do

- ensure that rubbish is removed from buildings on a daily basis

Don't

- burn rubbish on ETB property

9.0 Fire Prevention - Restricting Fire Spread

Buildings are provided with structural barriers, which prevent the spread of fire from one area to another.

Managers must ensure that:

- fire or smoke doors are labelled and are not jammed open unless that approved holding devices have been provided e.g. electro-magnetic catches.
- all service openings in floors, walls or ceilings are sealed to prevent the passage of smoke, hot gases etc. in the event of fire.

The purpose of sealing service openings is to:

- prevent the passage of combustion products from one compartment or room to another
- prevent smoke logging and interfering with the integrity of escape routes
- minimise possible damage to furnishings, fittings and equipment by corrosive by-products of combustion.

All service openings should be sealed:

- daily when temporary work is carried out
- Permanently when operations are completed
- Materials used for sealing purposes should have a minimum of one-hour fire resistance and comply with B S. 476 Part 8.

10.0 Fire Protection Equipment

10.1 Fire Protection Equipment can be divided into three main groups:

- Fire Extinguishing Equipment
- Fire Detection and Alarm Equipment
- Emergency Lighting

10.2 Fire extinguishing equipment refers to any appliance, either fixed or portable, that is provided for automatic or manual use in fire situations. Equipment found in the ETB buildings can be classified as follows:

- Fire Extinguishers
- Hose Reels
- Fire Blankets
- Fire Hydrants
- Suppression Systems

11.0 Fire Extinguishers

11.1 Portable fire extinguishers are provided in all buildings and are essential for the control of small fires

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11.2 All extinguishers contain an extinguishing medium, which upon actuation is discharged from the extinguisher by a propellant. The type of extinguisher installed and selected for use should be suitable for the risks that are present in any building or area within a building

11.3 Fire extinguishers should not be used to prop open doors. This may lead to extinguishers being damaged and unusable or removed from the appropriate location during an emergency

12.0 Selection of Fire Extinguisher

12.1 The type of fire extinguisher selected will depend on the fuel load present and the risks involved. Fire risks are divided into three main classes for simplicity with corresponding extinguishers available for each class.

- Class (a) Fire consists of paper, wood and textiles
- Class (b) Fire consist of flammable liquids or liquefiable solids
- Class (c) Fire involves flammable gases

12.2 The number of fire extinguishers provided depends on the risks involved

12.3 Fire extinguishers should be sited as near as possible to exits or staircase landings. As a general rule no person should have to travel more than 30 metres to reach an extinguisher

12.4 It is important to position extinguishers in conspicuous positions where they are easily accessible. They should be mounted on brackets not more than 1 metre (larger) to 1.5 metre (smaller) from the floor. In cases where extinguishers are positioned at floor level they should be positioned in base blocks.

Extinguisher	Type	Label Colour	Use on
	Water	Red	Paper, Textiles, Furniture (i.e. all combustible materials)

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Foam Spray

Cream

Combustible Materials and
Flammable Liquids



Dry Powder

Blue

Electrical Apparatus,
Flammable Liquids and
Combustible Materials



Carbon Dioxide
(CO₂)

Black

Flammable Liquids,
Machines, Electrical
Apparatus

	Water	Foam	Dry Powder	CO ₂
Wood, Paper, textiles	☐	☐	☐	
Flammable Liquids		☐	☐	☐
Flammable Gases			☐	☐
Metal			Special Extinguisher	
Electrical			☐	☐

Best Extinguisher



Suitable Alternative



13.0 Fire Extinguisher – How to Use

13.1 All extinguishers are easy to operate once the user is familiar with the appliance. All staff should be fully aware of the type of extinguisher in their particular area and its mode of operation.

13.2 There are three basic steps to be followed when using an extinguisher:

- remove the Safety Pin
- grip the hose where provided with one hand and operate the extinguisher with the other
- press down on the carrying handle to activate and discharge the contents

Remember

- position yourself between the fire and the exit door
- keep the door in sight and if your vision becomes obstructed by smoke leave the area without delay and close the door
- leave the area if you feel the fire is getting out of control.

