



DEVON &  
SOMERSET  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

# Farm Fire Safety



**KEEP  
SAFE**  
DSFRS

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

Acting to Protect & Save



## **Farm fires can be devastating; resulting in the loss of machinery, stores of hay and straw, livestock and the destruction of buildings.**

**Every year we attend 100's of fires and emergency incidents on farms and small holdings.**

Farms are at a particularly high risk from fire due to:

- increased attendance times due to isolated locations of farms and narrow access routes
- poor water supplies
- large amounts of combustible materials stored in or around buildings

## **Prevention**

**By considering the following steps you can minimise the risk of fire on your farm.**

1. Ensure machinery is well maintained and serviced regularly – clean machinery regularly to keep it free from hay, straw, oil and grease.
2. Remove hay and straw from fields as soon as possible after harvesting. Ensure it is dry before storing to prevent spontaneous combustion – many fires are caused by storing damp or wet hay.
3. Store hay and straw away from other buildings especially those containing fuels or chemicals and separate from livestock. Store in stacks at least 10 metres apart and ensure there is sufficient space between the top of the stack and the roof lighting.
4. Only carry out hot work, i.e. welding or grinding, in clear areas.

5. Electrical safety checks should be carried out regularly, especially in areas where straw or hay is stored.
6. Ensure any fuels, chemicals and hazardous materials are stored in clearly labelled containers. They should be locked away in locations away from other buildings.
7. Have designated areas for smoking away from combustible materials and ensure cigarettes and matches are extinguished properly.
8. Keep escape routes clear at all times and keep all areas free from rubbish, oily cloths and other combustible materials.
9. Ensure that your family and employees know what to do in the event of a fire; make sure everyone knows where the nearest phone is. Carry a mobile phone at all times, especially if working alone.
10. Keep firefighting equipment in good working order and ensure it is serviced regularly. Ensure it can be accessed easily at all times and that everyone is aware where it is located.
11. Make sure that the entrance to your farm is clearly sign posted and keep all access routes clear for emergency vehicles.



### Top tip...

Make sure you have an animal evacuation plan for your livestock in the event of a fire.



## The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

**The primary Fire Safety legislation in England and Wales is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which came into force in October 2006.**

Farm owners and managers are generally seen under the order as being the Responsible Person with whom the duty resides to ensure adequate fire safety provisions are in place.

All premises shall comply with this legislation with the exception of domestic dwellings. Failure to comply with the Fire Safety law may lead to prosecution.

The order requires a Fire Safety Risk Assessment be carried out which should ensure preventative and protective measures are adopted to overcome the hazards identified and will minimise the potential for fire if done properly.

Your fire risk assessment will help you identify risks that can be removed or reduced and to decide the nature and extent of the general fire precautions you need to take to protect people against the fire risks that remain.

### Top tip...

Find out where your nearest fire hydrant is and keep it clear from overgrown vegetation.

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## Five steps of fire risk assessment

One method of carrying out a fire risk assessment is to follow the simple five step approach below:

<b>1</b>	<b>Identify fire hazards:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sources of ignition (includes such things as welding or grinding equipment, damp hay, naked flames, munitions, smoking, poorly serviced electrics)</li><li>• sources of fuel (includes such things as petrol, diesel, LPG, hay, straw etc.)</li><li>• dangerous substances (chemicals, fertilisers, poisons, asbestos etc.)</li><li>• sources of oxygen.</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Identify people at risk:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• people in and around the premises</li><li>• people who are especially at risk.</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Evaluate, remove, or reduce, and protect from risk:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• evaluate the risk of a fire starting</li><li>• evaluate the risk to people from a fire</li><li>• remove or reduce fire hazards</li><li>• remove or reduce the risks to people from a fire</li><li>• protect people by providing fire precautions.</li></ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>Record, plan, inform, instruct and train:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• record any major findings and action you have taken</li><li>• discuss and work with other responsible people</li><li>• prepare an emergency plan</li><li>• inform and instruct relevant people</li><li>• provide training.</li></ul>
<b>5</b>	<b>Review:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• review your fire-risk assessment regularly</li><li>• make changes where necessary.</li></ul>

## Arson reduction checklist

If any of the red-highlighted boxes below receive a tick, a control measure will need to be put in place to reduce the risk of an arson attack. The outcomes of this arson checklist should be included in the overall fire risk assessment for the farm.

Signal crime:	Yes	No
• is there a history of vandalism or fire setting in the area around the farm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• is trespass a problem?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage:	Yes	No
• is hay and straw removed from the field as soon as possible after harvesting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• is hay and straw stored separately from other farm buildings particularly those housing fuels, agrochemicals and machinery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• is hay and straw stored in stacks of reasonable size, spaced at least 10 metres apart?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• is hay and straw stored separately from livestock housing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Security:	Yes	No
• are petrol, diesel and other fuels stored in secure areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• are fuel storage tank outlets padlocked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• are fertilisers and pesticides kept under lock and key?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• is the security of all farm buildings maintained at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is security lighting provided?	Yes	No
• are the farm buildings fitted with fully operational intruder alarms with a monitored link to an alarm receiving station?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• is all refuse disposed of safely and on a regular basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire safety management:	Yes	No
• are all unoccupied areas regularly checked to ensure they are safe and secure and that there is no unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## Reducing the risk of arson

**Arson is responsible for a large number of farm fires.**

There are some simple precautions that you can take to reduce the risk of these attacks:

- maintaining a good standard of security for all outbuildings – lock all sheds and buildings
- preventing easy access to fuel and chemical stores by ensure they are locked away securely
- repairing or replacing any damaged fencing or gates
- ensuring warning notices are displayed
- installing intruder sensors and security lighting
- using dogs or geese to give early warning of intruders.

## In the event of a fire

- **Call 999 without delay and tell the operator:**
  - the full address of the premise and directions if the location is not obvious – a 6 figure Ordnance Survey grid reference is helpful
  - what is involved or likely to become involved in the fire i.e. chemicals, hay etc.
  - if access to the fire will be difficult for fire engines or if a four wheel drive is needed
  - if there will be problems accessing water supplies.
- **Send someone to the farm entrance to direct the Fire & Rescue Service when they arrive.**
- **Prepare to evacuate livestock should the fire spread.**
- **Prepare to use farm machinery to assist the Fire and Rescue Service to move straw/hay etc.**



## **Controlled burning**

If you are doing any kind of controlled burning such as burning rubbish, please contact Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service control on:



### **Devon and Somerset Control**

t. 01392 872225

## **Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service**

Service Headquarters

The Knowle

Clyst St George

Exeter

EX3 0NW

t. 01392 872200

e. [firesafety@dsfire.gov.uk](mailto:firesafety@dsfire.gov.uk)