

The magazine of the Federation of Small Businesses



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FIRE SAFETY SUPPLEMENT

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business going up
in smoke

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Join the chorus: The FSB is the UK's leading business organisation. It's the members who make it such a powerful force for change. Join them, or if already a member, get a friend to sign up: www.fsb.org.uk/join

IS YOUR FIRM PROPERLY PROTECTED AGAINST FIRE?

The onus of fire protection can seem extra heavy to small businesses. Yet getting it right is essential, in terms of both safety and productivity. All that the owner has painstakingly built up can be put at risk in an instant if proper fire precautions have not been taken. The good news is there's lots of expert support ready to guide you through the preparations you can make.

You'll find details of the products, services and support available in this supplement, which we've produced in conjunction with our sponsors BAFE, CFOA, FIA and Safelincs to coincide with UK Business Safety Week coming up on 7-13 September.

Go to pages 5 to 7 to discover why Business Safety Week is important for small firms and to learn about schemes that will help you provide quality fire protection. The week involves a partnership with small businesses to help them reduce fire risk, and you can read more about this approach, including advice on fire exits, on pages 8 to 10. False fire alarms are a big worry, and on pages 12 to 14 you will find some tips for reducing these – plus details of third-party certification and what exactly your duties are under fire safety law. And if you've been thinking of updating your fire doors or fire extinguishers, have a look at pages 16 to 18 for some sophisticated options.

Keep your business safe.

DON'T GAMBLE WITH YOUR FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT!



If you are responsible for a business premises, the law requires that you have a fire risk assessment.

Under the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Responsible Person for a building is required to make a Fire Risk Assessment to clarify the fire precautions necessary to ensure the safety of staff, customers and property. At present there are no adequate means to ensure the competence and reliability of a company commissioned to carry this out.

BAFE scheme 'Life Safety Fire Risk Assessment SP205' has been developed specifically to address this situation, and will provide reassurance to the Responsible Person that they are doing everything possible to meet their obligations.

Don't leave everything to chance. Make sure that your suppliers are registered with BAFE.

WWW.BAFE.ORG.UK

BAFE supports CFOA Business Safety Week ...and so should every small business



A fire in the premises is one of the incidents that every business owner dreads. Some research indicates that 80 per cent of businesses that suffer from a major disaster such as a fire will fail within 18 months. There is fire safety legislation across the UK, and the good news is that the number of fires is reducing – but every one is a tragedy.

The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) represents all the local fire and rescue services in the UK, and it wants to highlight the serious nature of fire to the business community, and also the cost of false alarms. A recent study in Scotland indicates that competence in the design, installation and maintenance of fire alarm systems is vitally important and that they

should keep up to date.

All the legislation starts with the requirement for a fire risk assessment and, while the business owner may be able to do this for themselves, bringing in an expert can be highly beneficial. The best way to ensure that you use a competent assessor is to check if they are certificated by an independent third party, and BAFE is the registration body for third-party certification.

So if you want to ensure that your fire protection is there to look after your staff, customers and property, check our website – www.bafe.org.uk – to see if your providers are competent and regularly assessed. Don't take chances with your business or hide your head in the sand.

Fire safety and protection needs with small businesses

Keeping up-to-date on fire safety can seem daunting but help is at hand to make it manageable

One of the difficulties for small businesses is keeping up-to-date and dealing with rules and regulations. However, one area that should not be 'put to the bottom of the pile' is fire safety. Your staff, customers, stock and premises can be put at risk in an instant if proper fire precautions have not been assessed, actioned and maintained.

Fire protection legislation requires property managers of all non-residential premises to have adequate fire protection. It is their responsibility to ensure that there is a sufficient, updated fire risk assessment, and that all aspects of the requirements are carried out competently.

