



**CORNWALL**  
**FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**  
A service of Cornwall Council

Dear Sir/Madam

**Additional information to support your business during the Coronavirus 'COVID 19' pandemic period from Cornwall Fire and Rescue service.**

You will be aware through the media that the ongoing situation with the COVID 19 virus is having an effect on all areas of society. This is likely to have an effect on the ability of Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service to provide our 'normal level' of operational response.

It is important to remember that during the period of this crisis, that your responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 do not change. It is very likely that as with all sections of society, our staff (and yours) may be affected in one way or another and as such, it would be prudent for you and your staff to have a heightened awareness of fire safety in order to protect the public, your staff and yourself.

With this in mind, I am writing to suggest positive steps you can take both now and during this COVID 19 pandemic period.

**Fire Safety**

Review your fire risk assessment ensuring that it is up to date and effective.  
Please be aware of fire safety:

- Ensure you have adequate members of staff trained to implement your emergency plan.
- Ensure fire alarm systems continue to be tested, and the tests are recorded as normal.
- Fire doors should be kept closed and ensure that all signage is in place.
- Housekeeping standards should be maintained at a high level
- Smoking policies are rigidly enforced
- Where the business is being closed down for an indefinite period, it is very important to have a thorough closing down procedure and ensure that the building is completely secured.
- All unused electrical equipment is switched off/unplugged, where safe to do so.
- Refuse and waste is controlled, dustbins and skips are placed and secured away from the building.
- You may need to consider that waste collections may be affected leading to larger areas of storage being needed.
- Where possible avoid 'hot work' but if necessary undertake with active supervision any work requiring the use of equipment, which produces a flame or sparks
- Ensure that you have suitable control of any contractors working on the premises.

## **Emergency Incidents**

In the event of an emergency, please call 999 but be aware that fire appliances could be delayed in attending and there may be fewer fire engines than normal. Also, those firefighters attending may not have knowledge in relation to the layout or structure of the building, including the location of alarm systems or other installed safety equipment.

If the building's automatic fire alarm is activated, it is essential that, where safe to do so, you investigate the cause of the alarm in order to establish whether there is actually a fire and then dial 999 to update the Fire & Rescue Service.

**As our staff are likely to be affected during this period that COVID 19 is affecting the UK, this will affect our ability to respond. You may not receive a fire engine response to an automatic fire alarm activation unless you confirm that a fire has occurred.**

Should you find yourself in an emergency situation, there are some steps your staff can take to assist fire crews:

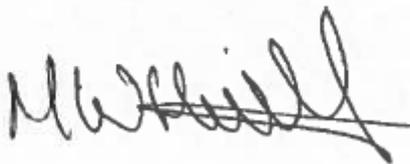
1. Any emergency calls made should state clearly the accurate address of the premises and the access point into the premises
2. Someone should be appointed to wait on the roadside (preferably wearing a hi-visibility tabard or jacket, both for their own safety and to attract the attention of the crew) to identify the property and to guide and assist the fire crews in locating the best point of access
3. Make available a simple but accurate single line plan drawing of the building, showing the location of hydrants, alarm panels and any gas, electricity or other service isolation points or other fire related, relevant information
4. The confirmation and refresher training of all personnel on the action to be taken in the event of a fire, and how to operate an extinguisher should be considered. The evacuation procedure for the building (including the use of visitor records and roll calls to account for everyone) should be practised. Roll calls should be carried out by previously nominated responsible persons or their deputies. The results should be provided to the fire personnel present as quickly as possible. For people who are unaccounted for, information on where they work, or are expected to be, or where they were last seen, should be provided as quickly as possible
5. For more complex buildings the provision of guides to assist in guiding crews towards the fire area can be of great benefit. These individuals will normally have been trained as fire wardens or marshals or have similar training.
6. If required, your staff should commence with the evacuation of the residents / guests / patients as per their training. I must stress that at no time should anybody put themselves in danger.

7. Should a more serious fire develop, there may be a need to change the evacuation strategy if the existing arrangement is for a delayed evacuation as often found in private accommodation in multi storey buildings, or progressive horizontal evacuation as used in Hospitals and Residential Care homes.
8. You may need to consider 'salvage' of items or files from other parts of the building. There may be insufficient fire personnel to do this and you should consider the formation and briefing of salvage teams from your staff should they be required. These teams must only work under the direct guidance and control of fire personnel.
9. The potential risk to your organisation through the loss of vital information should also be considered. The secure storage of essential data (company accounts, payroll, customer information, etc.) is essential. The storage of duplicate information, away from the premises is also strongly recommended.

Further information relating to Business Safety during the COVID 19 Pandemic will be published on our website at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/covid19fire](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/covid19fire)

During this period, our normal administrative telephone services may not be available. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Fire Service via our Central administration e-mail address; [csadmin@fire.cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:csadmin@fire.cornwall.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully



Chief Fire Officer – Mark Hewitt  
Cornwall Fire & Rescue Service

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Tel: 0800 3581 999 [www.cornwall.gov.uk/fire](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/fire)

**Working together to make Cornwall safer**

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