13.3 Prior to activating an extinguisher take up a position where access to the fire is not restricted but where a quick and safe retreat is possible i.e. the side of the fire nearest the door or when outside a building with the wind to your back. A crouched position will help you avoid smoke and heat and allow a closer approach to the fire.

13.4 Once a fire is extinguished ensure that the embers are totally doused to prevent re-ignition.

Different Extinguishers are used as follows:

Water



Direct the water at the base of the fire and keep moving it across the area of the fire. A fire spreading vertically should be attacked at its lowest point and followed up. Seek out any hot spots after the main fire is extinguished.

Note: Water is not suitable for fires involving flammable liquids or live electrical equipment.

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Foam Spray



Where a liquid on fire is in a container direct the jet at the far inside edge of the container or at an adjoining vertical surface above the level of the burning liquid. This allows the foam to build up and flow across the surface of the liquid.

Where this is not possible stand well back and allow the foam to drop down and lie on the surface of the liquid.

DO not direct the jet directly into the liquid, as it will drive the foam beneath the surface and render it ineffective. In addition, it may splash the liquid on to surrounding surfaces and spread the fire.

Dry Powder



On fires involving liquids in containers or spilled liquids direct the jet or discharge horn towards the near edge of the fire and with a rapid sweeping motion drive the fire towards the far edge until all the flames are extinguished.

On fires involving falling liquids direct the jet or horn at the base of the flame and sweep upwards.

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)



On fires in electrical equipment the first requirement is to turn off the Electrical Supply before using the extinguisher.

Direct the extinguishing agent directly at the fire. Where the equipment is enclosed direct the extinguisher into any opening on the outer casing.

If the extinguisher is of the controlled discharge type shut off the discharge when the fire appears to be extinguished, wait until the atmosphere clears and if any flames are still visible discharge the extinguisher again.

Notes:

- Water should not be used on fires involving flammable liquids
- Water and foam are both conductors of electricity and must not be used on fires involving live electrical equipment; however, if the power supply is switched off they can be used effectively
- Gas fires should only be extinguished by turning off the gas supply. Water should be used to cool surroundings and containers. Where gas cylinders are involved people operating extinguishers should take up a position where they will be protected should the cylinder explode
- When using Carbon Dioxide Extinguishers (CO₂), ensure the premises is ventilated as carbon dioxide is an asphyxiant.

13.6 Fire extinguishers should be recharged immediately after use irrespective of whether they have been completely or partially discharged.

14.0 Hose Reels



14.1 The main advantage that a hose reel has over an extinguisher is the constant and unlimited water supply, which permits the user to extinguish much larger fires.

14.2 There are two types of hose reel available. They are similar in all respects except for the way of operating the flow of water. The two types are:

a) Manually Operated Hose Reels

This type consists of the standard hose length wound on to a drum. A stopcock/gate valve is located adjacent to the hose reel, which must be turned on before the hose is run out to permit water flow. A nozzle fitted to the end of the hose allows the operator to control the discharge of water.

b) Automatic Hose Reels

These are similar to the manual type except that the water is automatically turned on when approximately 2 metres of the hose is rolled off. Again a nozzle fitted at the end of the hose allows the operator to control the discharge of water. It is important to note that a stopcock/gate valve may be located adjacent to the hose for maintenance purposes and in this situation the valve should always be in the open position.

14.3 Hose Reel – How to Use

Hose reels are easy to use once the users are familiar with the mode of operation. In the majority of cases the hose can be operated by one person by pulling the hose off the drum and down the corridor to the site of the fire without having to negotiate obstructions. This is not, however, always possible as the route from the hose reel to the fire may for example be around a corner or through a door and this may result in a delay in getting to the fire. If an assistant is available s/he should be so positioned to feed the hose around any obstructions.

