

Fireworks in shops: Retailers' risk assessment checklist

How could a fire start?

Danger	Action	Your actions and notes (record here any specific actions you need to take)	Action taken (/)	Comments
Cigarettes and other naked lights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict access to store area where fireworks are stored. • Ensure fireworks are not left unattended in the warehouse. • Prohibit smoking anywhere near the items. • Keep in a locked cabinet or display cabinet. 	(eg 'ensure all staff are aware of no smoking areas and check <i>'no smoking'</i> signs are displayed in prominent locations)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking positive action to prevent a fire is the most important of all the control measures you must take.
Sparks from electrical sockets and fittings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disconnect from supply if fitted in display cabinets or use dummy fireworks. • In storerooms, remove electrical equipment (other than light fittings and fire detection equipment) and blank off plugs. 			
Heat causes boxes to catch fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove space heaters or position them well away from the fireworks. • In storerooms, leave a clear space between the light fitting(s) and the fireworks. 			
Fire involving other goods spreads to the fireworks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep in a dedicated storeroom if possible, otherwise in a fire-resistant store cupboard or cabinet or container. • Keep well away from flammable or combustible articles. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flammable substances include white spirit, solvent-based paints. Video tapes and tights/stockings are also highly flammable. Combustible articles include cardboard, paper and wood (eg pallets).
Arson or criminal action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep in a secure goods yard. • Keep under supervision. • Review location of the store and security arrangements. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fire might be started deliberately or by thieves using cutting equipment to gain access to the store.

How could a fire spread and get worse?

Danger	Action	Your action points and notes	Action taken (/)	Comments
Heat from burning fireworks causes nearby flammable or combustible articles to catch fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the flammable/combustible articles if possible. • Locate fireworks well away from flammable substances to reduce risk of fire spreading. • If fireworks are stored in a container outside the building ensure it is located well away from parked vehicles, pallets etc. 			
Burning fireworks or fragments are thrown into flammable or combustible articles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the fireworks in their transport boxes. • Close transport boxes after use. • Keep fireworks in a separate storeroom. If this is not possible, keep in fire-resistant cupboards or cabinets. • If fireworks are stocked in a warehouse, ensure there is a barrier between fireworks and flammable items (eg a wall, or a wire screen) or enclose items in a wire cage or keep them in an ISO transport container or other suitable construction that will contain the fragment throw. • Control the amount of fireworks in the shop area. • Ensure the premises are suitable for the quantity of fireworks (and in any event keep the stocks of fireworks within the limits permitted by your registration or licence). 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone storing large quantities of flammable substances should seek specialist advice.
Fireworks are contaminated by other chemicals or by water and become unstable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep away from caustic substances such as drain cleaners, paint strippers and wood preservatives. • Keep away from fertilisers and products containing peroxides (eg fibreglass hardeners). • Keep in a dry place. 			

How could people be harmed if there was a fire?

Danger	Action	Your action points and notes	Action taken (/)	Comments
<p>Staff or customers are unable to escape because of heat and/or smoke.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep all fireworks in a display or storage cabinet. • Ensure the fireworks are located so that escape routes are not affected by smoke and flames in the event of a fire. • Ensure escape routes are not blocked by other goods. • Ensure all staff understand what action must be taken if there is a fire. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority must be for staff and customers to evacuate the shop. • Fires should only be fought if people are in danger. • You have a legal duty under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 to ensure that any person present in your shop can escape to safety should there be an outbreak of fire.
<p>Fire spreads to neighbouring or adjoining residential premises.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate containers away from neighbouring houses. • If there are flats or residential accommodation in the same building, ensure that there is a separate escape route for residents. • Install fire detection and alarm system. • Ensure that suitable fire doors are fitted etc. 			