

# **Runnymede Borough Council**

## Guidance for Event Organisers on Undertaking and Recording a Fire Risk Assessment

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## Where to obtain guidance

It is recommended that you obtain a copy of HM Government's fire safety guides to assist you in undertaking your fire risk assessment. These can be downloaded free of charge from Gov.uk. There are a number of guides, and some that may be of particular interest to you include:

- [Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist](#)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: open-air events and venues](#)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: small and medium places of assembly](#)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: means of escape for disabled people](#)

This list is not exhaustive and other guidance is available.

## How to undertake a fire risk assessment

The steps you need to follow to undertake the fire risk assessment are:

- Step 1 – Identify the fire hazards
- Step 2 – Identify the people at risk
- Step 3 – Evaluate the risk and act
- Step 4 – Record, plan and train
- Step 5 – Review

See also the document "[Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist](#)"

### Step 1 – Identify the fire hazards at the event

Considering the nature of the event and activities involved, you need to identify the presence and location of:

- Sources of ignition
  - such as naked flames, heaters or some commercial processes
- Sources of fuel
  - such as built-up waste, display materials, textiles or overstocked products
- Sources of oxygen
  - such as air conditioning or medicinal or commercial oxygen supplies

You may find it helpful to make a simple drawing of the venue, drawn roughly to scale, marking up the locations of key features such as marquees, staging, stalls, catering stalls, generators etc.

The plan should show the locations of any sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen. You can use a simple noughts and crosses system – circles for materials and crosses for ignition sources. It should also identify where material which could catch fire easily and sources of ignition are close together.

If you decide to do this, please attach a copy of the drawing to your fire risk assessment.

### Step 2 – Identify the people who will be at risk

You will need to identify those people who will be present and who may be especially at risk such as:

- People using or operating sources of heat, e.g., cookers
- People who will be near fire dangers
- Children, E.g., in pushchairs or prams
- The elderly or infirm
- People with mobility problems or who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters
- People who are under the influence of alcohol.

You may want to mark on the plan the locations of those people at significant risk.

## Step 3 – Evaluate the level of risk and take action

### Evaluate

You will need to evaluate both the likelihood of a fire **occurring** and the potential **consequences** should it occur.

Consider the hazards you identified in step 1. What is the likelihood of a fire occurring?

- **Low**
  - Unusually low likelihood of fire as a result of negligible potential sources of ignition
- **Medium**
  - Normal fire hazards for this type of occupancy, with potential ignition sources, where the fire hazards are generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).
- **High**
  - Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result in significant likelihood of fire.

Consider both the hazards identified in step 1 and the people identified in step 2. How **severe** would the consequences be if a fire occurred?

- **Slight harm:**
  - Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death.
- **Moderate harm:**
  - Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury (including serious injury) of one or more persons but is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.
- **Extreme harm:**
  - Significant potential for serious injury or death to one or more persons.

From your evaluation of the likelihood of a fire occurring and the severity of the consequences, consider what the overall level of risk is.

Likelihood	Severity of consequences		Severity of consequences
	Low - slight harm	Medium - moderate harm	High - extreme harm
Likelihood of fire - Low	Tolerable risk	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk
Likelihood of fire - Medium	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk	Substantial risk
Likelihood of fire - High	Moderate risk	Substantial risk	Intolerable risk

## Take action

Definitions and suggested actions for each level of risk are:

Definition	Required action
<b>Tolerable risk</b>	Regularly review the fire risk assessment and update it where necessary. Where it is reasonable to do so, efforts should be made to reduce risks further.  No major additional precautions required, however there might be a need for reasonably practicable improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
<b>Moderate risk</b>	It is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Moderate risks should only be tolerated for the short-term and only whilst further control measures to mitigate the risks are being planned and introduced.  Efforts must be made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures, which should take cost into account, should be implemented.  Where moderate risk is associated with severe harm, further assessment may be required to better estimate the likelihood of harm, in order to determine the priority for improved control measures.
<b>Substantial risk</b>	Considerable resources might have to be allocated and urgent action taken to reduce the risk.
<b>Intolerable risk</b>	The event must not go ahead until the risk from fire has been reduced.

Once the risks have been evaluated, you should take steps to remove or reduce any fire hazards where possible and reduce any risks you have identified.

Consider:

- What you can do to remove or reduce any fire hazards
  - E.g., replace highly flammable materials with less flammable ones
- What you can do to reduce any risks you have identified
  - E.g., separate flammable materials from sources of ignition

When you have reduced the risk as far as possible, you must assess any risk that is left and decide whether there are any further measures you need to take to make sure you provide a reasonable level of fire safety.

Consider and record in your fire risk assessment:

- What is in place to detect fire
- What is in place to alert people there is a fire
- What is in place to fight a small fire
- If the event is indoors, if are there suitable fire exit doors
- What the safe routes for people to leave the venue are
- How these exit routes are signed
- How disabled or mobility-impaired people will be evacuated
- Whether you need to provide staff/volunteers to assist them to evacuate
- If there sufficient is lighting to enable people to escape in case of fire or if you need emergency lighting

It may be that you are able to satisfy all these steps without difficulty, however, you should still be able to demonstrate that you have carried out all the steps.

All hazards and deficiencies identified in this fire risk assessment should be addressed by implementing all recommendations in your action plan.

## **Step 4 – Record, plan and train**

In this step you should record, plan, instruct, inform and train. If you have written down the answers from the sections above, then you have recorded the dangers and people you have identified as especially at risk ( in steps 1 and 2 ) and what you did about it ( in step 3 ).

A [sample Fire Risk Assessment template](#) is available from our website should you wish to use it.

Create and record your fire emergency plan, which should include the action that you need to take if there is a fire in the venue or anywhere nearby.

Things to consider include:

- Which of your staff/volunteers will help if there is a fire?
- What will they do?
- You will need to give instructions to staff/volunteers, stewards and guests - record what you will tell them, and how.
- Who or what will tell them they need to act?
- How will the public be informed in the event of a fire?
- Explain where the fire assembly point will be.
- How will you advise the public where to go?
- Will this be signed?
- What training have the staff/volunteers/stewards had?
- Is additional training required?

The Chief Fire Officers' Association ( now known as the National Fire Chiefs' Council ) created a [fire risk assessment template for food concessions at events](#) which you might find helpful.

## **Step 5 – Review**

You should review your fire risk assessment before the event takes place, in case anything has changed; it may be that the risk has reduced or increased. Make sure this fire risk assessment is an accurate reflection of the risk at your event and update it where necessary.

## **Actions arising from the findings of your fire risk assessment**

After you have undertaken the fire risk assessment, you need to act upon the significant findings of the assessment.

All action points arising from the significant findings of this Fire Risk Assessment should be recorded. Suggested headings for your action plan include:

- Details of action to be taken
- Action that has been taken
- By whom
- Completion date

All actions must be completed before the date of the event.



**For all information contained within this document contact:**

Runnymede Borough Council  
The Civic Centre  
Station Road  
Addlestone  
Surrey KT15 2AH

Tel 01932 838383

email: [SAG@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:SAG@runnymede.gov.uk) or [events@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:events@runnymede.gov.uk)

[www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk)

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