How does the business owner know if their provider of the fire risk assessment, their fire alarms and their extinguishers are competent? The most recent Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals highlights solutions, among which is the use of third-party certificated providers of fire protection services. This document can be found on the BAFE website: www.bafe.org.uk

Third-party certification means that a provider of the service has trained operatives, has good-quality management systems, and has had their business assessed by a third-party, accredited body to ensure that they meet all the relevant standards – and that they are checked out again every year.

It is mandatory to undertake a 'suitable and sufficient' fire risk assessment for commercial buildings, non-domestic and multi-occupancy premises. While the majority of premises do this, if the assessment is thought to have been carried out to an insufficient extent, the responsible person or duty-holder can face an unlimited fine or up to two years in prison.

To demonstrate that the 'responsible person' ('duty-holder' in Scotland) has met their obligations, many public authorities and commercial organisations now insist that their fire protection services are carried out by a company that has been third-party certified. Many now specify that providers are BAFE-registered.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and the equivalent legislation in Scotland and Northern Ireland, places specific duties on the responsible person or duty-holder, and the Department for Communities and Local Government states in its guidance documents:

"Third-party certification schemes for fire protection products and related services are an effective means of providing the fullest possible assurances, offering a level of quality, reliability and safety that non-certificated products may lack."

BAFE is the independent third-party certification, registration body for the fire

protection industry. We develop schemes for UKAS-accredited certification bodies to assess and approve companies to these recognised standards. There are more than 1,250 BAFE-registered companies across the UK. Our aim is to support property managers to ensure that they get quality fire protection for their premises, staff and service users.

In 2012, BAFE launched the first UKAS-accredited scheme for companies that carry out fire risk assessments (BAFE Life Safety Fire Risk Assessment SP205). The scheme considers the competence of the individual assessors as well as the quality requirements for the organisation. There are a growing number of companies registering to the scheme, throughout the UK.

If you are looking for the supply and maintenance of portable extinguishers, look for one of the 360 companies registered to the BAFE Contract Maintenance of Portable Fire Extinguishers incorporating Registered Fire Extinguisher Service Technicians' SP101/ST104 scheme. Companies are certificated to ISO9001, and all their technicians are assessed by BAFE for initial and ongoing competence. There are more than 1280 BAFE-registered

technicians, working for our registered companies.

For installing or maintaining fire alarm systems, companies should hold BAFE Fire Detection and Alarm Systems SP203-1 scheme approval. This scheme includes the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection systems, and requires that all equipment used is third-party certificated. The SP203 scheme has more than 800 registered companies.

Our emergency lighting scheme (Emergency Lighting SP203-4) sets out the standards and staff competence criteria to be met. It is modular, as with the fire alarm scheme, and is

achieving growing recognition from users.

There are a range of other BAFE schemes covering particular sectors of the fire protection industry, and details can be found on the BAFE website, along with a search facility to find registered companies in your area.

» If you want to be sure you are getting your fire protection from companies that are properly and regularly assessed, you can look for more information at www.bafe.org.uk

"Our aim is to ensure property managers get quality fire protection"





