



All accidents, incidents and near misses, relating to fire or to fire drills must be entered into the local accident reporting system.

In the event of fire, the three most important actions are, in chronological order, to:

Raise the alarm

Summon the fire brigade

Evacuate the building

The preservation of life shall override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire. If a fire is discovered, the alarm shall be raised immediately however small the fire. All staff are empowered to raise a fire alarm if they believe there is a fire; no authority should be sought from any other person.

Responsibility for summoning the fire brigade should be stated clearly in local site procedures.

NERC does not advise staff to attempt to extinguish a fire; **trained staff** may attempt to extinguish **small fires** if they consider it safe to do so.

Staff must not put themselves at risk to fight a fire. NEVER fight fires in laboratories or other areas where highly inflammable materials are held.

Evacuation of the building must start as soon as the alarm sounds. **Staff should be familiar with the procedure through the staging of regular fire drills.** All occupants, on evacuation, should report to pre-determined fire assembly points.

Fire emergency notices must be displayed in every building. Fire exits must be clearly signed and attention drawn to them for visitors and contractors.

SENIOR MANAGERS ON SITE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Ensuring that there is compliance with the general requirements for good fire protection, including:
- Ensuring that fire policy and procedure is part of the local H&S policy
- The maintenance and testing of fire detection and firefighting equipment
- The provision of suitable fire exit routes with appropriate signage and maintained and tested emergency lighting
- Appointing a chief fire marshal who will be the a competent person under the law
- Ensuring that competent persons (Fire Marshals) are appointed to cover all areas of the premises
- Ensuring that there is a co-ordinated staff training programme
- Ensuring that evacuation exercises are held regularly and the outcomes evaluated with a view to maintaining emergency readiness
- Preparing an emergency plan as appropriate; ensuring coordination of fire and security emergency planning such as bomb alerts
- Ensuring proper storage of flammables

MANAGERS ONSITE:

- Are required to ensure that fire risk assessments are performed for all rooms and areas within their physical area of responsibility
- Are responsible for checking on the local arrangements for fire protection including the maintenance of fire exit routes free from obstructions
- Briefing staff
- Co-operating with Fire Marshals and participation in tests and drills.
- Ensuring that the fire safety precautions are brought to the attention of any contractors that they manage or appoint.

Note: fire risk assessments need to be done by trained personnel; the technical aspects of fire safety also need to be done by competent persons. Managers may appoint one or more persons as 'fire officers' to perform these functions day-to-day but cannot totally delegate responsibility.

