

FIRE PREVENTION: KEEPING THE WORKPLACE SAFE

One of the most devastating accidents that can occur in your business comes from a fire. Fire is the third leading cause of deaths in the workplace and is the number one cause of a business never rebuilding after it has been destroyed by a fire. Whether your business is small or large, a disruption to providing your products and services to your customers could mean potential loss of jobs, property and in many cases loss of income by losing your customers outright. Spending time on your Fire Prevention Plan can stop a disaster from occurring.

Prevention is everyone's one job and there are steps that can be taken that will assist towards reducing or eliminating hazards within your facility that can contribute to a fire:

- 1. Develop a basic evaluation plan for your facility and inspect regularly for fire hazards:**
 - a. Inspect equipment for leaks of any kind.
 - b. Look at electrical connections to make sure they are secure and safe.
 - c. Make sure fuel or ignition sources are contained properly.
 - d. Make housekeeping a priority that there is not an abundance of debris in the facility.
 - e. Review manufacturer instructions for equipment concerning fire hazards.
 - f. Inspect and make sure fire extinguishers are fully charged monthly.
 - g. All electrical panels should have no materials stored in front of them or nearby.
 - h. All flammable chemicals must be stored in appropriate storage containers.

- 2. Have a Warning and an Evacuation system in place:**
 - a. Make sure the facility has appropriate warning Fire Class hazard placards in place outside the building which identifies any hazardous substances the Fire Department should be aware of in the building.
 - b. Have an emergency evacuation plan in place which all employees are aware of and trained on, including what their role may be in an emergency evacuation.
 - c. Have an emergency alarm system in place to notify all in the facility of the emergency.
 - d. Make sure all methods of facility egress are maintained and exits are accessible. Train at least annually on methods of evacuation and escape routes.
 - e. Have both smoke detection and sprinkler systems tested annually, if not on a quarterly basis, that they are in working condition.

While this review is not exhaustive, there are some basics here that should be followed and implemented with the main priority of saving lives. For further assistance you can call on Alliant Insurance Services to assist with implementing your company Fire Prevention Plan.

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