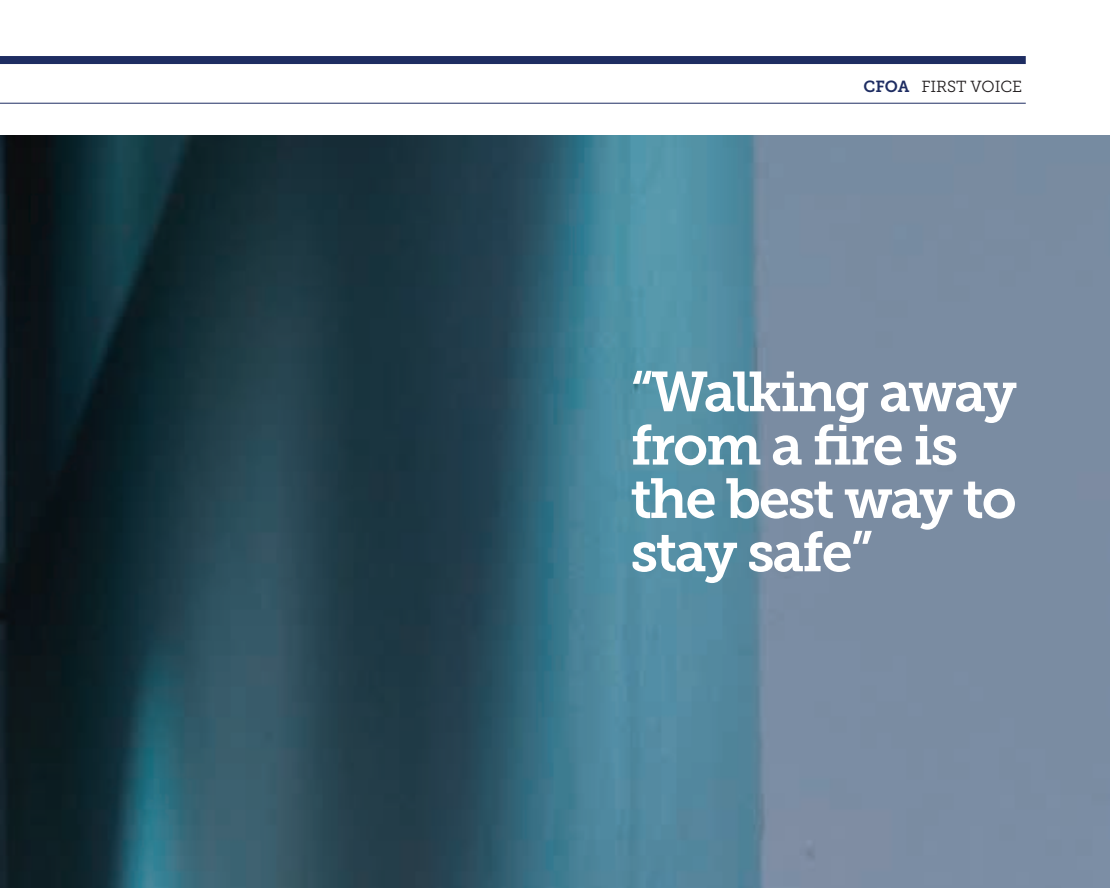
UK Business Safety Week, 7-13 September

Fire exits are the focus this year, with fire and rescue services helping businesses to reduce risk



This year's UK Business Safety Week, coordinated by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) will take place from 7 to 13 September. Fire and rescue services across the UK will be engaging with businesses, working in

partnership to help them reduce fire risk in their organisation. The campaign has been scheduled for September as changes in staff, stock and customer levels may have an impact on potential fire risks. Helping businesses to manage their fire risks and



**“Walking away
from a fire is
the best way to
stay safe”**

hazards, and potentially to save lives and safeguard businesses against financial and commercial loss, are essential in these competitive times. Fire can cause major disruption for businesses – there is a far greater chance of recovery if the risks have been identified, and appropriate arrangements have been put in place to prevent fires starting, or to mitigate their impact. Contact your local fire and rescue service for information of events and activities going on in your area.

The timing of any campaign requires many considerations, and the CFOA has been working closely with businesses large and small, and specifically with the FSB, to

target a week that will maximise our messaging, in order to assist business owners to comply with fire safety law. Businesses are always busy and there is seldom sufficient time to commit to the raft of responsibilities, so it's vital that the information provided by fire and rescue services is easy to find and simple to understand.

Our simple approach for this year's Business Safety Week focuses, among other things, on fire exits. Making sure it is possible to find a way out of a building to a safe place will minimise risk of injury to staff and visitors. There are some simple ways you can achieve this:

- Ensure you can turn your back on the fire and walk away to a place of safety.
- Ensure you can pass the fire while it is very small and will not harm you.
- Ensure there is a fire- (and smoke-) proof barrier between you and the fire when you pass it (for example, this may be a door, wall or lobby).

