



Fire Safety In Construction

Fires have long been a considerable problem during construction work. It is well known that a building is significantly more likely to catch fire during construction, refurbishment or demolition than throughout its life in general use. The risk to the safety of workers is further compromised by the lack of, or incomplete fire safety measures that would be found in a completed structure, e.g. Compartmentation, detection systems, emergency lighting etc.

The Health & Safety Executive have recently revised and reissued [HSG168 Fire Safety in Construction](#). HSG168 provides guidance on meeting the requirement of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2007 and The Joint Fire Code with regard to construction work.

Essentially the requirements for fire safety during construction are the same as those in completed buildings, however, due to the nature of construction work, managing fire safety during construction has significant challenges;

- Frequent changes in layout, escape routes etc
- Lack of or incomplete fire alarm, detection, emergency lighting, sprinklers etc
- Removal of compartmentation or inadequate protection of routes and stairwells etc
- Regular change of personnel on site
- An accumulation of waste and combustible materials on site
- Hot works

It is important to consider that insurance cover may be invalidated in the event of a fire during construction, if it cannot be demonstrated that all necessary fire safety measures were in place.

What do I need to do?

As the Principal Contractor, or main contractor on non-notifiable projects, you must ensure all work is carefully planned and managed to reduce the risk of fire. It is a requirement of the RRO that a fire risk assessment is undertaken by a competent person prior to work commencing, and that this is reviewed on a regular basis as the work progresses.



The fire risk assessment must consider;

- Who is at risk
- Means of escape - exit routes, stairwells, compartmentation (temporary and permanent)
- Fire alarms - provision of temporary systems or early installation of the permanent system
- Emergency lighting - provision of temporary systems or early installation of the permanent systems
- Control of hot work
- Installation of temporary electrical systems - location of temporary lighting, charging points, routing of cables, damage to cables
- Storage of flammable substances
- Storage of combustible materials
- Management of waste - siting of waste skips, regular removal of waste
- Housekeeping
- Emergency procedures
- Arson - security of the site
- Type of construction - timber frame etc
- Temporary fire fighting equipment
- Signage
- Neighbouring properties

HSG168 provides significant detail on all of these issues and has specific guidance for timber frame construction, and construction in high rise buildings.

If you would like further information about managing fire safety construction, or require a construction fire risk assessment please contact us;



Enquiries@peligro.co.uk

0845 643 9707