12 Simple Ways to Prevent a Workplace Fire

Preventing fires is everyone's job. We all need to be alert to anything that can cause a fire and take responsibility to report any problem areas so that they can be corrected.

1. Practice good workplace housekeeping—clutter contributes to fire by providing fuel and be preventing access to exits and emergency equipment.
2. Place oily rags in a covered metal container—this waste must be properly disposed of on a regular basis.
3. Maintain machinery to prevent overheating and friction sparks.
4. Report electrical hazards—many fires start in faulty wiring and malfunctioning electrical equipment. Never attempt electrical repairs unless your are qualified and authorized.
5. Maintain access to all electrical control panels—material or equipment stored in front of the panels will delay the shutting down of power in an emergency situation.
6. Use & store chemicals safely—read the label and the MDS to determine flammability and other hazards. Provide adequate ventilation when using and storing these substances.
7. Use all precautions to prevent ignition in potentially explosive atmospheres such as those containing flammable vapors or fine particles. Use non-sparking tools and control static electricity as required.
8. Help maintain building security to prevent arson fires—lock up as instructed; report suspicious persons and do not leave combustible rubbish where it can be set afire outside the building.
9. Smoke only in designated areas and extinguish smoking materials safely. Never smoke in storerooms or chemical storage areas. Never leave cooking appliances unattended—if you leave the appliance, make sure it is off.
10. Never block sprinklers, firefighting equipment or emergency exits. Observe clearances when stacking materials.
11. Post emergency telephone numbers as well as the company address by the telephone in your station for quick access if a fire were to start in your work area.
12. Learn how to properly use a fire extinguisher.

Treat every alarm as though it is a real emergency, even if the initial source is unknown.

What to do before a work place fire?

Develop a fire/emergency response plan...this plan should be in writing and easily available to all employees including those that work nights and weekends. The plan should be kept current through periodic updating. Make sure that employee meeting places are part of your plan and known to all employees.

When a fire happens...

Alert others in the building to begin evacuation. **Call 911 as quickly as possible no matter the size of the fire and even if your alarm system is monitored**. Close all doors as you evacuate. Use the stairs; do not use elevators. Never wait to call the fire department while you investigate the situation; any delay will allow the fire to grow. DO NOT silence or reset the alarm until the Fire Department arrives and has investigated the source of the alarm.

Department of Fire & Emergency Services
26 Broad Street • Albany, NY 12202 • (518) 447-7879

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