If an operator, however, is alone then sufficient hose should be pulled to the obstruction site so as to enable the operator to carry on to the scene of the fire without delay or further obstruction.

All staff should be familiar with the method of operation of the hose reels in their particular work area.

15.0 Fire Blankets



15.1 Fire blankets are usually fitted where flammable liquids in containers may ignite e.g. deep fat fryers. The purpose of the fire blanket is to execute oxygen and extinguish the fire in that fashion.

15.2 Fire Blanket – How to Use

- remove the blanket from its container and hold it so that it protects the face and body
- gently place the blanket over the burning surface
- switch off the heat source and leave the blanket in position until the liquid has cooled to prevent re-ignition.

16.0 Fire Hydrants



16.1 Fire hydrants are outlets provided externally on a main water supply for use by the Fire Brigade. They are normally marked by yellow painted covers or marker posts and should never be obstructed by vehicles or stored items. Employees or learners/students should never park a vehicle so as to obstruct access to or sight of a Fire Hydrant.

17.0 Fixed Fire Extinguishing Equipment



17.1 The FM 200 Suppression System is an environmentally acceptable flood extinguishing system. It is operated by an automatic fire detection system designed specifically for extinguishant release. The system can be operated both manually and automatically. Discharge nozzles should be kept free from obstructions at all times.

18.0 Fire Detection and Alarm Equipment

18.1 Early warning of a fire condition is vital if staff and learners/students are to be evacuated safely from a building. All ETB buildings are protected by an Automatic Fire Alarm and Detection System, where the automatic detectors “sense” the fire condition and automatically activates the evacuation signal.

18.2 All automatic systems include break glass units to allow for manual activation upon discovery of a fire condition. Bells or sounders must be audible throughout the building.

18.3 Emergency lighting equipment refers to lighting systems that can operate independently of normal lighting and are normally provided along escape routes to assist with evacuation. The main function of emergency lighting is to provide sufficient levels of light for persons to move safely to final exit points from buildings and to assembly points in the open air. These systems generally operate from a battery supply and once adequately maintained can be relied upon in emergency situations.

Apart from luminaries they also include emergency exit signs, which are strategically mounted at exit doors and final exits from buildings.

19.0 Inspection & Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment

19.1 It is mandatory under the Fire Services Act 1981 to record details of testing and maintenance in a Fire Register.

19.2 The following schedules refer to the inspection and maintenance of fire protection equipment as required by various Standards. The main objective is to ensure that all equipment will operate correctly in emergency situations and also remedy any defects at the earliest possible opportunity.

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- **Fire Extinguishers**

A **monthly inspection** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

- that all appliances are in the correct location
- that all firefighting appliances are free from obstruction
- that appliances have not been discharged
- for lost pressure if pressure indicator is provided on extinguisher
- for signs of damage.

A competent contractor who provides the Chief Fire Warden with an appropriate certificate on completion carries out the **Annual Maintenance**. The certificate shall be retained with the Fire Register. The annual maintenance must comply with B.S. 5306 or I.S. 291 depending on the construction standard specified on the appliance.

- **Hose Reels**

A **monthly inspection** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

- that on/off valve is operating normally
- that the automatic on/off valve is operating normally, if provided
- tubing and drum for signs of damage or wear
- the outlet nozzle for freedom of movement.
-

A competent contractor in compliance with B.S. 5306 Part 2 carries out the **Annual Inspection**. A discharge rate of 30 litres per minute should be expected.

- **Fire Hydrants**

A **monthly inspection** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

- that the hydrants are not obstructed
- that the indicator plates or markers are in position.

A competent contractor carries out the **Annual Inspection** and issues the Chief Fire Warden with a certificate on completion. The certificate shall be retained with the Fire Register.