Turning your back on a fire and walking away to a place of safety is the best way to stay safe from any fire in any building. This is why you will see fire exits in places that you visit: to point out the alternative ways to get to a safe place, and to enable you to turn your back on a fire and walk away.

If you are in a room when a fire starts, you will either see it or be alerted (in most cases). In a small room, you can leave through the door via which you came in, before the fire grows too big. In larger rooms, the fire can grow too big before you reach the door, so another way out is provided for you to turn your back and walk away. If the fire could grow unnoticed, it could trap you, so you need something to tell you that the fire has started. Fire alarms and detectors do this and give early warning, so that you can start moving towards the nearest exit at the earliest opportunity.

If the fire starts in a room or place that you have to pass in order to reach your exit, the fire could cut you off. To keep your route out safe, you need a fire-proof barrier to hold back the fire so that you can safely pass (it needs to be smoke-proof, as well). Fire doors and fire-resisting walls are provided for this purpose – of

course, the doors work only when they are closed and when they fit their opening.

Being above or below ground level can make things worse. The fire might be above or below you. Now you have to rely on an early warning of the fire from the fire alarm, and on something to keep the staircase clear of the potential fire and smoke. Moreover, the staircase itself must never be a place where the fire can start – you need it to get out.

Finally, if the fire starts while it is dark, it could isolate the electrics and lighting. Your staff and visitors need to see sufficiently well to make their way out, and emergency lighting (with a battery backing it up) will give the light needed to navigate to a place of safety.

For Business Safety Week, CFOA and fire and rescue services are encouraging 'active' checking of all such safety features, in particular the routes you will use to safely escape a fire. Make sure

the exits open and the route is clear, with nothing there to obstruct those leaving.

Safety is always our first priority. But by closing doors along any escape route, you will be more likely to ensure the fire remains small, reducing the risk of a major fire and protecting your business, and ultimately enabling your business to recover and return to normal operations.

Your local fire and rescue service will be able to assist you should you have any queries about your property, and will provide advice in accordance with national guidance and standards.

» A list of local fire and rescue service contacts can be found at www.cfoa.org.uk.

"The staircase must never be a place where the fire can start"



FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

Do you have 5 or more employees?

If **YES** then you are required by Law under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to have a written Fire Risk Assessment which is 'suitable and sufficient'. A professional and formal Fire Risk Assessment will:

- Identify fire hazards and potential associated dangers
- Evaluate and recommend how to remove or reduce any risks found
- Identify people at risk
- Provide photographic evidence (where applicable)
- Show relevant legislation and British Standards

To discuss further or get a quotation for a new Fire Risk Assessment or to review your existing document, please contact our Fire Risk Assessment Department.

During the Fire Risk Assessment your fully qualified and insured assessor will look at your portable fire equipment.

Morgan Fire Protection have extinguisher technicians nationwide who can assist you in ensuring that your building is fully equipped and meets legal requirements.

To arrange a free of charge, no obligation survey by one of our BAFE qualified engineers please contact our Service Desk.

Fire Risk Assessment contact:

@: riskassessment@morganfire.co.uk

Call: 0800 085 6381

Service Desk contact:

@: servicedesk@morganfire.co.uk

Call: 0800 085 6381



Don't let false fire alarms disrupt your business

Reducing false alarms will help in terms of both productivity and safety

Some estimates suggest that false fire alarms cost UK businesses over £1 billion a year. False alarms disrupt business productivity during evacuations and in the retail world this can also be an opportunity for thieves. Most importantly, false alarms put people's lives at risk. Loss of confidence in the fire alarm system can make people complacent and stop behaving as they should in the event of a real fire.

The FIA has put false alarms high on the agenda with our 'Cut False Alarms Costs!' campaign.

