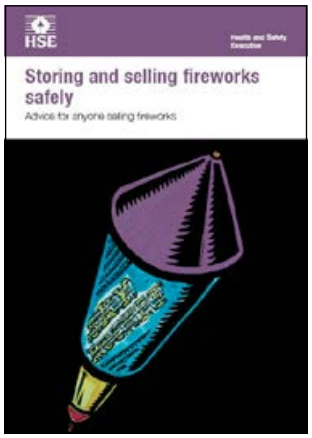
Storing and selling fireworks safely

Advice for anyone selling fireworks



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What you need to do

Are you planning to sell fireworks? This leaflet has been written to help you to protect the safety of your staff and customers and comply with the law.

You must do a risk assessment. This means thinking about what might cause harm to people and deciding whether you are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm.

The main questions you need to ask yourself about how fireworks being stored and sold on retail premises can harm people are:

- How could a fire start?
- How could it spread?
- What do I need to do to protect people if there is a fire?

The actions you need to take are to:

- prevent a fire starting;
- stop it spreading;
- protect people in the event of a fire.

The risk assessment is about taking sensible, common sense precautions. For example, a fire could be started by a cigarette so you will need to take steps to stop people smoking anywhere near the fireworks.

There is a checklist to help you carry out your risk assessment. See the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg407ch.pdf.

Preventing a fire

Do:

- Do exclude sources of ignition.
- Do stop people smoking anywhere near the fireworks.
- Do restrict entry to the store where the fireworks are kept.
- Do keep fireworks away from space heaters.
- Do follow your supplier's advice on returning unsold items.

Don't:

- Don't store fireworks with caustic substances such as drain cleaners, paint strippers and wood preservatives.
- Don't keep fireworks near fertilisers and products containing peroxides (eg fibreglass hardeners).
- Don't let the fireworks become wet or damp.

Stopping a fire spreading

Do:

- Do keep fireworks in closed transport packaging.
- Do use suitable storage and display cabinets.
- Do leave fireworks in their closed transport packaging until you are ready to move them to display cabinets.
- Do avoid handling fireworks unnecessarily.

Don't:

- Don't empty fireworks into metal dustbins.
- Don't store fireworks near articles that could catch fire easily, leading to the fire spreading to the fireworks.
- Don't store the fireworks near anything that could spread the fire.
- Don't store with flammable substances such as white spirit or clothing.
- Don't store near pallets, cardboard boxes and paper.
- Don't store in or near parked vehicles.

Protecting people in the event of a fire

Do:

- Do ensure that all fireworks in the shop sales area are kept in a suitable display cabinet.
- Do ensure all escape routes and fire exits are clear and fire exit doors unlocked.
- Do ensure that your fire detection and alarm system is tested and working properly.
- Do ensure that everyone understands that the first priority is to ensure staff and customers leave the shop as quickly and safely as possible.
- Do carefully consider and manage the amount of stock in the shop sales area.
- Do position transport containers or other stores well away from any neighbouring houses.

Don't:

- Don't store or display fireworks anywhere near an escape route or fire exit.
- Don't store an excessive amount either in the shop or in the stockroom.
- Don't store more than you are allowed to store under your licence.

Please note you must take special precautions if you share a building with flats or maisonettes. Contact your licensing authority for more information.

Summary of the main legal requirements

The main regulations that are particularly relevant to the storage of fireworks are as follows:

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require you to carry out a risk assessment but if you have fewer than five employees, you don't have to write anything down.
- The Explosives Regulations 2014 require that you take appropriate measures to prevent fire or explosion; to limit the extent of fire or explosion; and to protect people from the effects of fire or explosion.
- The Explosives Regulations also require anyone storing Hazard Type 1 and Hazard Type 2 explosives or more than 5 kg net of Hazard Type 3 or Hazard Type 4 explosives to obtain a licence from their local authority (see Contacts for further information).
- In addition, there are also general duties under both health and safety at work law and fire safety law (see www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox).

If you are selling fireworks you have duties under:

- the Pyrotechnic Articles (Safety) Regulations 2010. These include requirements on the types of fireworks that can be sold to members of the public as well as on the age of purchase;
- the Fireworks Regulations 2004. If you are selling outside certain times of the year you will need a licence – this is in addition to any licence allowing you to store fireworks.

Contacts

In the metropolitan counties, ie West Midlands, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Tyne and Wear, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire, the fire service is responsible for licensing and enforcing the regulations on storage. They are also responsible for licensing the sale of fireworks.

In other areas, the licensing and enforcement authority is normally the trading standards department of your local authority. It is also responsible for licensing the sale of fireworks.

In all areas, the trading standards department is responsible for enforcing regulations on consumer safety and age of purchase.

You can find the contact details for your local trading standards department at www.tradingstandards.gov.uk.

Your fireworks supplier is a useful source of advice and information. Your local licensing authority should also be able to advise and assist.

Useful websites

HSE Explosives pages: www.hse.gov.uk/explosives

GOV.UK: search 'fireworks' at www.gov.uk

The Confederation of British Industry's Explosives Industry Group: www.eig.org.uk

British Fireworks Association: www.bfa.org

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

This leaflet is available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg407.htm.

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