



Arson checklist: Places of Worship

Places of Worship often store valuable goods and items, many of which are irreplaceable, and are often located in high crime areas particularly vulnerable to arson attacks. Although the checklist below is not definitive, it should be used in conjunction with the accompanying guide (Small and Medium Places of Assembly ISBN 9781851128204) to guide you through the risk assessment process.

| Safety & Security Precautions | Y/N |
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| Ensure your Fire Risk Assessment is reviewed regularly and takes into account the threat of Arson. | |
| Designate an area for rubbish bins and skips which is at least 6 meters away from buildings and boundaries if practical to do so. | |
| Reduce the amount of rubbish stored on premises by arranging for its regular removal. | |
| Purchase metal bins with lockable lids to hold rubbish and chain wheeled bins to a fixed post or wall which is away from the main building. | |
| Keep any undergrowth on waste or derelict land bordering onto your property under control. | |
| Regularly inspect unoccupied buildings such as storage areas and basements and remove any non-essential combustible material. | |
| Keep escape routes clear and ensure internal fire doors are kept closed. | |
| Use candles safely with appropriate holders away from any combustible materials/ furnishings that could spread a fire. Ensure a clear procedure is in place for the extinguishment of candles after use. | |
| Ensure there is a procedure for a sweep search of the building for evacuation purposes to ensure all occupants have evacuated. If at all possible, have a register of all persons entering or leaving the building, where this is practical to do so and not too onerous. | |
| Ensure that staff, new starters and volunteers are trained in Fire Safety and that this training is reviewed and updated as required. This should include good housekeeping. | |
| Repair damage to perimeter fencing and gates and ensure that bushes along the perimeter are not overgrown. | |
| Report any security concerns to the Police and utilise networking/social media with other faiths to share information/risks. | |

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| Promptly repair vandalism and remove graffiti, report suspicious behaviour to the Police and alert surrounding neighbours Encourage employees to be vigilant and report suspicious behaviour to the Police. | |
| Install security lighting and if necessary CCTV in areas which are hidden from view. Cut back vegetation close to recesses which could provide cover. | |
| If your place of worship is visited by a multi-lingual congregation ensure adequate provision is made available. This includes what actions to take if the fire alarm sounds. | |
| Minimise gaps under external doors and secure openings. Installing a metal container on the inside of a letter box will help reduce the risk of arson. | |
| Ensure items of high value and/or religious significance are held securely when the building is not in use. | |
| Fit window locks on ground floor windows and those near flat roofs and drain pipes. | |
| Protect against lead/metal theft. Consider forensic marking such as Smart Water or consult your insurance company for guidance. | |
| Avoid leaving valuable items on display and have clear procedures for employees to secure the premises at close down. | |
| When the place of worship closes have the appointed person carry out checks before closing up the premises internally and externally. | |
| ACTION PLAN AND COMMENTS TO SUPPORT THE CHECK LIST. | |
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