Where to start

False alarms are often caused by poor building management, fire alarm system design or maintenance:

- Poor building management
- Poor fire system design
- Poor maintenance

Incidents of false alarms are put into categories which should be recorded in a logbook to help organise the information. In the UK, BS 5839-1 recommends the following four categories:

- Unwanted alarms
- Equipment false alarms
- Malicious false alarms
- False alarms with good intent

Smoke detectors

False alarms triggered by smoke detectors could be caused by cooking or burning toast; insects; welding or soldering; steam, dust and aerosols; candles and open fires; or lack of maintenance.



Heat detectors

Heat detectors tend to be less prone to false alarm signals and are generally used where smoke alarms will be too sensitive. They are set to allow for expected temperature levels and will trigger an alarm if the temperature goes above that level.

Manual call points (MCPs)

MCPs don't usually cause false alarms due to faulty equipment. However, the glass can be broken deliberately or by accident. If there's a high risk of this, transparent flaps or covers which have to be lifted before the glass can be broken can be fitted.

Managing your building

If you have a problem with persistent false alarms, set a target number to try not to exceed and aim to drive that down to zero. All incidents of false alarms should be investigated and recorded to establish the cause.

» For further advice, visit www.fia.uk.com/cut-false-alarm-costs.html.

Third-party certification explained

Small firms can benefit from enlisting outside support to assess fire safety services or products



If you purchase goods or services you want to be confident that they are fit for purpose. Not just that; it is a legal requirement for the purchaser of fire safety services to ensure that the person or organisation carrying out the work is 'competent'. As most people commissioning this work are unlikely to be experts in fire safety, how can they be sure that the individual or organisation they are hiring is competent to do the job?

(TPC) is evidence that a service or product adheres to certain standards. An independent expert has assessed the service or product and certified that it complies. TPC can cover the technical qualities of what is being provided, but it can also relate to environmental, ethical or other qualities.

Who's responsible?

The person responsible for fire safety is anyone who has, to any significant degree, control of the premises, control over the activities on the premises or employs people.

TPC – the detail

TPC is when a Third Party Certification Body (CB) assesses the qualities of a

supplier by comparing them with the requirements of a particular scheme. If the organisation meets these standards then it is issued with a certificate detailing the scope of its certification.

The now certificated supplier is permitted to claim compliance with the scheme, display copies of their certificate and, in most cases, display the logos of the scheme and the CB. Depending on the scheme, they will also issue certificates of conformity for the product/service they provide.

There is a wide range of TPC schemes, so you need to make sure you use a supplier with certification to the relevant scheme for your needs.

How do I do that?

First you need to identify the right scheme owner or CB for the product/service you are looking to commission. Then you can visit their website and draw down a list of potential suppliers. You can also go to the FIA website and draw up a shortlist of FIA members in the relevant product and geographical area.

» For more information, download the FIA's **whitepaper** at www.fia.uk.com.

Do you know your fire safety law?

As a small business owner, you have clearly defined responsibilities in terms of fire safety



Fire safety legislation in the UK is enacted differently in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, these regulations are largely identical in terms of where they apply and what people have to do to comply with them so we'll consider them as one law in this article.

Where does the law apply?

The law applies to virtually all premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure and open space. It does not apply to private homes, including individual flats in a block or house. In England and Wales the law applies to the common parts of flats and HMOs, but not in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Who is responsible?

The person responsible for fire safety is anyone who has, to any significant degree control of the premises, control over the activities on the premises or employs people. They are responsible for the safety

of people who may be legitimately on the premises, or who are not on the premises but might be directly affected by a fire on the premises.

What do you need to do?

The person or people responsible must make sure that everyone is safe from fire. You or a person engaged by you must carry out a fire-risk assessment to determine what the risks are and to identify those measures necessary to minimise the risk to an acceptable level.

Enforcement

Fire authorities will look into complaints, carry out investigations after fires and carry out targeted inspections. Where poor fire safety management is discovered, they may prosecute. If there is a very serious risk to life, the fire authority can issue a notice preventing the premises being used for certain things, or preventing people from using all or part of the premises.