- **Emergency Lighting**

A **weekly check** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

- that any faults recorded in the Fire Register for the previous week have received attention
- that every lamp in a maintained system is lighting or L.E.D.s where provided in non-maintained systems are operating normally
- that any defects are remedied without delay and a record entered in the Fire Register.

A competent contractor carries out the **Quarterly Checks** in compliance with **I.S.3217**

A competent contractor also carries out the **Annual Inspection**.

- **Fire Detection and Alarm Systems**

A **daily check** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

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- that the control panel indicates normal operation. If not, that any fault indicated is recorded in the Fire Register and is receiving urgent attention
- that any fault warning recorded the previous day is receiving attention.

A **weekly check** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

- that the indicating equipment on the control panel and alarm sounders or bells are functioning properly, by operating one break glass unit on each zone circuit
- that the battery connections providing back up to the control panel are in good condition. Action should be taken to remedy any defects, including low electrolyte level
- that at least one trigger device or end of line switch on each zone circuit is operated to test the ability of the control and indicating equipment to receive a signal and to sound the alarm and operate any other warning devices
- that any printer has adequate reserves of paper, toner for at least two weeks' normal usage.
- that defects are recorded in the Fire Register and appropriate action taken to correct it.

A **quarterly inspection** and **test procedures** are carried out by a competent contractor in compliance with **I.S. 3218: 1989**.

An **annual inspection** and **test procedures** are carried out by a competent contractor in compliance with **I.S. 3218: 1989**.

Note: The person carrying out the tests should notify the caretaker in advance to avoid any false calls.

- **Suppression Systems**

A **weekly check** is carried out by the Chief Fire Warden/Fire Wardens to check:

- that the discharge nozzles are not obstructed
- that the pressure gauges on cylinders are showing the correct pressure.

An **annual service** is carried out by a competent contractor and details recorded in the Fire Register.

20.0 Means of Escape

20.1 The foregoing parts of this document have dealt with the prevention and control of fire by means of preventative action and the provision of protection equipment. While the information, advice and instructions included in these parts will greatly assist in the management of fire hazards, there always exists the possibility of fire occurring and the subsequent need to train and inform staff on action to be taken in emergency situations.

20.2 The Fire Services Act 1981, emphasises the need for pre-fire planning and the provision of adequate information to enable staff to prevent fires occurring and also to escape from buildings safely, should fire occur.

20.3 What is Pre-Fire Planning?

The term refers to a wide range of activities that must be designed and implemented to ensure the safety of occupants in buildings. It can be subdivided under six headings:

- Means of Escape
- Maintenance of Escape Routes
- Fire and Evacuation Procedures
- Assisting the Fire Brigade
- Training
- Record Keeping

20.4 Means of escape refers not only to the physical provision of a safe exit route but encompasses its use, layout and maintenance. The most fundamental of all fire safety requirements is the provision and maintenance of escape routes that can be easily and effectively used by all persons by their own unaided efforts.

20.5 Escape routes must comply with the following sections:

- **Design of Escape Routes**

The design of escape routes in new buildings or the upgrading of existing escape routes in older buildings are subject to the requirements of the Building Regulations

- **Effectiveness of Escape Routes**

To be effective a route provided for escape purposes must commence at the point of exit from a room or area and continue to the point of discharge into the open air. The selected route must be clearly defined, adequately lit and clearly identifiable along its total length and free from any obstruction that may impede free movement

- **Selection of Escape Routes**

The main threat to safety of people arises from smoke and gases generated during a fire and subsequent movement of these by-products through a building. The main objective in selecting escape routes is to ensure that every person can turn away from a fire and readily find an escape route unaided

- **Maintenance of Escape Routes**

The primary responsibility for the maintenance of means of escape rests with the Chief Fire Warden and Fire Warden(s). A similar responsibility rests with all staff to ensure that escape routes are kept free from obstruction at all times. Under no circumstances should designated routes be used for the storage of equipment even on a temporary basis.

It is preferable for means of escape to be part of the normal circulation of persons within a building.

