

Hot Tips to Help Avoid an Arson Attack on Your Business

The most likely person to deliberately start a fire in your premises is a disgruntled employee/former employee or a local teenager.

So if you have recently dismissed an employee or made staff redundant or if groups of teenagers hang around your premises when they are shut, then you need to consider my hot tips to help avoid the possibility of an arson attack on your premises.

The following two facts are startling but sadly true:

50% of all fires in the UK are arson related.

70% of the business's that have a fire go out of business within a year.

So how do you reduce the chances of an arson attack on your business?

Here are my hot tips for avoiding an arson attack on your business:

- Ensure that any dark recesses in your premises i.e. inset doorways; enclosed yards, alleyways etc are secured with a gate or door, why? They attract arsonists because they can set fires without being seen by passers by.
- If you have a yard or space around your building make it secure, check gates and fences for holes or damage that make them easy to climb or pass through.
- Rubbish bins need lids that can be locked or if they can't be locked the bins should be kept in a secure compound or chained to an immovable object at least 6 metres from any building.
 - Arsonists will often push rubbish bins up against buildings and then set them on fire.
 - Piles of rubbish up against a building will attract arsonists; you've done half the job for them!
- Skips – overflowing skips attract arsonists, skips should be placed at least 6 metres away from any building.
 - If as part of your business process you permanently have skips outside your buildings that contain combustible material then you need skips with lockable lids or site them in a secure compound away from the building.
- Propane and Butane Cylinders should be secured inside a cage, if not arsonists will put them in the bin or skip when they set it on fire and then you have a “bomb” as well as a fire.

How do I know about arson?

Before starting my fire safety consultancy I spent 36 years in the fire service ending my career in West Midlands Fire Service as a Divisional Officer.

In 2001 I was seconded to the Home Office for 8 months and conducted a joint survey across England and Wales with the Police Inspectorate looking at how the fire service and the police dealt with arson; this resulted in the report “Arresting Arson” that was published in 2003, of which I am a co-author.

Arson prevention should form part of your fire risk assessment, a legal requirement to ensure your building is safe from fire, for you, your employees, customers and visitors.

I hope you find this information useful, at Fire Safety Net we pride ourselves in providing reports and information in plain English that are easy to understand and implement.