Fire certificates and old legislation

Old legislation used to require the Fire Brigade or Local Authority to issue a fire certificate for certain classes of premises. Those previously in force will have no legal status but may be useful as a starting point for your fire risk assessment.

» For more information, visit www.fia.uk.com or call us on 020 3166 5002.



“I get my fire extinguishers off the net. Why pay more?”

No ones like to spend more than they have to.

But also none of us likes to buy goods that may be sub-standard or not right for the job.

Especially when they could save your business from disaster.

How do you know if a fire safety supplier ticks the right boxes?

We say they should be independently assessed and meet high standards.

In other words, they should have Third Party Certification.

Which is what members of the FIA must have.

So you have independent assurance that our members provide quality fire safety products and services.

Plus, using competent fire safety suppliers is a legal requirement and gives you peace of mind.

**Go to www.fia.uk.com
and Find a Member**



Fire Industry Association



Access all areas

Door closing devices allow both staff and visitors to move around premises with ease

A common concern for managers is how to stay compliant with fire safety regulations while also meeting the needs of employees and customers. Moving around a building, where heavy fire doors are present, can be a problem. Carrying files or goods from one office to another often results in a struggle with heavy fire doors. These are a necessity within a business, but in everyday situations can cause frustration and hinder disabled people from moving around the building independently.

Another issue in summer is how to maintain a flow of air. Door closers are designed to close as soon as the door has been released by the person passing through it. It is in these situations that employees wedge doors open illegally – an action that could result in a fire spreading much faster through the premises.

There are two easy-to-install devices that will enable you to tick all the boxes for staff and visitors as well as staying compliant and legal.

If you just want to keep your fire door pinned open then Dorgard, a wireless fire door retainer, will do just that. Fitted in less than five minutes to your fire door,



Dorgard will listen for your fire alarm and, in case of a fire, will automatically lift the plunger that holds the door open, allowing the door closer to close the fire door.

Portland Youth Christian Outreach (PYCO), a small charity working with young people in Dorset, identified through its fire risk assessment that users were wedging fire doors open to increase accessibility through the premises. Zach Williams, Operations Manager, said “Fire doors were often left wedged open as this was the only way that users could freely move around the centre and that staff could easily monitor what was happening in other rooms.”

PYCO wanted to find a solution that would not reduce their accessibility but that made it compliant with fire safety regulations. After the easy installation of Dorgards at the centre in Portland, Zach commented: “Fire doors make a real difference in protecting property, so these

devices have made a great improvement to the safety of our building and all users. It allows both staff and volunteers to move around the centre with ease, without placing anyone, or the property at risk."

For some business managers, more flexibility with fire doors is necessary. The doors may be required to move freely for all in the building and to stay open in any given position, while closing on the sound of the fire alarm. This flexibility is advantageous in restaurants, hotels, nursing homes and hospitals. Freedor is a wireless device that is fitted to the top of a fire door in place of a door closer. It will allow your fire door to swing open and closed with ease, giving you the option of leaving it open in any position. Your fire door will now work for you as any other door would, with no hindrances.

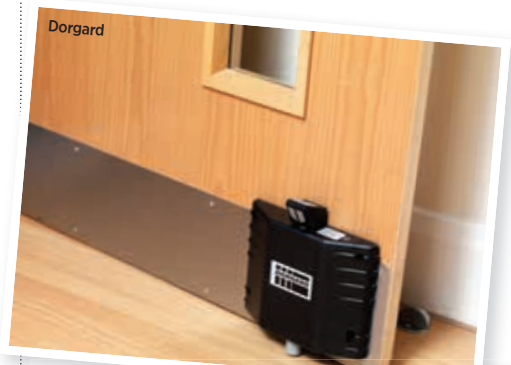
The Royal Liverpool University Hospital has the largest emergency department in the country, with over 40 wards and more than 710 beds. Mike Farrell, Fire Safety Advisor at the hospital, found that heavy fire doors were proving obstructive for staff. "The staff are constantly walking through entrances with trolleys and pushing beds, so they need easy access. We found that doors were being wedged open, as they are heavy and difficult to get through."