20.6 While the provision of escape routes is normally achieved at the construction stage, alterations to the original layout of offices or rooms may reduce the effectiveness of the routes under emergency conditions and it is necessary therefore to maintain:

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- a clear passage to a room exit
- an unobstructed corridor from the room exit to a final exit via a staircase, if necessary
- a clear and unobstructed route from the final exit to a place of assembly in the open air.

20.7 Measures adopted to ensure compliance with legal requirements for the maintenance of escape routes should ensure that:

- all escape routes both internally and externally are kept unobstructed and available for use
- people do not park cars in a way, which obstructs access by the Fire Brigade
- escape routes are clearly indicated and adequately illuminated
- fire doors, panic bolts and self-closing devices are in good working order and free from defects
- all exit doors are capable of being easily opened in the event of an emergency.

21.0 Signs & Fire Action Notices

21.1 The requirement to clearly indicate the route of escape can be met by fixing approved directional signs at strategic intervals. It is important that any change in direction along the escape route is clearly indicated. The approved signs carry a white symbol or lettering on a green background.

21.2 All assembly areas should be sign posted, free from obstruction and at a safe distance from the building.

21.3 Fire Action Notices must include the below instructions. This notice, including the names of Fire Wardens, should be posted at all break glass call points and the notices must be kept up to date.

FIRE ACTION

Discovering a Fire

Raise the Alarm

Call the Fire Brigade

Deal with the outbreak if it safe to do so

Evacuate the Building

Report to the Assembly Point

Hearing the Alarm

Co-operate with the Fire Wardens

Evacuate the Building

Do not use lifts

Report to the Assembly Point

DO NOT RETURN TO THE BUILDING UNLESS AUTHORISED TO DO SO

22.0 Fire and Evacuation Procedure

22.1 The main purpose of drafting evacuation procedures is to ensure that everybody reacts in a regulated manner under emergency conditions. For procedures to be fully effective it is important that this be kept simple and straightforward thus reducing the likelihood of panic and confusion. When planning evacuation procedures consideration will have to be given to:

- action to be taken on discovering a fire
- action to be taken on hearing the alarm.

23.0 Discovering a Fire

23.1 All managers and staff should be fully aware of the action to be taken if they discover a fire. Training and instruction of all staff should include specific information on:

- operating the fire alarm
- calling the Fire Brigade
- leaving the building
- tackle the fire **if it is safe to do so**
- closing the doors

The Chief Fire Warden should ensure that a specific procedure for calling the Fire Brigade is in place and that all staff are aware of the procedure.

23.2 On hearing the alarm, all occupants of buildings should be familiar with the procedures to be followed on the actuation of the Fire Alarm i.e.

- co-operate with the Fire Wardens
- evacuate the building
- do not use the lifts
- do not re-enter the building
- report to the designated assembly point

24.0 Fire Drills

24.1 The most effective means of training occupants in evacuation procedures is by way of pre-fire drills. The drills should simulate emergency procedures and involve all occupants of the building. The main points to remember with fire drills are:

- they must be held twice yearly
- they should be announced beforehand to Senior Managers
- they should be held for both evening and day staff
- they should simulate conditions in which one or more escape routes are obstructed by smoke
- an evacuation time of less than two minutes should be aimed for.

24.2 Following the completion of the drill the Chief Fire Warden should meet with all the Fire Wardens to determine what deficiencies if any arose and to subsequently put in place appropriate corrective action.

24.3 In the unlikely event that someone refuses to leave a building during an evacuation, Fire Wardens should not waste time arguing with that person but should continue with their allocated tasks; however, information that there is someone still in the building must be given to the Fire Brigade immediately.

24.4 In a fire some disabled people may need assistance to reach a final exit. Visually impaired people can best be guided on level surfaces by taking a Fire Warden's arm and following his/her lead. On stairways the Fire Warden should descend first and the visually impaired person follow with a hand on the Fire Warden's shoulder. If a visually impaired person is accompanied by a guide dog, the person should be asked how best s/he can be helped. Some guide dogs may follow on their owner's command but generally if a helper is leading a visually impaired person the guide dog should be held by the leash rather than the harness.

