

Arson Risk Reduction advice for Commercial and Industrial premises and those managing these types of premises during the Covid-19 period.



FAO: Business Owners, Persons responsible for Fire Safety, Estates and Facilities Managers and their Teams:

As the UK follows Government guidance in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) would like to take this opportunity to offer some guidance and advice to continue to ensure your staff and premises remain safe from fire.

Business Fire Safety should remain at the forefront of any continuity planning arrangements enacted during this period. Detailed guidance for fire safety in Businesses, and more information on broader fire safety issues, can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>

Deliberate fires continue to occur during the isolation period albeit at a lower rate than normally experienced. Some of these fires are spreading from stored waste or other materials into adjacent buildings (significantly exacerbated during periods of dry and windy weather).

Fires have occurred at both industrial and commercial sites, and have involved outdoor facilities as well as buildings themselves.

We don't want to create any additional worries or burden at this time but would like to take this opportunity to remind you that whilst your building/s are unoccupied, or perhaps being used in a reduced capacity, it is important that security and the associated risk of Arson remains a consideration.

We are advising business and site owners to ensure security and arson risks are considered within the fire risk assessment (FRA) review process. Fire risk assessments and emergency procedures should be reviewed and significant findings logged; with a specific focus on things that have changed recently which might now make your premises more at risk from a deliberate fire event.

The following information may provide assistance when considering fire prevention and simple measures to help protect your buildings from the risk of arson whilst partially or fully closed. Your insurance company may have specific requirements with respect to such matters and it is always advisable to check policy conditions when premises are vacated.

- Test your fire alarm system; ensure it is fully operational
- Ensure internal fire doors are closed
- If disruption to the supply chain has resulted in more stock or product being held than is normally the case; consider if this is being stored safely ie Not blocking escape routes and not stored adjacent to buildings or boundary fences.
- Consider how fire might spread from stored materials or parked vehicles to your buildings – Is it possible to re-arrange storage and parking to ensure that even if there was a deliberate fire involving these items it would not spread to your buildings?
- Identify any vulnerable areas. Rectify these. Ensure security gates, bollards and exit doors have been secured.
- All waste and recycling bins should be stored in a secure location at least 8 metres away from the building.
- Ideally waste and recycling bins should be kept in a container made from fire resistant materials and locked.
- Other storage areas such as sheds and containers should also be kept at least 8 metres away from the building to prevent spread.
- Keep external areas clear and tidy so intruders are visible and there is less to interest opportunists
- Ensure service doors are closed and locked when not in use.

Further advice and guidance can be found on our website where there are a number of free resources available for your use. If you would like to get in contact with one of our Business Safety Advisors who may be able to advise further, email BSA@lancsfirerescue.org.uk

A simple Arson Vulnerability Assessment template is available at:

<https://www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/safety/business-safety/business-fire-safety-during-coronavirus-outbreak/>

Further advice and support is at:

<https://vault.ecloud.co.uk/lancsfire/2019/10/Arson-Booklet-2019.pdf>

<https://www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/safety/business-safety/guidelines-for-businesses/arson-prevention/lancashire-police-arson-prevention-guidance/>

<https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/COVID-19/Protection>

If your business is remaining open, please check the National Business Crime Centre for guidance and crime prevention tips –

<https://nbcc.police.uk/>

For any further tips or guidance, please visit the Lancashire Constabulary business crime page –

<https://www.lancashire.police.uk/help-advice/keeping-your-business-safe/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Lancashire Partnership against Crime (LANPAC) is a unique collaboration between Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Businesses and Public Services working together to reduce levels of crime and disorder across the county. For further information about LANPAC and how businesses can join, please visit www.lanpac.co.uk or contact 10335@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

LANCASHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BUSINESS SAFETY TEAM