The wedged doors were enabling staff to move freely from one department to another but they posed a great risk to patients and staff should a fire break out in the hospital.

Installing Freedor has ensured that staff can now push doors open with ease while pushing a patient on a bed or in a wheelchair. Doors can also be left open,

allowing air to flow through the hospital on hot, stuffy days. Mike said: "Following a trial, our staff were so pleased that we had Freedors installed on the entrance to the ward. It's a financially viable option, and cost-effective as the product is wireless. It has made life so much easier for all our staff. We are now looking at purchasing more in the future."

» For more information, phone Safelincs Ltd on 0800 612 4851 or email service@safelincs.co.uk



Choosing the right fire extinguishers for your business

Advice on fire extinguisher best practice has changed, so small firms should check they are up-to-date in this area



The provision of fire extinguishers is an important part of a business owner's duty of care for anyone working in or visiting their premises. BS5306-8 recommends best practice selection and positioning of fire extinguishers. In its latest version, the standard for example recommends that powder fire extinguishers should no longer be used in enclosed spaces.

In small, office-based businesses with a warehouse it is still common to find combination fire points of foam and carbon dioxide extinguishers. Foam extinguishers are used for general fires whereas CO2 extinguishers would often be recommended for use on electrical equipment. CO2 works on the principle of suffocating fires. However, care must be taken in confined spaces where the air flow is limited, as they could adversely affect the user.

Kitchens present a different challenge, with fires often involving burning oil. Wet chemical extinguishers are the traditional answer when tackling fires in the kitchen, in particular with fires involving fat and oil. It is also advisable to have a fire blanket in the kitchen.

New extinguishing solutions include 'dry' water mist extinguishers. Safelincs'

dry water mist extinguishers can tackle all conventional fire classes, even including cooking fat fires. They disperse de-ionised water as a fine mist, enabling the water to smother a fire by removing the oxygen supply, while cooling the blaze. As the water is de-ionised, it cannot conduct electricity, so these extinguishers can be used on fires that involve live electrical equipment.

Other developments include the P50 extinguishers, which are corrosion-free. These are the first service-free extinguishers in the UK, and require refilling only after 10 years rather than the standard five years. Instead of requiring a service by an external company, P50s have to be visually inspected by the customer once a year.

All other, traditional extinguishers will require an annual service. When choosing your servicing company, make sure they are accredited by a body such as British Approvals for Fire Equipment.

» To arrange a site survey or to discuss your fire safety needs, phone Safelincs on 0800 612 4851, or via support@safelincs.co.uk.



Fire Extinguisher Servicing with No Hidden Charges

Our nationwide fire extinguisher servicing is 100% transparent with clear pricing, no hidden charges and a one-off call out charge. All work is carried out in accordance with BS 5306 and certified by BAFE approved service engineers.

Our servicing prices include all basic spare parts such as O-rings, tamper seals, etc.

- ✓ **Clear prices and no hidden charges**
- ✓ **All basic spare parts included**
- ✓ **BAFE certified service engineers**



BS 5306 Part 3
Portable Extinguisher
Maintenance

Freephone: 0800 612 4851
www.safelincs.co.uk



IT'S NO GOOD BURYING YOUR HEAD IN THE SAND!

YOU NEED



When you specify fire alarms, portable extinguishers or emergency lighting you need to be sure that they meet the latest standards, using approved equipment and that your contractor is competent.

There are now over 1200 BAFE registered contractors from all parts of the UK who are certified so that they meet your requirements.

These key Third Party Certification schemes are backed by UKAS accredited Certification Bodies thus ensuring you get the products and systems your fire risk assessment requires.

WWW.BAFE.ORG.UK