

WE KNOW

HUMAN RESOURCES

Quick Guide for Fire Safety, Evacuation Procedures and Evacuation Schemes

QUICK GUIDE

As a business owner, you're obligated to provide a safe workplace for your employees. That includes doing what you can to reduce the risk of a fire emergency.

FENZ may want to visit your business to plan for an emergency. They do this to help you reduce the risk of an emergency and to keep people safe.

Here's a quick and easy checklist you can use to spot any risks or hazards that might cause a fire or reduce fire safety in your business.

FIRE SAFETY

- You have monitored fire alarms that are connected to the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Communication Centres.
- You have fire extinguishers in the building and key staff have been trained to use them.
- You have a working fire hose reel in the building that can be accessed and used by emergency services.
- Any electrical wiring, equipment or appliances are in good condition and well maintained.

EVACUATION PLAN

- You have an evacuation scheme that has been approved by Fire and Emergency New Zealand.
- Your employees understand the evacuation plan and can action it in an emergency.

PREVENTING ARSON

- Any outdoor rubbish bins or skips are kept away from your building, where they're less of a target.
- You have adequate perimeter fencing around your workplace.
- There's security lighting and surveillance equipment installed outside your building.

MEANS OF ESCAPE

- Exits are clear of obstacles at all times and not locked, barred, or blocked when the building is occupied.
- There is no rubbish or other waste in stairwells and passageways.

Building owners are legally responsible for taking fire safety precautions in their buildings. This includes implementing [fire evacuation procedures](#) to ensure people can be evacuated in the case of a fire or alarm of a fire.

Some buildings must have their evacuation scheme approved by Fire and Emergency New Zealand. When this is the case, the building's owner must apply to us in writing through the [Online Services website](#).

Building evacuation schemes must be submitted to Fire and Emergency New Zealand for approval prior to, but no more than 30 days prior to, occupation of a new building or of an existing building being used as a relevant building.

See also: [Fire safety and evacuation procedures information sheet](#)

WHO NEEDS THEIR EVACUATION SCHEME APPROVED?

Commercial, public, and industrial buildings that meet the conditions set out in [section 75 of the Fire and Emergency Act 2017](#) must submit their evacuation scheme for approval. You can find a comprehensive list of conditions on the [Online Services website](#) to determine if you must develop an evacuation scheme and submit it for approval.

Under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire Safety, Evacuation Procedures, and Evacuation Schemes) Regulations 2018, owners of these buildings:

- must maintain their approved evacuation scheme by carrying out regular trial evacuations or implementing a training programme – noting that false alarms can now be treated as trial evacuations;
- reporting the results to Fire and Emergency within 10 days of a trial evacuation;
- must provide for people who may require assistance to safely evacuate using the buildings means of escape, or have a fully compliant place of safety inside the building if they, or any other person, are to remain inside;
- notify Fire and Emergency of certain events, under section 35 of the Regulations, including if the owner, or building contact person is going overseas for more than 21 days.

Under the Regulations 2018, Fire and Emergency may revoke or require a variation to an approved evacuation scheme. There are penalties for not providing or maintaining evacuation schemes, and Fire and Emergency may apply to the court to close down a building that does not comply with the Regulations.

As a landlord, you have obligations to ensure you're maintaining your property to a suitable standard. This includes ensuring that it's fire safe for renters.

Here's a quick and easy checklist you can use to spot any risks or hazards that might cause a fire or reduce fire safety in your rental properties.

You might also want to ask your tenants to look at the [renter's fire safety checklist](#) to ensure they're doing their part.

SMOKE ALARMS

You're legally required to provide adequate [smoke alarms](#) in your rental properties. Make sure:

- There's at least one long-life photoelectric smoke alarm in each bedroom (or within 3 metres of each bedroom door).
- There's at least one long-life photoelectric smoke alarm on each level of the house.
- There's at least one long-life photoelectric smoke alarm in any caravans or sleep-outs.

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For more information about your smoke alarm obligations, visit the [Tenancy New Zealand website](#).

GENERAL FIRE SAFETY

There are plenty of other things you can do to ensure your rental properties are fire safe. Not all of these are a legal requirement, but they will help protect your property and the people who live there.

- Any electrical appliances you have provided for tenants (e.g. fridges, washers and dryers) are in good condition, without frayed cords.
- The house number of the property is clearly visible from the street and can be read by emergency services.
- If there's a useable fireplace in the property, the chimney is in good condition and has been cleaned recently (this is your responsibility).
- There's an appropriate fire extinguisher in the property and your tenants know how and when to use it
- There are plenty of power points in the property, so tenants will not have to use extension cords or overload outlets.

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