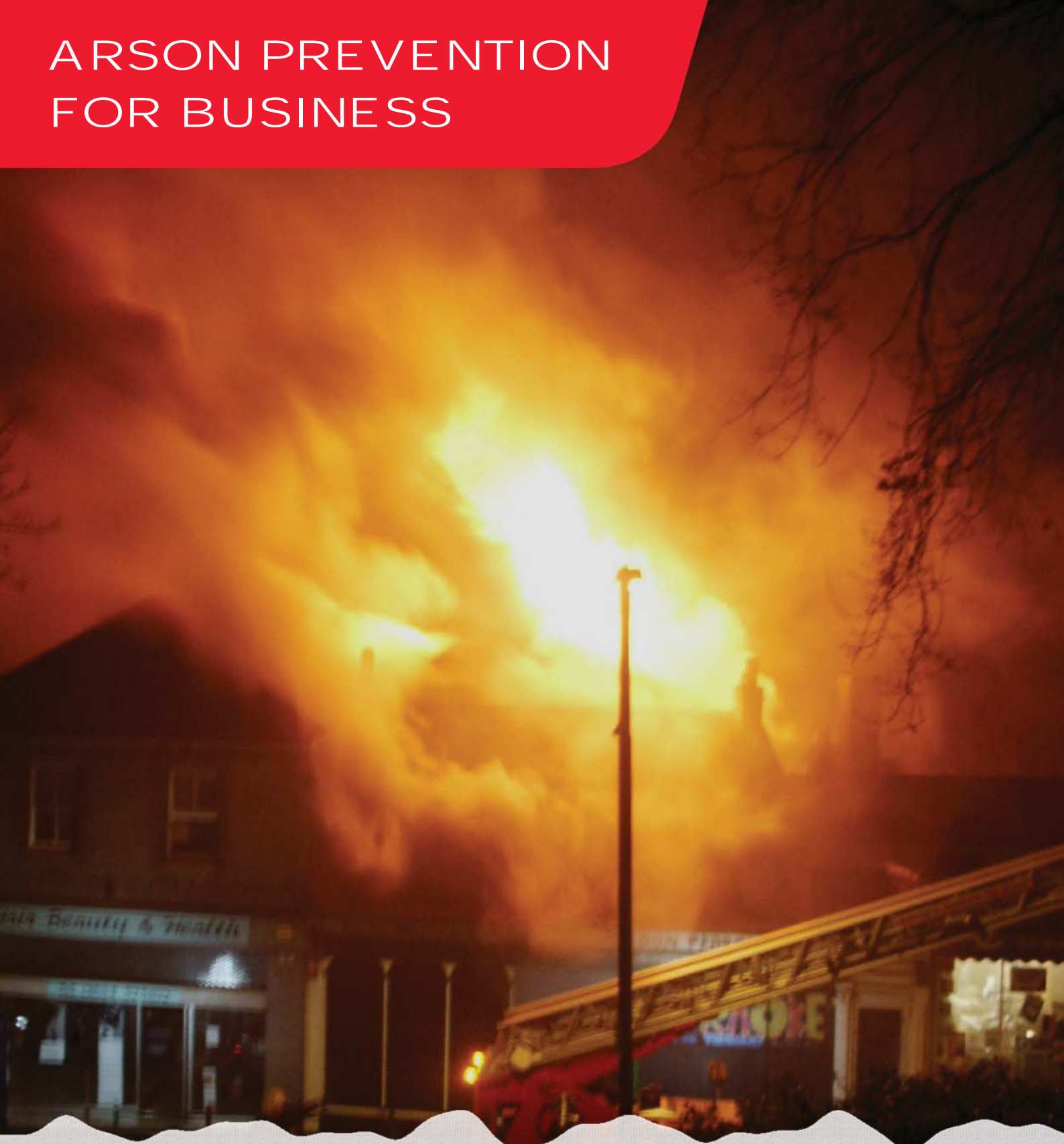


ARSON PREVENTION FOR BUSINESS



Company Hit By Arson

Staff at a local firm were clearing up
to allow a major fire at night.

Around 50 firefighters battled through
the night to stop the fire from spreading.

A spokesperson for the fire service said,
'we are helping the police with their investigation.'



HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
WORKING FOR THE WELLBEING OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

PREVENTION BEFORE INTERVENTION



INTRODUCING ARSON PREVENTION FOR BUSINESS

"65% of all fires attended by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service are started deliberately."

The threat of arson rarely features as a major concern to the owner or occupier of a building. However, arson is an increasingly significant factor in fire losses and industrial and commercial properties are major targets for arsonists. Losses due to arson fires are not simply financial, they can also involve:

- Death and injury to occupiers and firefighters.
- Business interruption, or even closure of the company.
- Loss of jobs.
- Loss of facilities or amenities for the community.
- Environmental damage caused by smoke and possible pollution by water run-off from firefighting.
- Loss of industrial heritage.



Management of Waste Material

Every year UK Fire and Rescue Services are called to some 150,000 secondary fires involving waste material. In addition, there are some 10,000 fires involving waste paper and cardboard. At least, these fires are an inconvenience to the Fire Service and premise occupier, at worst, can spread to involve buildings and cause multi million pounds worth of damage.

Triangle of Arson



Most people who have received fire training are familiar with the triangle of fire and the removal of any side of the triangle extinguishing the fire. With the triangle of arson the absence of combustible material, or a reduction in the opportunity to set fire to refuse, prevents an arson fire.

If the absence of combustible material cannot be achieved then the following guidance should be followed:

- Always dispose of waste material in non-combustible containers or skips.
- Only use or hire enclosed skips or containers with lockable lids.
- Collect or replace regularly.
- Store in a well lit area.
- Do not store within 2m of the perimeter.
- Keep aerosol cans, flammable liquid containers and gas cylinders separate.
- Recycle waste material.
- Avoid burning or incinerating waste material on site.

Skips

- Keep at least 10m away from buildings.
- Use enclosed and lockable ones rather than open.
- Have a designated area for regular skips.
- Arrange for collection as soon as full.



Wheeled Waste Containers

- Ideally should be metal with lockable lids.
- Keep 6m from buildings (10m if plastic).
- Chain in a designated area or compound when premises are unoccupied.
- Arrange for collection as soon as full.

Pallets

- Store outside, neatly stacked away from buildings and perimeter.
- To a height that if on fire or in a strong wind they will not collapse.
- Return as soon as possible.

Control of Visitors

Members of the public who visit premises can be a potential arson or crime risk. Visitors should be controlled by:

- Good signage directing where and where not to go.
- Allowing access only via clearly signed and staffed reception facility.
- Asking for identification and operating a register for booking them in and out.
- Insisting that they display a visitors badge and are escorted to their destination.
- Encouragement of staff to question strangers on the premises.



Security

It is crucial that all Stakeholders in the business and its environment accept a responsibility for the safety and security of the business, its customers, staff and visitors.

- Devise and publicise a system to record details of the nature, time and place of all incidents in order to enable early identification of vulnerable areas.
- Allocate a specific budget each year, on a rolling programme, for crime and vandal prevention measures, separate from any general repair fund.
- Make repairs quickly so as to discourage further damage.
- Ensure that the boundary of the business is clearly defined.
- Consider protecting or eliminating recessed doorways, concealed yards, shrubs, planted areas and similar features that give cover to intruders.
- Restrict access to the roof from points such as walls, down-pipes or rubbish bins.
- Ensure ladders are locked away securely.
- Reduce routes that allow unauthorised access through the grounds.
- Provide external security lighting where appropriate.
- Retain maximum natural surveillance from surrounding buildings or passing public.
- Store valuable or attractive items in secure areas to which access is restricted.
- Advise staff and customers of the need to safeguard personal property.
- Insist personal property is clearly named.
- Ensure that all business equipment is visibly and indelibly marked and that signs to that effect are displayed to deter thieves.
- Consider zoning the intruder alarm system to cover parts of the premises that are unoccupied whilst, cleaning staff are on other parts of the premises.
- Hold regular meetings between managers, staff and maintenance personnel, specifically to discuss safety and security.
- Make safety and security a priority in the design and planning of buildings including any refurbishment schemes.

What is Happening in your Neighbourhood?

It is good practice to be aware of any problems regularly occurring in your neighbourhood. Many arson attacks are preceded by petty vandalism and theft moving on to small fires, which get bigger and more ambitious over a period of time. Keep abreast of planning issues concerning developments that may have an impact upon your business.



Close Down Procedures

At the end of a working period where premises are to be left unoccupied it is essential to operate procedures to check:

- External doors are locked.
- Internal doors are closed.
- Windows are closed and locked.
- No unauthorised persons remain on the premises.
- No accumulation of rubbish or waste.
- Flammable liquids are not accessible.
- Intruder alarms are turned on.
- Security lighting is switched on.

Reducing Damage Should a Fire Occur

Although the ultimate aim is to avoid a fire there are things that can be done to reduce the damage should one occur. Many buildings are divided up into compartments with fire resisting walls and doors. By simply making sure doors are closed when the building is unoccupied fire spread can be slowed down and damage mitigated. Automatic fire alarms can detect and warn of fires in the early stages, while sprinklers will also detect and subdue a fire.

Empty or Unoccupied Buildings

Properties, which are not being used, are prone to arson, theft, vandalism and intrusion by unauthorised persons. To reduce the risk to these buildings:

- Remove sources of ignition and combustible material from inside and outside.
- Minimise the attractiveness to thieves and vandals by removing contents and fixtures and fittings that may be of value.
- Prevent unauthorised access by optimising levels of physical security around the perimeter and to the building itself.
- Secure letter flaps and ensure postal and other deliveries are stopped.
- Maintain landscaped areas to give the appearance of occupancy.
- Make regular inspections of the building to check security, repairing any minor damage and removing any graffiti.



ARSON PREVENTION FOR BUSINESS



If you prefer to pass information onto the Police anonymously, call Crimestoppers on:
0800 555 111

Safe Business Initiative



Safe Business Initiative is a comprehensive guide to risk management in businesses produced by West Mercia Constabulary with the help and assistance from the business community. It supports individual businesses in providing a safe and secure environment in which all their functions can be carried out.



Details of Safe Business Initiative are available through the West Mercia website or from the Crime Risk Manager, Crime and Disorder Team, Force Headquarters on **01905 331804**



For additional advice on arson and fire safety, please contact:

Hereford & Worcester
Fire and Rescue Service
South District Headquarters
Worcester Road
MALVERN
Worcs
WR14 1TD
Tel No: 01684 572948

Hereford & Worcester
Fire and Rescue Service
West District Headquarters
St Owen Street
HEREFORD
HR1 2JW
Tel No: 01432 274561

Hereford & Worcester
Fire and Rescue Service
North District Headquarters
Castle Street
KIDDERMINSTER
Worcs
DY11 6TH
Tel No: 01562 512612

Our Fire and Rescue Service website is:



For additional advice on crime prevention, please contact your nearest Crime Risk Manager on **08457 444 888** at:

Worcester Police Station
Bromsgrove Police Station
Redditch Police Station
Kidderminster Police Station
Hereford Police Station
West Mercia Police HQ
www.westmercia.police.uk

Some useful websites:

www.arsonpreventionbureau.org.uk
www.thefpa.co.uk



This document is also available as a large font file via our website www.hwfire.org.uk