24.5 Many disabled people will be able to ascend/descend a stairway possibly with assistance whilst others will need to be carried. It is preferable for a wheelchair bound person to be carried in his or her own chair.

24.6 The Chief Fire Warden should ensure that a sufficient number of suitably trained Fire Wardens are available to assist with the evacuation of disabled people. The procedure to be adopted when evacuating disabled staff should include:

- on hearing the alarm, the disabled person should move or be directed away from the fire to a place of safety
- the designated Fire Warden having carried out the evacuation/search procedure should go to the disabled person
- the disabled person is assisted down the stairs to the final exit by the required number of Fire Wardens.

25.0 Fire Brigade

25.1 The person who discovers the fire shall call the Fire Brigade and shall then advise the Chief Fire Warden.

The **Emergency Services** may be contacted by dialling:

- (Line Access) and 999/112

Note: Irrespective of the size of a fire the Fire Brigade should always be summoned to the scene, as expert action may be necessary to prevent re-ignition.

25.2 To allow for an effective response to a fire incident the Chief Fire Warden or nominated Fire Warden should assist the fire brigade by:

- ensuring that all routes into the building are unlocked and unobstructed
- ensuring that gates and security barriers required for Fire Brigade access are open
- meeting the officer in charge of the brigade and provide details of:
 - the number and locations of persons still on the premises
 - the location of gas storage facilities and power distribution rooms
 - entry points to all parts of the building, the location of fire hydrants, hose reels etc.
- providing the Fire Brigade with a copy of the floor plan
- shutting off the main gas supply to the premises, if safe to do so.

25.3 The most effective means of providing information to the Fire Brigade is to mount a floor plan of the building, adjacent to the main entrance. The plan should highlight the following:

- the position of all exits from the building
- the location of fire alarms, extinguishers, hose reels and suppression systems
- the location of main electricity switchgear
- the location of boiler rooms
- the location of gas storage facilities.

In addition, a detailed set of floor plans should be attached to the Fire Register and updated or amended as the need arises.

26.0 Training

26.1 Training must be provided to all staff on the prevention and control of fire. The level of training provided will depend on the level of responsibility placed on individuals.

26.2 Training should be given to ensure that all staff are familiar with:

- the fire prevention measures appropriate to the individual area of work
- the emergency and evacuation procedures
- the maintenance of escape routes
- the arrangements put in place to assist the Fire Brigade

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- fire control techniques e.g. use of extinguishers, hose reels etc.
- closing doors to prevent the spread of fire
- shutting off electricity, oil or gas as appropriate
- the location of escape routes, fire-fighting equipment, fire alarm call points and assembly points.

27.0 Record Keeping

27.1 A Fire Register must be maintained in all the ETB buildings, which must be kept up-to-date by the Chief Fire Warden. The Fire Register must be kept on the premises at all times and be available for inspection by the Local Authority Fire Officer.

27.2 The following information should be recorded in the Fire Register:

- the name of the Chief Fire Warden and Fire Wardens
- the names of persons allotted specific functions
- the dates and times of all fire evacuation drills
- details of training given to staff
- the type, location and number of fire protection appliances including extinguishers, hose reels, hydrants, fire alarms, emergency lighting etc.
- the dates of inspection and maintenance of fire protection equipment together with details of defects and action taken to remedy defects
- the names and telephone numbers of persons responsible for the maintenance of fire protection equipment
- the details of all fire incidents, fire alarms and near misses.

27.3 The Fire Register **must be removed** from the building in the event of an emergency.

28.0 Corporate and Ancillary Safety Statements

This policy should be read in conjunction with the ETB Corporate Safety Statement and the respective Centre's Ancillary Safety Statement.