



Southern Alarm Systems Ltd

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Duties of the “Responsible Person”

The “responsible person” is someone who has control, or a degree of control, over premises or fire-prevention systems within premises. If you are the responsible person, you must make sure that everyone who uses your premises can escape if there is a fire.

The people you need to think about include anyone who might be on your premises, including employees, visitors or members of the public. You need to pay particular attention to those who may need special help, such as elderly or disabled people or children.

You must:

- Carry out a fire-risk assessment and identify possible dangers and risks
- Think about who might be particularly at risk – you may have disabled employees, or people who work with hazardous chemicals
- Get rid of the risk from fire, as far as reasonably possible
- Put in place fire precautions to deal with any risks that remain
- Make sure there is protection if you use or store flammable or explosive materials
- Have a plan to deal with emergencies
- Record your findings and review them as and when necessary

If you are the responsible person, you must make sure that a fire-risk assessment is carried out on the property. You can appoint some other competent person to do the actual assessment, but you are still responsible in law.

The enforcing authority, which is usually the local fire authority, must be satisfied with your safety measures. If not, they will tell you what you need to do. If they find major problems they can restrict the use of your premises or close them altogether until you deal with the problems they find.

Central government has published risk guidance articles to cover all types of premises. We advise you copy the link below into your web browser and download this short guide to making your premises safe along with the complete guide, relevant to your establishment.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-your-premises-safe-from-fire>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>

I trust this document along with the above web links and BS 5839 extract makes it clear what duties fall on the responsible persons, if you require additional information or clarification relating to this, please do not hesitate to contact us here at Southern Alarm Systems.