



# **PUTTING A STOP TO ARSON**

How to stop people deliberately  
setting fires in your area



London Fire Brigade (LFB) works hard to ensure that the city is a safe place to live, work or visit.

Arson (deliberate firesetting) is a criminal offence that can lead to loss of life and injury. It can damage property and have a negative effect on the environment. Arson also has proven links to domestic abuse, terrorism, harassment, fraud and anti-social behaviour such as vandalism.

Each year, in London, more than 3,000 fires are deliberately started. LFB works in partnership with organisations to reduce this figure but everyone can help by following the practical advice in this leaflet.

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## RUBBISH FIRES



Each year the Brigade attends more than 1,000 fires caused by rubbish being deliberately set alight. Fires involving rubbish and bins can quickly spread to nearby homes and buildings putting lives at risk.

**Make sure that rubbish doesn't become a ready source of fuel for an arsonist by following these tips:**

- Only put rubbish and recycling containers out on collection day.
- Never store rubbish, recycling or anything that can catch alight in corridors, stairwells or on escape routes.
- Ensure common areas such as bin stores are kept secure and are well lit.
- Recycling containers should be stored at a safe distance from buildings.
- Report fly tipping (illegally dumped waste) to your local council to get it collected quickly.
- Don't overload skips and get them removed when full. Make sure they are positioned away from homes and buildings.



### Remember

Contact your local council or search online if you need information or advice on missed collections or to arrange for the collection of unwanted large household items.

## ARSON INVOLVING VEHICLES



Don't let abandoned vehicles, such as cars, motorcycles or mopeds, become a target for arson.

A burnt out vehicle isn't just an eyesore in our communities and open spaces, they can cause damage to the environment from oil spills and the toxic smoke produced in a fire. Water used during fire fighting can also become polluted and affect sub-soils and water drainage systems.

Always report abandoned vehicles to your local council who can arrange for collection and safe disposal.

## PROTECTING SCHOOLS FROM FIRE



The impact of a deliberate fire at a school goes far beyond the cost of any repairs needed.

Pupils may need to be moved to other schools causing major upheaval. Years of students and teachers work could also be lost or damaged.

Our education team can deliver specialised workshops in schools to understand the dangers, impact and consequences of arson and hoax calls. For more information visit: [london-fire.gov.uk/schools](http://london-fire.gov.uk/schools)

### Remember

Always report suspicious activity on school grounds by calling either Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or the police on 101.

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES



Fires in parks and open spaces such as grasslands, wooded areas, sports grounds and allotments can kill wildlife and cause widespread damage, as well as polluting the air with harmful emissions such as the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide.

### **How to reduce fire risk:**

- Take rubbish home or put it in bins provided, especially bottles and any broken glass to avoid them magnifying in the sun and starting a fire.
- Open fires or barbecues can be a serious fire risk. Always follow any local rules or guidance on their use.
- Regularly check and maintain open water supplies for fire fighting.
- Ensure there are no gaps, holes, damage or access points in perimeter walls or fencing.
- Gates should be locked out of hours.
- Consider increasing security patrols at peak times (April – September).
- Rubbish or recycling containers should be placed on firm, solid ground and regularly emptied.
- Grass, plant and tree cuttings should be removed from the area as soon as possible.

### **If you are responsible for any open or green spaces follow this advice:**

- Paths can be used as fire breaks – keep them maintained and trimmed back to allow fire brigade vehicle access.





One of the best ways to prevent arson is to ensure that there are effective security measures in place. This advice is relevant for all types of buildings including; homes, schools, businesses, places of worship and derelict or unoccupied buildings.

- Keep access points to buildings secure, include outdoor structures (sheds or garages), perimeter walls, fencing and gates.
- Board up and secure unused or derelict buildings.
- Prevent intruders and trespassers by ensuring perimeters and buildings are well maintained and any damage is repaired as soon as possible.
- Consider installing security systems such as CCTV, alarms or security lighting.
- Ensure car parks are well lit.
- Don't leave flammable liquids or substances in the open – keep them stored safely and securely. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions on storage.
- Fit a fire reduction letterbox.



### Remember

If you have any concerns contact your local council, report suspicious behaviour to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or contact police on 101 with information.



Arson can be devastating for any commercial business and lead to loss of production and subsequent unemployment. Nearly 60% of businesses never recover after a fire.

### **Follow this advice to help reduce the risks:**

- Make sure you have a suitable fire detection and alarm system.
- Install or seek advice on extra security measures such as perimeter security, lighting, CCTV and intruder alarms.
- Do not allow unauthorised people into staff-only areas.
- Ensure staff know what to do if they see anyone acting suspiciously.

### **Adopt a procedure at the end of the day to:**

- Lock external doors and windows.
- Close internal doors.
- Check there are no unauthorised people left on the premises.
- Maintain good housekeeping of storage areas and rubbish containers.
- Switch on security lighting and intruder alarms.





### FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

If you are responsible for a building, it's important to do all you can to reduce the risk of fire to keep people safe. It saves lives, it's your legal duty, and it makes good business sense.

A fire risk assessment looks carefully at your premises and the people who use them. It helps you and others to understand and identify potential fire

risks and take action, where necessary, to improve your fire safety precautions. If five or more people work at your premises you will also need a written record of your assessment.

Further information can be found at: [london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-workplace/fire-risk-assessments-your-responsibilities](https://london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-workplace/fire-risk-assessments-your-responsibilities)

## USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

In the event of a fire phone 999 and ask for the fire brigade.  
Remember – even a small fire can spread very quickly.

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A FIRE?



It is your responsibility to make the property or business premises secure once the emergency services have left. If it looks like the fire was caused deliberately, the police will be notified and specialist LFB fire investigators may also attend the scene. Do not enter any sealed off areas.

For more information and advice download a copy of the LFB 'After We Leave' booklet from our website.

### JUVENILE FIRESETTERS INTERVENTION SCHEME (JFIS)



JFIS offers free one-to-one fire safety education to children and young people who have demonstrated any type of firesetting or fire play, and provides advice to parents and carers.

For more information visit:

- Email: [firesetters@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:firesetters@london-fire.gov.uk)
- Call: 020 8555 1200 x30842
- [london-fire.gov.uk/community/young-people/worried-about-someone-setting-fires](https://london-fire.gov.uk/community/young-people/worried-about-someone-setting-fires)

# USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

## HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS



LFB can visit your home and provide free fire safety advice to suit your home and personal needs. We will fit free smoke alarms where needed.

If you or someone you know would like a visit:

- Freephone: 0800 028 4428
- Text/SMS: 07860 021 319
- Email: [smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk)
- Apply online at:  
[london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/book-a-home-fire-safety-visit](https://london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/book-a-home-fire-safety-visit)

## FIRE REDUCTION LETTERBOXES

Fire reduction letterboxes can be fitted by both LFB or partner agencies where there is a risk or threat of

arson to vulnerable individuals. In addition, a home fire safety visit can also be completed.

## NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE

This service offers support to anyone experiencing domestic abuse, their families, friends, and others calling on their behalf.

They operate a 24 hour freephone helpline (run in partnership with Women's Aid and Refuge).

- Call: 0808 2000 247

## CRIMESTOPPERS



Anyone with information on fires that have been deliberately started should call Crimestoppers free on 0800 555 111 or contact police on 101 with information.



[london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk)



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE